

No Mow May 2021- Invitation to Participate

2020 has been a year full of stress, anxiety and tension, for this reason we are happy to put forward some excellent news regarding the protection of our native bee pollinators. During the month of May 2020, the city of Appleton approved the first No Mow May.

The goal of No Mow May is to provide early season forage for emerging native pollinators by reducing own mowing intensity during a month where foraging resources are limited. Four hundred and thirty-five Appleton homes registered to participate, and the initiative was widely appreciated by our community.

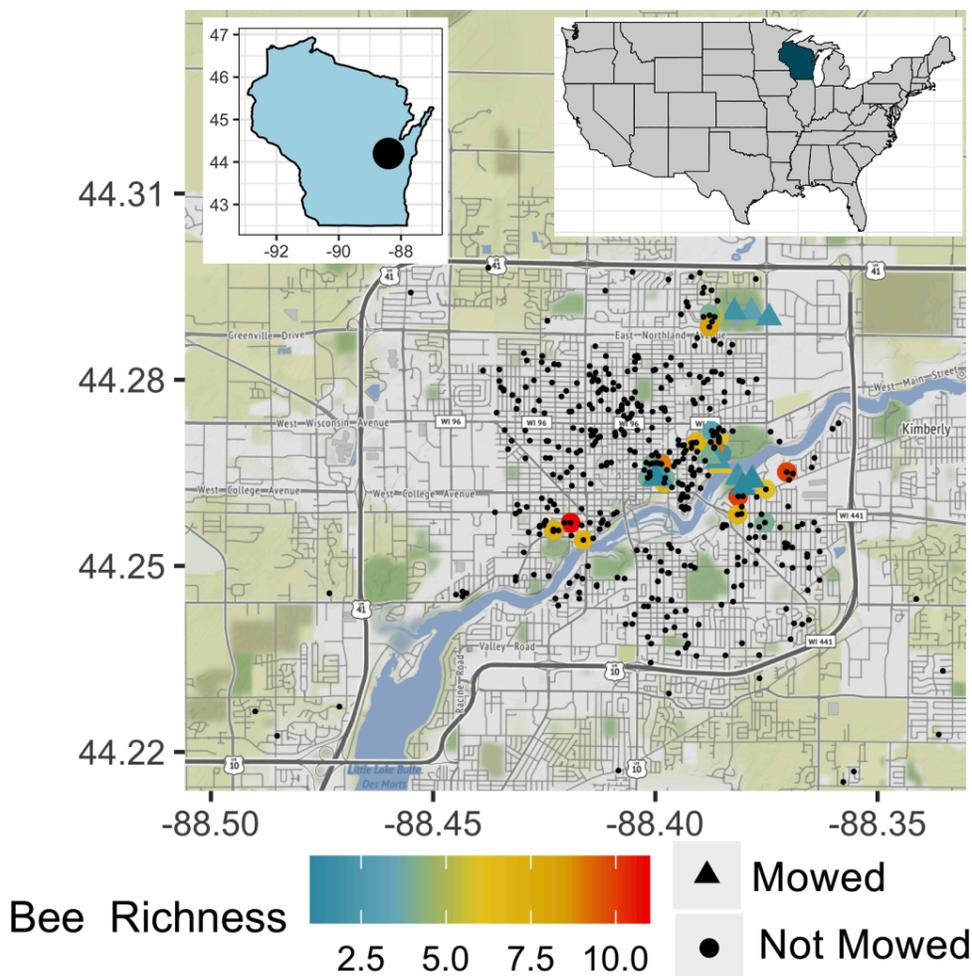


Fig. 1 shows the 435 homes that participated in No Mow May 2020. The colored points are sites where we sampled for native bee biodiversity.

The results of our first attempt at No-Mow-May are promising and speak for themselves. The reduced mowing intensity resulted in ~35% more floral resources (abundance and diversity) available to native pollinators by the end of the month (Fig.2). This translated to a five-fold increase in wild bee abundances and three-fold increase in wild bee diversity (Fig. 3).

