

What is pollination?

When a pollen grain moves from the anther (male part) of a flower to the stigma (female part), pollination happens. This is the first step in a process that produces seeds, fruits and the next generation of plants.

Pollinators need you.

You need pollinators.

What are pollinators? Who are our pollinators?

In the UK many different species of insects act as pollinators as they move from spot to spot. These include 250 species of native bee, but also many other insects including butterflies, moths, flies, beetles and wasps. They visit flowers to drink nectar or feed off pollen and transport pollen grains.

- Pollinators are responsible for bringing us one out of every three bites of food.
- Pollinators sustain our ecosystem and produce our natural resources by helping plants reproduce.
- Without pollinators agricultural economies, our food supply, and surrounding landscapes would collapse.
- 75% - 95% of all flowering plants on the earth need pollinators.
- local native pollinators prefer local native plants



Red Admiral

What's going wrong? Why is it going wrong?

Pollinator populations are changing. Many populations are in decline.

The reasons?

- Loss of feeding and nesting habitats: 97% of our grasslands and wildflower-rich meadows, the best habitat for many of our wild bees, have disappeared since 1945
- The use of toxic neonicotinoid pesticides: just four-billionth of a gram is a lethal dose to a honeybee, meaning one teaspoonful of neonics is enough to give a lethal dose to one and a quarter billion bees.
- Climate change
- Disease
- Pollution
- Invasive non-native plant and animal species



Thick Legged Flower Beetle



Red Mason Bee

What can we do?

- Use no pesticides! Neonics are neurotoxins, synthetic relatives of nicotine. They attack the brain of the insect, causing paralysis and death, and at lower doses interfere with navigation, disease resistance and learning.
- Spread the word about the importance of pollinators
- Make room for pollinators on your land: home gardens, farms, schools, hospitals, corporate landscapes, public spaces
- Create bee-friendly spaces
- Home owners, local governments, national governments and private industry need to make the effort
- Bees cannot tell if a plant contains neonics. Plants labelled 'bee-friendly' are just as likely to have been treated as other flowers. Find out from your plant suppliers or garden centres if they know whether neonicotinoids have been used on their plants. They need to ask their suppliers.



Bumble Bee



Marmalade Hover Fly

Without bees and other pollinators, many of our fruits and vegetables would be under threat. It would cost the UK farming industry at least £1.8 billion each year to pollinate these crops by hand, pushing up food prices.

Friends of the Earth's Bee Cause campaign persuaded the government to adopt a Bee Action Plan (the National Pollinator Strategy) to reverse the decline of bees. It was launched in November 2014. Go to the Friends of the Earth website to find out loads more about pollinators

<https://www.foe.co.uk/page/the-bee-cause-act>

