

## **Integrating restoration and sustainable agriculture for improved soil, pollinator health and wildlife habitat**

L. Vickerman, and **J.R. Neale** \*

Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver, Colorado, United States of America

\*Corresponding author: [jennifer.neale@botanicgardens.org](mailto:jennifer.neale@botanicgardens.org)

Keywords: habitat restoration, multi-purpose gardens, pollinator health, sustainable agriculture, urban wildlife corridors

Denver Botanic Gardens (Denver, Colorado, USA) is a multi-site organisation committed to the values of diversity, relevance, sustainability and transformation. Our Chatfield Farms site, located in the suburban, rural interface of the Denver-metro area is a 700+ acre (283+ hectare) site which serves many purposes. A historic homestead, Chatfield Farms functions as a working farm supporting the production of vegetables and fruit for distribution to shareholders and communities with limited access to fresh, local food. The site also serves as a botanical garden and an urban wildlife corridor. Denver Botanic Gardens has conducted restoration of natural habitats at the Chatfield Farms site over the last 10 years. We have improved riparian and meadow habitat as well as implemented sustainable agricultural practices. Integrating agriculture and restoration can improve soil health and wildlife habitat. Our practices include burning, beaver dam analogs, no till practices, high fungal compost, increasing pollinator habitat, studying microbial communities, and assessing seed source effects. These have improved biodiversity and ecosystem function via reduced water use, improved soil communities, and more nesting habitat. Chatfield Farms exemplifies the values of Denver Botanic Gardens through these practices.