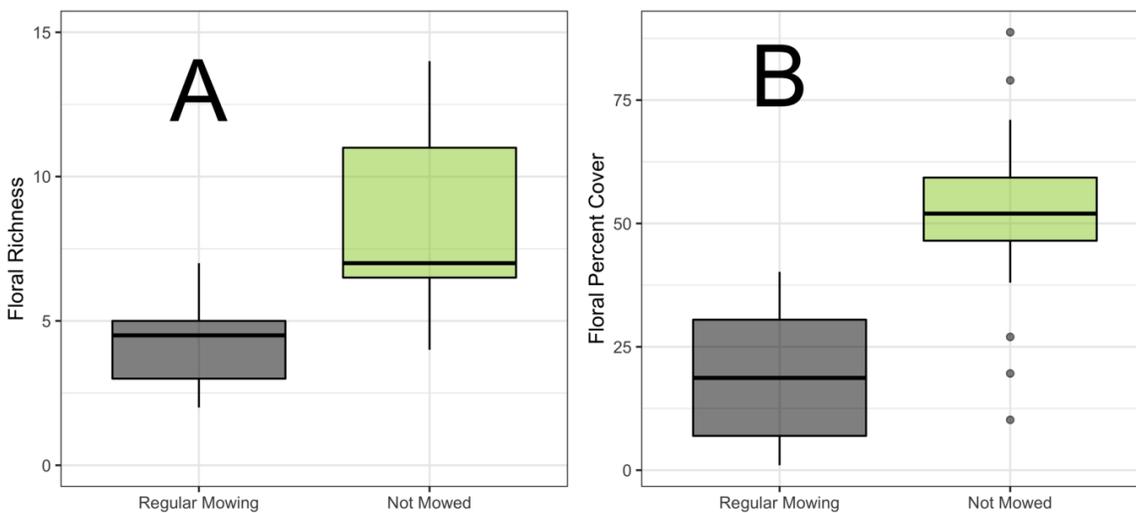


Figure 2 Boxplot of floral richness and percent cover comparisons. Boxplot showing higher median floral density (A) and richness (B) in No Mow May lawns ($n = 20$) relative to regularly mowed areas ($n = 15$).

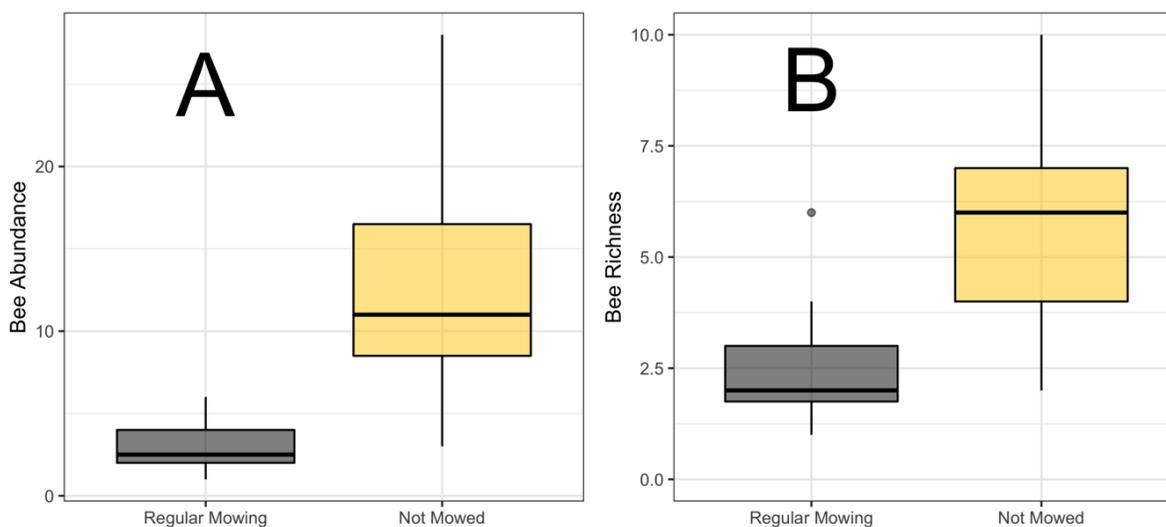


Figure 3 Boxplot of bee abundance and richness. Boxplot showing higher median bee abundance (A) and richness (B) in No Mow May lawns ($n = 20$) relative to regularly mowed areas ($n = 15$).

In preparing for the 2021 re-launch of No-Mow-May, we would like to grow our program to include ten additional cities/towns in the Fox Cities and throughout Wisconsin. We aim to increase citizen science engagement by providing detailed instructions and materials for collecting standardized data on pollinator diversity, abundance and floral resource availability. In 2021 we will do things a little different but with the same goal in mind, protecting our native pollinators by providing additional foraging resources for them.

Citizen Science:

Your community is full of scientists! All it takes is a little time, some basic tools (which we will provide) and your smartphone to share your data and results with. Citizen scientists will measure the length of their grass, record blooming flower species in their lawns, photograph pollinators and help us build a list of pollinator biodiversity in your community. Participants in No Mow May will be asked to register on our site (www.BYOBEEZ.org) and citizen scientist materials will be made freely available at a local point of collection starting in mid-April (e.g. in Appleton this will be a local brewery and City Hall).



We are looking for your help in growing this already successful citizen science initiative in your community. This means talking to your elected officials to approve a long-lawn exception ordinance during the month of May 2021 and facilitating No Mow May's endorsement through your city council. If you want to be a champion for protecting our native pollinators reach out to us directly:

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