

**Climate change is accelerating insect loss.** Rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, intense storms, and changing seasonal patterns are disrupting insect life cycles. Many species rely on specific climate cues to emerge, breed, or migrate. As those cues shift, insects are unable to adapt quickly enough. Some populations collapse entirely; others move northward—if they can.

At the same time, climate change interacts with other stressors like habitat loss, pesticide use, and pollution. Together, these forces are pushing many insect species past their tipping point.

### **Connecticut's Changing Insect Landscape**

In Connecticut, climate change is altering insect populations. Warmer temperatures have led to the arrival of new species, such as the giant swallowtail butterfly, previously uncommon in the region. While this increase in species diversity might seem positive, it also indicates ecological shifts that can disrupt existing food webs and habitats.

Climate change is especially challenging for biodiversity because of the rate of change. Connecticut has already lost some species that are adapted to colder climates. Rather than dying out, they still maintain colonies in the Berkshires and northward. Others on the decline include those found in bogs, and other species that are reliant on cooler conditions for survival. Climate will have grave consequences for many species, with extinction likely for many plants and animals.

### **Support Insect Biodiversity**

Your yard can become a sanctuary for insects.

- **Plant Native Species:** Native plants provide the food and habitat local insects need. Consider incorporating plants like milkweed, goldenrod, and coneflowers into your garden.
- **Reduce Lawn Areas:** Lawns offer little for insects. Replacing portions of your lawn with native plantings or wildflower meadows can create valuable habitats.

- **Avoid Pesticides:** Chemical pesticides can harm beneficial insects. Opt for natural pest control methods and encourage predators like ladybugs and birds to manage pests.
- **Provide Shelter:** Leave some leaf litter, dead wood, or create brush piles to offer shelter and breeding grounds for insects.
- **Add Water Sources:** A shallow dish with water and stones can provide hydration for insects.