

Pollinator Garden

Located in the northwest corner of Capen Garden, the Pollinator Garden is pulsating with activity as plants and pollinators interact. This partnership, whereby insects acquire nectar while transferring pollen from flower to flower, is crucial for plant reproduction and beneficial to pollinators in search of food, shelter, nest-building materials, and mates. As a part of the Smith College Botanic Garden's mission, this garden provides a place for horticultural display as well as education.

Currently, there is a global decline in pollinators of all kinds and many species are threatened with extinction.

Contributing environmental challenges include:

- ◆ habitat fragmentation or destruction
- ◆ toxins such as pesticides
- ◆ pests and diseases
- ◆ climate change

The introduction of non-native and invasive plant species also directly impacts pollinator populations. These plants may displace native plants in the landscape. Some native insects prefer to forage on native plant species over



introduced plants. When fewer native plants are available, certain pollinator populations may also decline.

Composed of plants that provide habitat year-round, this garden supports diverse pollinator populations.

How to Start your own Pollinator Garden

There are many ways to start your own pollinator garden that you and your pollinator friends will enjoy. Many flowering plants will beautify your garden while providing critical resources for pollinators. Some resources you can use to get started on your garden include:



www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/gardening.shtml

Easy steps to create a pollinator-friendly garden

<http://www.pollinator.org/guides>

Pollinator planting guides based on your region.

plants.usda.gov/pollinators/Native_Pollinators.pdf

Information about specific pollinators and their habitat requirements

millionpollinatorgardens.org/

Information on how to get involved in the pollinator

garden movement



Pollinator Garden at Capen Garden

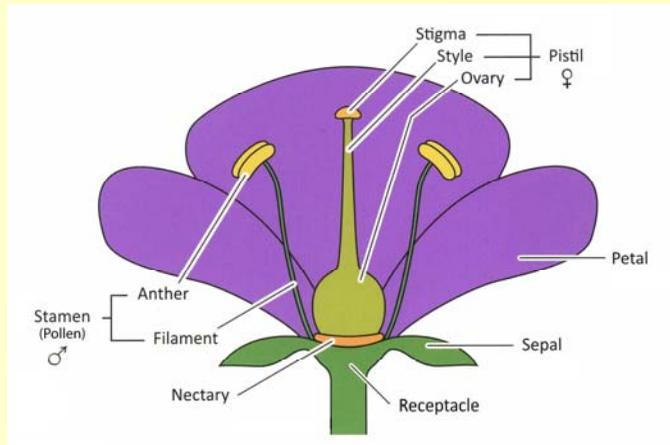


The Botanic Garden of Smith College

www.smith.edu/garden

What is Pollination?

Pollination is the transfer of pollen grains from the anther (male part) of a flower to the receptive surface of the stigma (female part) of a flower of the same species. Pollen can be transferred by wind and water or by animals that visit the flowers. The transferring of pollen is the first step in the reproductive cycle that ultimately leads to the development fruit and seeds within the fruit.



Who are the Pollinators?

Pollinators are animals that unintentionally, or sometimes intentionally (human-mediated pollination), transfer pollen from one flower to another. Examples of pollinators include bees, butterflies, wasps, beetles, ants, flies, hummingbirds, and bats. Most pollinator species are attracted by the pollen or nectar in the flower. In their quest to find nutritious nectar or protein-rich pollen, pollinators brush against stamens in a flower, picking up pollen. Arriving at the next flower, they deposit the pollen on a stigma there.

Why Support Pollinators?

Pollinators are an integral part of our environment and are essential components of the world's ecosystems. Nearly 75% of the 250,000 flowering plant species require animal pollinators for the production of seeds, which will become the next generation of plants. Pollinators, especially bees, are responsible for about 35% of the world's crop production, and it is estimated that one out of every three bites of food we eat depends on pollinators.



How Can You Help Pollinators?

By planting your own pollinator-friendly garden, you can provide a habitat that supports and protects pollinators and their plants. Other ways to help include supporting local farmers by buying organically produced foods, joining movements such as the Pollinator Partnership, or spreading the word about the importance of pollinators to friends, family, the community, and community leaders.



Features of the Pollinator Garden



The Pollinator Garden provides a place for discovery. While pollinators visit flowers, you can observe this remarkable activity.

You are invited to use

the provided magnifying glasses to observe pollinators and their flowers more closely. On the ground you will

see creeping thyme,

which produces

delicate, fragrant

flowers that attract

pollinators such as

bees. Observe insects



enjoying a cool drink in the shallow bird bath or find

places where pollinators have found shelter to rest and

recharge. The sights are endless and you will be able to

enjoy the pollinator garden throughout the seasons as

plants have been selected to provide food and shelter

for pollinators year round.

