



Planting for Pollinators

Read:

What is a pollinator?

A pollinator is an animal - usually an insect - that helps to make plants grow. They do this by picking up pollen from the part of a flower called a stamen and dropping it on another part of a flower called a stigma. Moving the pollen helps the plant make fruits and seeds.

Why are pollinators important?

- Do you like to eat? One out of every three bites of food you eat exists because pollinators are doing their job. For some plants, if the flower doesn't get help to move the pollen, it won't make any more fruits or seeds. For instance, if we didn't have any bees, apple trees wouldn't produce the apples that we enjoy eating.
- Do you like to breathe clean air? Three out of four flowering plants need pollinators to be healthy. Healthy plants clean our air, supply oxygen and support wildlife.

How can you help the pollinators?

Bees, butterflies, moths, wasps, bats, hummingbirds and even some small mammals (like squirrels) play a role in giving plants a hand, but they need all the help they can get. You can help by planting flowers in your yard that attract the pollinators.

On the next page are some kinds of plants that will attract pollinators to your yard. Look at the list and pick ones that you would like to grow.

Do:

1. Go with an adult to a garden store and buy some flower seeds. (Use the suggestions on the next page.)
2. Pick a sunny spot in your yard, clear away the grass and dig up the soil so it is loose and crumbly, OR, fill some plant pots with soil. Leave about an inch at the top of each pot.
3. Add a little water, but not too much. Ask an adult to help you decide how much.
4. Poke a hole in the top of the soil, drop the seed in and fill in the hole with more soil. Check the seed packet to see how deep to plant the seeds.
5. Poke a popsicle stick about halfway into the soil by each seed, so you know where they are.
6. Be sure your seeds get plenty of water. Give them a drink about every other day.
7. Enjoy watching your plants grow and bloom! See if you can spot the pollinators!

Materials:

- Flower seeds
- A trowel (for digging)
- Popsicle sticks
- Water source
- Plant pots (optional)
- Potting soil (optional)

Native Plants that Encourage Pollinators:



Butterfly Weed - attracts Monarch butterflies. It needs sun to part shade.

Purple Coneflower - attracts butterflies, bees and beetles. It needs sun to part shade.



Bee-Balm - attracts butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. It needs sun to part shade.

Sunflower - attracts bees and butterflies. It needs mostly sun.



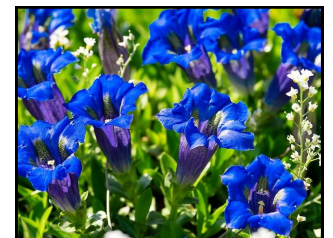
Wild Columbine - attracts bees, butterflies, moths and hummingbirds. It needs part shade to all shade.

Joe-Pye Weed - attracts bees and butterflies. It needs sun to part shade.



Evening Primrose - attracts moths. It needs sun to part shade.

Gentian - attracts bees. It needs part shade.



Blazing Star - attracts butterflies and bees. It needs sun to part shade.

Lupine - attracts butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. It needs sun to part shade.

