

THE FOREST REPORTER

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The Importance of Pollinators

What are Pollinators?

Pollinators are living things that move pollen from flower to flower or within one flower to accomplish fertilization and help with the reproduction of plants.

Pollinators take many forms, from commonly known insects such as bees and butterflies all the way to birds, lizards and mammals.

Pollinators are necessary for a healthy ecosystem and are key to a greater diversity of life. Without biotic pollinators, many species of plant would have a difficult time surviving, likely having great impact on those organisms that depend on them.



Why are pollinators important to us?

Pollinators are important for humans in many ways. Many of the fruits, vegetables and nuts that we eat come from plants that require pollination. Examples include apples, tomatoes and carrots. Even cotton plants require pollination of their flowers.

Diversity is also important to humans. Many medicines, vaccines and technological advancements come from studying living organisms. As noted above, the pollinators have a huge impact on the ecosystem they are apart of and help create diversity.



Pollinators are in Trouble

Unfortunately, many of our most important pollinators are in trouble. Some of the most notable species that have seen their numbers dwindle recently are honeybees and monarch butterflies.

Like many environmental issues, there is not necessarily just one reason for the loss of these pollinators. Habitat loss, pesticide misuse, disease and parasites, and air pollution are all potential causes of the reduction of pollinators. This issue is big enough that the White House recently called for action!

We Can Help

Many of these problems are things that we can help to prevent or solve, even in our own backyards! Avoiding pesticides when possible and using them correctly and in moderation is a good start. Always read the instructions in full.

Planting a native flower garden and creating homes for bees with simple tools are things that we have done or are planning to do at the Outdoor Education Center. These are also things that can be done at your home or in your community. Follow the links below to see how you can help!

Local and National Groups Working to Help Pollinators

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation has special concern for pollinators.

The Garden Club of Houston has some great links for information and ways to help.

The Native Bee CO-OP has great information for protecting native bees.

The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center has also has dedicated itself to the conservation of pollinators.

An example of a mason bee home.

Photo and build by:
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