

# Monthly Pollen

## October



### Native Pollinator



Photo Credit: Debbie Johnson

### Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, *Bombus affinis*

**Description:** Large, fuzzy, yellow and black bumble bee ranging from 1-2 centimeters in size with a distinctive rusty-colored patch on the second segment of the abdomen.

**Flight:** May-October. Bumble bees can be active in cooler temperatures when most insects are not.

**Foraging Habitat:** Pollen and nectar from a variety of flowering plants and crops.

**Nesting:** Social, colony bees. Nests are constructed in preexisting underground cavities.

**Status:** Critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (ICUN) Red List. Its historic range has been reduced by 90%.

### Native Plant



Photo Credit: UW Madison Arboretum

### New England Aster, *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*

**Description:** Grows 1'7' feet tall with clustered stems. Along the stem grow dense leaves broadly oblong to lance-like in shape. Blue-purple to rosy pink flowers of 3/4"-1.5" inch width that grow in leafy, short clusters.

**Bloom Time:** August-October

**Sun Exposure:** Full to partial sun.

**Native Habitat:** Perennial forb, moderate to moist soils, Habitat generalist that will grow in prairies, meadows, woodlands and along habitat edges.

### The Buzz!



Photo Credit: Clay Bolt Nature Photography

### The buzz on bumble bees!

Bumble bees utilize a special behavior call "buzz pollination" in which the pollen structure of the plant is grabbed in their jaws and vibrated using their wings to dislodge pollen. The pollen is then stored on the bees' hind legs. Certain plants require buzz pollination, including tomatoes, peppers and cranberries.

Although critically endangered, areas with restored pollinator habitat around Madison and Baraboo have had sightings of this now rare bumble.