



POLLINATORS

Presented to GCMG Class #36: Kathy Carroll
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What is a Pollinator?

- A pollinator is an animal that moves pollen from the male stamen of a flower to the female stigma of a flower. This helps to bring about fertilization of the ovules in the flower by the male gametes from the pollen grains.
- Pollination is a crucial event in a plants life - essential for production of seed and future generations of the plant
- Some plants depend on wind or water for pollen transplant but most rely on animals, mostly insects.

Pollinator Examples

- Texas Pollinators include bats, bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, moths, wasps, flies, and beetles.
- Bees are considered *King Pollinators*- life dedicated to pollination, can collect a lot and move quickly
- Largest Pollinator – black and white ruffed lemur – endangered
- Smallest Pollinator – *Perdita minima* bee – less than 2mm
- There are approx 20,000 bee species world wide, 4,000 native to United States, 800 different species in Texas

What happens if we lose Pollinators

- According to Albert Einstein; if the bee disappeared from the surface of the earth, humanity would only survive 4 years.
- Cornell University Study determined 14 billion dollars worth of seeds crops in the United States are pollinated by bees
- Loss of nutritional benefits of berries, apples, almonds, cucumbers, peppers and seeds

Pollinator Populations are declining

- Loss of Habitat – urbanization
- Introduction of invasive species
- Pesticides
- Disease
- Drought

How can we help

- PLANT NATIVES
- AVOID INVASIVE SPECIES
- DON'T KILL THE BEES
- Provide housing – tree logs, bare dirt, leave perennial stems through the winter
- AVOID PESTICIDES- organic gardening
- Plant butterfly host and larval plants
- Plant in groups
- Choose variety of plants

Resources

- Pollinators of Native Plants by Heather Horn
- University of Texas at Austin Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Native Texas Plants by Sally Wasowski and Andy Wasowski
- Howard Garrett's Plants for Texas