



Children's Garden Club
Volume #18, Sheet # 8
August 5, 2017

Project Pollinator Day
"From Garden to your Table"
Greenscape Gardens
2832 Barrett Station Road

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Welcome to the August Meeting of Children's Garden club. Today Greenscape Gardens is keeping with the Project Pollinator – In showing you first hand all the produce you receive from our Pollinator Friends, a tour of their Demo Garden, an Urban Vegetable Garden. We have a fun filled morning of ongoing pollinator activities for our guests here today. Families will start with an independent plant and insect scavenger hunt, and end by planting veggie seeds to take home and grow for the fall garden. Along the way, we will learn how important pollinators are for food production and snack on some juicy watermelon, and sample honey. Enjoy!

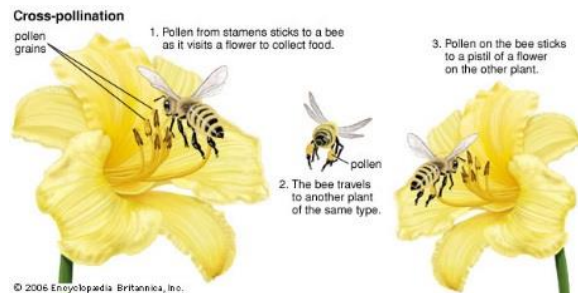
Pollinators, such as most bees and some birds, bats, and other insects, play a crucial role in flowering plant reproduction and in the production of most fruits and vegetables. ... The fruits and seeds of flowering plants are an **important** food source for people and wildlife in the United States one third of all agricultural output depends on pollinators. Fruit and vegetable growers can attest to the significant role pollinator's play in the production of many of their crops. Promoting pollinators' habitat on and near the farm benefits everyone who likes to eat!

In the lush green fields where our fruits and vegetables are grown, there is a process that perfectly exemplifies the interconnectedness of all beings. It is often forgotten or unseen by the general public,

but without it, there would be far less food on our table, and medicine in our cabinets. The process is called pollination, and birds, bees, bats, butterflies, and other animals all play a part.

It occurs when the pollinator moves the pollen from the male plant to the female, fertilizing the female for reproduction, as well as fruit and seed

production. Some plants are self-pollinating, meaning that they can fertilize themselves. Many plants, however, are cross-pollinating, meaning that they cannot do this on their own. They need animals capable of flight and movement to bring the process full-cycle, and flowering plants have evolved over the years to attract these pollen-moving creatures.



Pollinators are an essential part of the production cycle for plants, and farmers in the U.S. need them, too. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, one third of agricultural production in the U.S. depends on pollinators. This not only includes food, but also plants used to create medicines and alcoholic beverages. Unfortunately, one of the world’s most successful pollinating animals is at risk, and there are necessary changes that must occur in order to save them.

According to the Pollinator Partnership, many pollinators are federally “listed species,” which means there has been an observed decline in populations. The decline of the honey bee is especially concerning, with a loss of around half of the managed honey bee colonies in the past ten years. The Nature Conservancy names this dying species “the greatest pollinating machine when it comes to agriculture,” which highlights the danger involved in losing the honey bee.

The loss of pollinators has many causes, from destruction of habitat to the overuse of chemicals and pesticides. As numbers continue to fall, the situation may appear dire, but there are things that anyone can do to help save pollinators and U.S. agriculture.

One of the easiest ways to start is to plant pollinator-friendly plants in your backyard. Some favorites of the honey bee include zinnias, hyacinths, golden rod, and bee balm. For bird pollinators like the hummingbird, bright red, nectar producing plants are a good choice. The USDA Forest Service also recommends that these flowers be tubular with a strong support for perching. Some examples include trumpet honeysuckle. The best choices are always native plants, or plants that naturally occur in a particular area.



Zinnias



Hyacinths



Goldenrod



Bee Balm

Additionally, the use of natural fertilizers and pesticides will help reduce the impact on bees who visit your garden. Instead, we can rely on other insects like lady bugs and praying mantises to eliminate the produce-eating pests. With strong, wide-spread populations of honey bees and other pollinators, U.S. agriculture will reap the benefits, providing humanity with successful crop production year round.

