



Exploring the World of POLLINATORS

THE IMPORTANCE OF POLLINATORS

Pollinators play a vital role in the reproduction of plants and the overall health of our ecosystems. They facilitate the transfer of pollen, enabling plants to produce seeds and fruits. This process is essential for the maintenance of biodiversity, as well as for the production of food crops. Approximately 75% of the world's flowering plants, and 35% of global crop production, depend on pollinators. In other words, one of every 3 bites of food you eat is because pollinators are out there in the world doing their job.

At McDonald Garden Center, we encourage you to protect our local pollinators through growing the best plants for them in your garden.

TYPES OF POLLINATORS

Bees: These creatures are among the most important pollinators. They are attracted to flowers by their colors, fragrances, and nectar. Honeybees, bumblebees, and solitary bees are common bee pollinators. They have specialized body parts and behaviors that aid in pollen collection and distribution.

Butterflies: These delicate rely on flowers as a source of nectar, and while feeding, they inadvertently transfer pollen from one flower to another. Planting nectar-rich flowers and providing host plants for butterfly larvae can attract these beautiful pollinators.

Birds & Bats: Hummingbirds, sunbirds, and nectar-feeding bats have long beaks or tongues that allow them to reach deep into flowers to access nectar. They often visit flowers with tubular shapes and brightly colored petals.

Other Pollinators: This includes beetles, flies, wasps, and even some mammals like rodents. These lesser-known pollinators contribute significantly to pollination, especially in specific plant species and habitats.

CREATE A POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY GARDEN

Selecting the Right Plants:

Choose a variety of native and nativar plants that provide nectar and pollen throughout the seasons. Planting a diverse range of species ensures a continuous food source for pollinators. Come see our Green Team members if you are not sure what pollinator plants will work best for you in your garden.

Providing Habitats:

Create habitats that offer shelter, nesting sites, and overwintering spots for pollinators. Install birdhouses, bee hotels, and butterfly houses. Leave some areas of your garden untidy with leaf litter and dead wood, as they provide nesting opportunities for pollinators. You can find all kinds of habitats in our Garden Pharmacy at our year-round locations.

Sustainable Gardening Practices:

Opt for organic and natural alternatives to protect pollinators from harmful chemicals on the plants they feed from and nest on. This includes pest and disease solutions like our Bee-Safe Insecticide and Fungicide.

Water Sources:

Provide a water source, such as a shallow dish with stones or pebbles, for pollinators to drink from. This is something you can DIY! Be sure to change the water regularly to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes.

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