

The Power of Pollinators



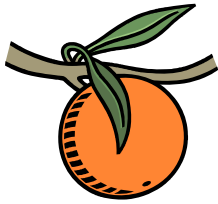
1. What are pollinators and how do they help plants?

2. What is nectar and how do pollinators use it?

3. What are some of the ways plants adapt to survive? What clues can you find to figure out which pollinator helps that plant?

4. What are pesticides and how can they hurt pollinators?

5. What are some things we can do to protect pollinators?



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Answers:

1. What are pollinators and how do they help plants?

Pollinators are insects or animals that help plants create fruits and seeds. Pollinators move pollen between plants that are the same species. The pollen fertilizes the other plant, so it can grow more seeds and fruit.

2. What is nectar and how do pollinators use it?

Nectar is a sweet liquid that plants produce to attract pollinators. Pollen sticks to the pollinators while they are sipping nectar. As they travel from flower to flower, looking for nectar, they collect and spread pollen wherever they go. This helps the flowers make seeds and fruit.

3. What are some of the ways plants adapt to survive? What clues can you find to figure out which pollinator helps that plant?

They grow in special ways to spread their seed and match the feeding habits of the animal that pollinates them. A flower's color, shape and blooming pattern can be clues about the plant's pollinator. Some flowers open only at night so animals who fly only at night, like moths, can pollinate them. Some flowers are colorful and attract butterflies. They have flat leaves for them to sit on and flowers that are easy for them to suck nectar from. Coconuts are hollow and float, so they can be carried away in the water.

4. What are pesticides and how can they hurt pollinators?

Pesticides are poisonous chemicals used to kill unwanted insects that can damage plants. They are often sprayed in gardens and farms. When pesticides get sprayed on flowers that create nectar, the pollinators eat the pesticides along with the nectar. The pollinators can get sick and even die.

5. What are some things we can do to protect pollinators?

It is a good idea to stop using pesticides. We can plant flowers that attract beneficial insects that will eat insect pests. Planting a variety of flowers can invite and feed many kinds of pollinators.