

Agenda

8.30 am - Arrival and breakfast

9.00 am - Welcome

Professor Simon Pearson, Director of LIAT

**9.05 –Introduction by Jenny Rowbottom
Research Assistant, University of Lincoln**

9.10 am - **Dr Sandra Varga**

**Lecturer, School of Life Sciences, University of Lincoln
“Mycorrhizal fungi as modulators of pollination”**

Sandra is a lecturer in the School of Life Sciences University of Lincoln. Her main scientific interest is understanding how plants interact with their environment, linking belowground and aboveground processes. Sandra will talk about her work with pollinators and in particular mycorrhizal fungi as important components of most ecosystems, including agricultural ones. These mutualistic fungi have been shown to have direct effects not only on the plants they colonise, but also on insects visiting their flowers

9.30 am - **Gill Perkins**

CEO Bumblebee Conservation Trust

**“Bumblebees – lifecycle, declines, importance, PLUS ‘Bee Steward’, a predictive model for
bumblebee pollination services in agro systems.**

Gill has been an enthusiastic conservationist from a young age, starting with building footpaths in Devon. She has been a volunteer and an ecologist for the Lake District Special Planning Board. The highlight of her early roles, was counting puffins for the Icelandic National Park. Gill found her way back to conservation, after a career in business, when she took a sabbatical in Borneo working with a local community to restore rainforest and reporting to the United Nations on the project. Gill joined the Bumblebee Conservation Trust in 2012 as Conservation Manager and moved into the role of CEO in April 2016 where she has found the perfect channel through which to promote her passion for bumblebees and their protection.

9.55 am - **Sarah Baker**

**Senior Policy Officer ~ Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership
“Increasing wild pollinators on farmland – a low cost approach”**

Pollinators contribute around £690 million a year to the UK economy. Declines in many species are however continuing despite the work of farmers and land managers and further action is needed to prevent further losses. Are we doing enough to support our insect pollinators and is there more that could be done at a basic level to ensure their key requirements for food, nesting and overwintering sites are met?

Sarah will talk about the work she has been doing with Lincolnshire farmers to explore this idea and develop an approach to support wild pollinators on farmland which is low cost both in terms of initial outlay but also ongoing management. Funding from Defra through the National Pollinator Strategy has helped support the project.

10.15 am - **Mr Nicholas Watts**

**Vine House Farm, Deeping St Nicholas.
“Farming in partnership with wildlife”**

Nicholas started recording the breeding birds on his farm in 1982. In 1992 he realised there had been a large decline of some species, this worried him so he decided to try and stop this decline and by chance Vine House Bird foods was created. Since 1992 there has been extensive habitat creation at Vine House Farm and Nicholas has won more awards for conservation on his farm than any other farmer in the UK. He has also received the MBE for his work.

10.35am - **Event concludes**