

Research Paper

Birdbaths and Drowned Insects

Topic chosen for my research assignment is entitled birdbaths and drowned insects- namely bees because of the issue this particular summer of finding drowned victims due to thirst. Birdbaths are a nice accent in any yard if one enjoys bird watching but not when finding drowned dragon flies, bees, and beetles – some of nature’s beauties.

Assorted birth bath types come in various colors, weights, depth or shallow. Plastic birdbaths are affordable and make nice gifts whether housewarming, birthday, or Christmas.

I have a green plastic one. It is lightweight and easy to move around should I have the desire. It has a semi-shallow dish which is deeper in the center with a stand that sits in my yard to help cover up the rectangle, protruding from the ground, septic power pump. The stand holds sand in it to help keep balance and help it not blow over. I place it in close perimeters of the bird feeders so the birds can have the option of drinking water or bathing should they choose. The downside is that they can break easily, the water gets too warm from the plastic heating up in 100° days that it dries up fast and I have to keep refilling it; the dish gets knocked off its stand in windy weather and it can break apart in icy climates, and recently bees and dragonflies drowning! All in all, it has served me well in caring for the birds – but not the bees and dragonflies!

This summer, I have sadly noticed drowned bees, dragon flies, and even beetles. My love for life has led me to not fill up the birdbath as much that I have not kept up with the watering for birds. Dilemma of what to do! Life needs water to exist. Hence, the research paper of finding ideas to continue giving water to birds and the apparent life in the backyard bees, dragonflies, etc.

Did it ever occur to you that bees, dragonflies, and beetles need water to drink too? Honestly, I personally never gave it a thought until finding them in the birdbath, scooping their lifeless bodies out with sadness, cleaning, and refreshing the water supply. These insect friends seek shallow water sources like puddles and birdbaths. I hear you – bees and beetles friends?!?!?! There is a reason for their existence otherwise they would not be here in existence at all although I may not have the scientific evidence for being here on Earth. Save that for another research paper should one come my way.

Some insects are not known as good swimmers. Although one may see dragonflies around water looking for flying food to eat, bathing, or laying eggs, the adults don't swim. Bees, important to our ecosystem, you don't see them flying over water at all, but I find drowned, so what gives?! They are thirsty! They look for a place to land to sip water. If they fall in, they are unable to climb out. Beetles feed on the pests and decaying plant and animal material.

The solution? A great way to safely continue keeping your birdbath full of fresh water for the birds and the bees is to place a stone in the center, nice sized cleaned shell from the beach, or *something* in the birdbath-even a saucer-so insects have somewhere safe to perch, like the birds, when they drink. I chose a terra cotta saucer from one of my plant pots and filled it with colorful-flat marbles so the center may be used as a perch for insects to drink and the birds still have their ability to drink and bathe.

There is so much work to be done in our earth to help wake up our societies to not only care for one another, to care for this planet Earth we inhabit, but also to care for the big and the *small*, the seen and the **not so seen**. The bees and dragonflies are only a couple types of the myriads of insects that inhabit our earth that mankind may list as a nuisance yet they are important to our ecosystem. Without them, there is less pollination, which leads to less gardens

and crops, in turn less food for the population of people on this earth and less of the animals that eat those plants. It affects the entire food chain. Obviously birdbaths are not on the top of the list of saving certain insects we enjoy watching for their beauty or to bring about the insect population that may possibly near extinction. We are all interconnected: life as Earth beings and the living. My backyard is not going to save the Earth but it is a drop in an ocean. If I and many others make a decision and act to place a saucer in a center of a birdbath so bees, dragonflies, and beetles may take a drink, we become that drop in the ocean that make a difference keep our Earth teeming with life of plants, trees, insects, animals, and Earth beings.

I am happy to report this week: no more drownings!

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