

BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE
P.O. BOX 389
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BLUE MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE

I N C O R P O R A T E D

Spring 2021

www.bluemountainwildlife.com

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SLOW-MOTION SPRING

Blue Mountain Wildlife's emergence from the COVID lockdown has been a slow one. We kicked off the spring with the traditional Earth Day Clean-Up on April 24th. Turnout was light, but we did have a volunteer group working with Berks Nature on-hand to plant some trees at the Monument Parking Lot. Unfortunately, the BMW Race Committee decided to cancel this year's Trail Race Series, which left the remainder of the spring without BMW programs. So the rest of the spring

passed uneventfully, except for the on-going construction on the I-78 Bridge project.

The rest of the year's program is starting to fill in. BMW and Berks Nature will be holding a **Wetlands Restoration Walk** at 9 AM on Saturday July 31st at the Monument Parking Lot. BMW plans to take the stand to their traditional location at 2nd and State Streets for the **Taste of Hamburger Festival** on Saturday September 4th. And more events are being planned in the fall.

OUR MISSION

THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE WILDLIFE AND WETLANDS ALONG THE SCENIC SCHUYLKILL RIVER IN NORTHERN BERKS AND SOUTHERN SCHUYLKILL COUNTY



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EARTH DAY CLEAN-UP RETURNS!

GREGG ADAMS



CALENDAR OF EVENTS—SUMMER 2021

Saturday July 31, 2021...Wetlands Restoration Along the Kittatinny Ridge Walk 9 AM Monument Parking Lot
Rain Date Sunday August 1st at 9 AM
Thursday August 12, 2021...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library
Saturday September 4, 2021...Taste of Hamburger Festival 10 AM to 6 PM 2nd & State Streets Hamburg
Thursday September 9, 2021...BMW Monthly Business Meeting 6:00 to 8:00 pm Hamburg Library

CHIMNEY BEE RESCUE—JUNE 2021 INTERIM PROGRESS: THE RELOCATED BEES ARE FLYING!

MIKE SLATER



The first of the relocated Eastern Chimney Bees (a.k.a. Abrupt Digger bees *Anthophora abrupta*) were seen flying on June 7, 2021 when I went to check on them at one of my relocation sites at Rock Hollow Woods Environmental Learning Center (RHW). This is a major milestone in my project to rescue a portion of the breeding aggregation that was in the path of the I-78 bridge construction near Hamburg, PA!



They had apparently started emerging just after my previous visit to the site and had been out and flying for several days as there were new tunnels and chimneys in the works! The dark color of the wet soil used showed the new workings very easily. According to Beth Norden's pa-

per this species doesn't start working for a day or two after emerging, so they were probably flying about June 4th or 5th here at this old farm equipment shed that is used for reclaimed lumber storage by Jimmy McCarney. Jimmy was there when I saw them for the first time and apparently my excitement showed. After over two years of working on this I finally had successfully moved some of the bees!

The boxes closest to the outside were the ones that had bees. These are the ones that are warmest because they get the most sun! I'm not sure where they are going for water. There is a stream a few hundred yards away and B. Norden also reported they use morning dew from grass and nearby plants to soften the soil for easier excavation.

Later in the afternoon the boxes don't have sunlight falling on them. They are in far enough that they don't get hit by rain.

All of the nests so far have been in the old boxes from last year or in the four new unoccupied ones that I have put beside them. They are not using in the underlying sandy-clay soil that makes up the floor of the shed. It is a rather dry sandy surface and is full of antlion pits.



The bees at the other boxes of daughter colony bees at RHW are 0.2 miles away under the overhanging barn of Jean's Place and they started flying about a week later, around June 14th. They got a lot of sun on them at first, but now they are getting some tree shade from sapling black locust trees. All of these boxes spent the winter in our detached garage at our house and were installed in their current location in early May.



At our house I have four medium/large boxes of soil that had nest tunnels from last year at the mother site and three small ones. The bees started flying about June 14th here. I have given them a watering dish of coarse gravel in a shallow pan. They like to be able to land easily and not worry about going in too deep. (Although they can "swim" on water and get to shore if they get bumped into the water! Their swimming is more like an airboat as they scoot across the water by flapping their wings as though they were flying.) They started using it as a water source

for their soil softening for excavation almost immediately. It is about 20 feet (6 m) from the two boxes at our back porch and maybe 50 feet (15 m) from the ones at the side of our garage. The females are also getting water from the wet moss at base of the flower planters by our backdoor. I have been adding a little extra water to keep this moss saturated every time I go in and out of the house. They ARE NOT using either of our nearby birdbaths which are close to grand level and have a few large rocks in them, even with the gently sloping sides on our big concrete one!



I've seen a few of the females already carrying pollen in their scopa hairs on their hind legs so nest provisioning is on for some of them. I'll report any other interesting things I notice yet this season as they should be flying for at least 2 more weeks before they begin their long wait until next June.



To keep up with the progress of the Kerny's Abrupt Digger Bees relocation project and learn more about bees, visit Mike's Native Bee Blog at <https://nativebeeblog.blogspot.com/>.



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