



# Pollination Fast Facts

## What is pollination?

Pollination is a vital stage in the life cycle of all flowering plants. When pollen is moved within a flower or carried from one flower to another of the same species it leads to fertilization. This transfer of pollen is necessary for healthy and productive native & agricultural ecosystems.



- About 75% of all flowering plant species need the help of animals to move their heavy pollen grains from plant to plant for fertilization.
- About 1,000 of all pollinators are vertebrates such as birds, bats, and small mammals.
- Most pollinators (about 200,000 species) are beneficial insects such as flies, beetles, wasps, ants, butterflies, moths, and bees.

## Why are pollinators important?

Pollinators are often keystone species, meaning that they are critical to an ecosystem. The work of pollinators ensures full harvests of crops and contributes to healthy plants everywhere.

- An estimated 1/3 of all foods and beverages is delivered by pollinators.
- In the U.S., pollination produces nearly \$20 billion worth of products annually.



## How you can help.

- **Reduce your impact.** Reduce or eliminate your pesticide use, increase green spaces, and minimize urbanization. Pollution and climate change affect pollinators, too!
- **Plant for pollinators.** Create pollinator-friendly habitat with native flowering plants that supply pollinators with nectar, pollen, and homes. For information on what to plant in your area, download a free eco-regional guide online at [www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org).
- **Tell a friend.** Educate your neighbors, schools, and community groups about the importance of pollinators. Host a dinner, a pollinated food cook-off or other event and invite your friends.
- **Join the Pollinator Partnership** Go to [www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org) and click on “Get Involved.” Be part of a growing community of pollinator supporters.

# Pollination Activity

How does pollination happen? Let's find out!

## Materials and Supplies:

small candy pieces (Bit-O-Honey work well)

bowl

cheese puffs

paper towel

marker

## Directions:

1. Using a marker, draw flowers on a paper towel.
2. Place the candy in the bowl.
3. Fill the bowl with cheese puffs.
4. Using your hand, dig through the cheese puffs to get a piece of candy.
5. Wipe your hand on the paper towel. Repeat steps four and five until all of the candy is gone.
6. How do the bowl, candy, cheese puffs, cheese powder, and paper towel represent parts of the pollination process? Even your hand plays a role.



Learn more about pollen in Annette's books.

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