



# Pollination

## Objectives

Students can explain pollination and identify the different ways that plants are pollinated.

## Background

Plants rely on “pollination” to reproduce. Pollination is when an insect or animal transfers pollen between two of the same plants which allows a plant to reproduce more plants like itself (i.e. the same species). Pollen is made by plants and when pollinators are foraging the plants for food (nectar, fruit, or seeds) the pollen sticks to them and travels to other plants. There are many different ways pollination is achieved. Bees are the most well known example of a pollinator, but did you know that butterflies, birds, flies, beetles, and small animals all play a role in pollinating plants? Even bats and moths are pollinators! Pollinators are the reason we have fruit and vegetables and without them, we would lose nutritious food that we require to live.

Plants attract pollinators in different ways which is why there are so many different pollinators. The shape, size, smell and color of a plant’s flower are what get the attention of a pollinator and it can be fun to try to match up which plant pairs with which pollinator!

## Activity

- 1) Introduce pollination and show examples of pollinators. Use page 2 to guide your discussion on the flower shape and size that attracts different pollinators. You can also use our lesson ‘Plant Parts for 3-5’ to go over the parts of a plant before discussing flowers.
- 2) Have the students use art supplies and paper to create a plant and its pollinator. This is a chance for students to be creative and hands on but they should use some guidelines to reinforce what they learned from your introduction:
  - What shape does the flower of your plant have?
  - Is your pollinator the right shape and size to reach the flower?
  - Does the color of the flower attract your pollinator?
  - Does it use scent instead of color?
- 3) Have your students share their plant/pollinator pair with the class and describe why they go together.

## Optional

- 4) Take your students outside (or to the window if it’s a rainy day) and see if they can spot a flower or a pollinator! What color is the flower, can you smell a scent from the flower, and what shape and size is it? If you don’t have access to an outdoor space or you’re doing this during the winter, pull up pictures of flowers and pollinators on your phone or a tablet to practice some more!

### Age Group

Grades 3-5

### Duration

30 Minutes

### Materials Needed

Art Supplies

Paper

### Location

Indoor

### Grade Standards

3 = Ecosystems;  
Structures and  
Functions of Living  
Organisms

4 = Ecosystems

5 = Ecosystems,  
Structures and  
Functions of Living  
Organisms

# Plants and Their Pollinators



Bees are one of the most commonly known pollinators and are attracted to the color of a plant's flower. They can see color better than we can and use their sight to find colorful flowers that are big enough for them to land on or with an opening they can wiggle into. They have short mouth parts so they need flowers that they can land on or climb into.

Butterflies are attracted by the color and smell of a flower like bees. They like to land on clusters of flowers that have plenty of space to sit. Since butterflies have a long tongue, they are attracted to plants that hide nectar, a sugary liquid produced by plants, deep inside of flowers.



Plants that attract birds like hummingbirds have flowers that require a long beak to get to and can be small since the bird doesn't need to land on the plant to reach the flower. They use color and scent to attract these pollinators because it means food to them!