

What YOU can do to Protect Pollination Services

Pollination services depend on stable, intact habitats and ecological systems that support pollinators. Some of the key strategies to maintain pollination services include restoring degraded pollinator habitats, protecting existing ones from sprawl and other development pressures, using pollinator-friendly agricultural practices such as targeted (rather than broad-spectrum) pesticide use, and expanding buffer strips. In addition, suitable habitat corridors should be identified and preserved to protect migratory pollinators.

While pollination is of global importance, there are several easy things *you* can do in your community—and even in your own backyard—to help protect pollinators and sustain pollination services.

➤ ***Create your own pollinator-friendly garden.***

One of the easiest (and most rewarding) ways to provide suitable habitat for pollinators is to create a garden in your own yard using a wide variety of native flowering plants. If you don't have the space for a garden, pollinator-friendly plants can be planted in window boxes or other containers. To learn more about the native flowering plants in your community, contact:

- A local garden shop or nursery
- Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
(512) 292-4200, <http://www.wildflower.org>
The Wildflower Center website contains detailed lists of native flowering plants and links to local native plant societies throughout the United States.

For useful information on how to improve pollinator and other wildlife habitats in your yard, contact:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture's Backyard Conservation Program
1 (888) LANDCARE, <http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/CCS/Backyard.html>
- National Wildlife Federation's Habitat Program.
(703) 790-4000, <http://www.nwf.org/habitats/index.html>
This website includes tips for attracting bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies.

➤ ***Encourage the planting of native flowers in open spaces.***

Backyards are not the only place where you can restore and protect pollinator habitats. Through community or school gardening programs, you can encourage the planting of native flowers in local spaces such as parks, playgrounds, roadways, and around public buildings.

For more information, contact the resources listed above. In addition to backyard conservation, the National Wildlife Federation's Habitat Program provides resources for developing pollinator-friendly habitats in the schoolyard, workplace, or community.

➤ ***Build artificial shelters for pollinators.***

The key to developing a successful pollinator habitat is to provide food, water, *and shelter*. Complement your pollinator-friendly garden with artificial shelters such as bird nests, bee boards, and bat houses. For more information about how to build shelters, contact:

- National Wildlife Federation's Habitat Program (see above).
- U.S. Department of Agriculture's Backyard Conservation Program (see above).
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Bird Pamphlets
<http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/pamphlet/pamphlets.html>
- Bat Conservation International.
(512) 327-9721, <http://www.batcon.org/bhra/index.html>

➤ ***Reduce the level of pesticides in and around your home.***

Pesticides for use on lawns, gardens, or indoor invaders are found in most homes. Yet, there are many ways to ward off unwanted insects without endangering pollinators. To learn more, contact:

- Pesticide Action Network's Pesticide Advisor
(415) 981-1771, <http://www.panna.org/panna/resources/advisor.html>
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Environmental Contaminants
(703) 358-2148, <http://www.fws.gov/%7Er9dec/issues/pollinators.cfm>

➤ ***Support agricultural enterprises with pollinator-friendly practices.***

Farmers who use pollinator-friendly practices, such as avoiding or minimizing pesticide use, may be at an economic disadvantage compared to their competitors. Reward sound environmental efforts by supporting these farms. For more information:

- Contact your local Cooperative Extension office
- Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs' "GreenPeople" Database
(310) 399-9355, <http://www.greenpeople.org>
This is a large online database for locating environmentally sound farm products.

Other helpful online education or action resources

- ***The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Forgotten Pollinators Campaign:*** Information on threatened and endangered pollinators, migratory pollinators, the importance of pollinators to agriculture, and some good website links. <http://www.desertmuseum.org/fp>
- ***USDA-ARS Bee Biology and Systematics Lab:*** Focuses primarily on pollinator research with bees, and their importance to agriculture. <http://www.LoganBeeLab.usu.edu>
- ***Plant Conservation Alliance:*** An alliance of government agencies and non-governmental groups that researches and provides information on native plant extinction and habitat restoration. <http://www.nps.gov/plants>