Just type *pollinators* into any internet search engine, and you will be presented with pages and pages of links to universities, organizations, agencies, and individuals who share the desire to ensure that pollinators have what they need to do their work. Several links can be found at the bottom of this page.

Did You Know?

Pollinators support biodiversity: There is a correlation between plant diversity and pollinator diversity. The pollinator population of an area is a great indicator of the overall health of an ecosystem. Some crops, including blueberries and cherries, are 90 percent dependent on honey bee pollination. Honey bees visit five million flowers to make one pint of honey.



To produce 150 pounds of honey, bees cover a distance equal to 13 trips to the moon and back.

90 percent of the nation's apple crop is pollinated by bees. Bees tend to prefer flowers that they can walk on to sip nectar. Butterflies and moths need a place to land on the flowers that they visit, so they prefer broad, flat-faced flowers.

There are 4000 bee species in the U.S. There are 450 species in New York State alone. *More than 300 species occur in Pennsylvania. Increased yields and higher quality crops are benefits that growers and consumers realize from a healthy *pollinator population, native or managed*.

Worldwide, approximately 1,000 plants grown for food, beverages, fibers, spices, and medicines need to be pollinated by animals in order to produce the goods on which we depend.



It's estimated that there are about 2.4 million bee colonies in the U.S. today, two-thirds of which travel the country each year pollinating crops and producing honey and beeswax.

Flowers bloom during the day and night, depending on which pollinator they need to attract. *Day-blooming flowers* are often brightly colored, while those that *bloom at night* are often pale, and may produce sweet scents or odors to attract nocturnal pollinators such as moths and bats.

Tips for Establishing a Healthy Pollinator Habitat

Start right. Flowering plants can be started from seed; shrubs are better established by transplanting seedlings. Consider the soil characteristics, site drainage, sunlight, and other factors when selecting plants. Provide a variety of flower colors and shapes to attract different pollinators. Plant in clumps, rather than single plants, to better attract pollinators.

Choose plants that flower at different times of the year to provide nectar and pollen sources throughout the growing season. Whenever possible, choose native plants. These plants will be better adapted to your soil type, climate, precipitation, and local pollinators. Avoid the use of pesticides. Practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to reduce damage to your plants and to protect pollinators by using less chemicals.

Visit a plant nursery to ask about pollinator plants suited for your site conditions. Pollinators, need water too. You can provide water for pollinators with a shallow dish, bowl, or birdbath with half-submerged stones for perches.



Children's Garden Club

Growing with St. Louis County Parks & Recreation

2017 Schedule



I LOVE
my Garden
Club!

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| August 5 | Project Pollinator Greenscape Gardens 2832 Barrett Station Rd. |
| Sept. 9 | Plant fall color – Sherwood Forest Nursery & Garden Center 2651 Barrett Station Road |
| October 7 | Topic to be decided For the Garden by Haefner's 6704 Telegraph Rd. |
| November 4 | Backyard Eggs Made Easy Sherwood Forest Nursery & Garden Center 2651 Barrett Station Road |
| Dec. 2 | Holiday Decorations Sherwood Forest Nursery & Garden Center 2651 Barrett Station Road |
| Jan. 6, 2018 | Dried flora -Flower show arrangement Baisch & Skinner 2721 LaSalle street |
| Feb. 3, 2018 | Fun things to do in the Garden Sappington Garden Center 11530 Gravois Road |
| Mar. 3 ,2018 | Pollinators & Plants Sherwood Forest & Garden Center 2651 Barrett Station Rd. |
| Mar. 8-11 | HBA- Home & Garden show America Center Children's Garden Club Booth |
| Apr. 7, 2018 | Fun in the Garden For the Garden by Haefner's 6703 Telegraph Road |
| May 5 | Mother's Day Project Plant a vegetable -Annual & Vegetables Wiethop's Greenhouses |