

OUR POLLINATOR FRIENDS

Pollinators are in danger!

Pollinating insects are real heroes: life on Earth would be impossible without their work because they essentially contribute to the natural processes related with plant life. We wouldn't have forests, parks, gardens and indoor plants without them and our food supply would be in danger as well. Unfortunately, because of the decline of their habitats, the use of insecticides and because of the climate change the number of these important insects is rapidly decreasing. Now it's time to help them!

What can You do for the pollinators?

- **Grow plants that attract pollinators** – even on your balcony!
- **When making a gift, go for pollinator-friendly pot flowers instead of cut flowers!**
- **Take out the lawnmower less often** – let the grass grow in your garden with wildflower and weedy patches!
- **Make an insect hotel, insect-bath** – you will see, not only the little pollinators but birds will love it too!

1.

SCARCE SWALLOWTAIL (*Iphiclides podalirius*)

It's one of our biggest butterflies. They love to search the flowers for some fine nectar on bright days. Pollen sticks to their beating wings which they carry on to other flowers.

STRIATED SHIELDBUG (*Graphosoma lineatum*)

Not all bugs are useless – a couple of these striped shield bugs can also be easily caught as they sunbathe in the flower from where, of course, pollen is carried on.

3.

CONVOLVULUS HAWK MOTH (*Agrius convolvuli*)

At dusk it hovers above tubular flowers and sucks nectar with its outstretched haustellum. Just like migratory birds this species spends the winter in North-Africa.

1. COMMON LILAC (*Syringa vulgaris*)

The fragrant flowers attract insects and butterflies like a magnet.

2. ELDER (*Sambucus nigra*)

Its flower is excellent as a flavour in lemonade and can also be baked into butter. Its berries can be mixed with jams and they give a deep colour to red wines.

3. SNOWBERRY (*Symphoricarpos albus*)

Only few beneficial insects can resist the flowers of this hardy shrub. Its fruits are food for thrushes in winter time.

4. SWEET ALYSSUM (*Lobularia maritima*)

A honey-scented, insect attractant flower that can also be planted in balcony boxes.

5.

RED MASON BEE (*Osmia rufa*)

Mason bees lay their eggs (with food) in natural or bored holes. Mud plugs in your insect hotel will indicate when the cradle is full.

5. COMMON DANDELION (*Taraxacum officinale*)

It's time to change perspective: let it grow wherever it is, rather than weeding it out. Beside its beauty it produces a lot of pollen and nectar.

HONEYBEE (*Apis mellifera*)

She is responsible for the honey, beeswax, royal jelly, her pollinating activity is indeed a special charity. For two pounds of honey they fly as much as if they were flying around the Earth.

2.

LARGE EARTH BUMBLEBEE (*Bombus terrestris*)

The friendly and furry bumblebees emerge by early spring. First they exercise a little to warm up: they vibrate their wings. The heat is then retained by their fur while they have a snack in the flowers.

HUMMINGBIRD HAWK-MOTH (*Macroglossum stellatarum*)

Like a hummingbird, it is hovering in the sun with lightning-fast wing-strokes while it is sipping the nectar of flowers. Sometimes it changes from flower to flower in a second.

MARMALADE HOVERFLY (*Episyrphus balteatus*)

Of many types of pollinating fly species the marmalade hoverfly is able to hang in one place in the air (hovering). With their wasp-like yellow and black pattern they alert predators.

4.

COMMON SOLDIER BEETLE (*Cantharis fusca*)

Many large beetles prefer to just gorge the flowers but even they may carry pollen with them. The smaller ones, like the fast-flying, soft-bodied leatherwings are, however, especially important pollinators.

