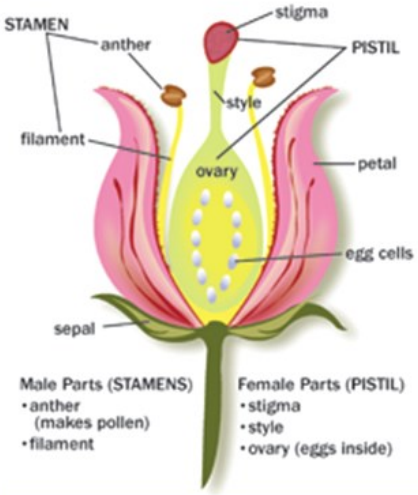
Utah Pollinator Habitat Program

POLLINATORS 101

Basic facts to help YOU support Utah's pollinators in need

What is pollination?

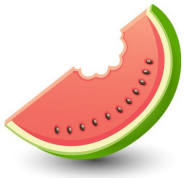


Pollination occurs when a pollen grain moves from the **anther** (male part) of a flower to the **stigma** (female part), and is necessary to produce seeds, fruits, and the next generation of plants. At least 80% of all flowering plants rely on animal pollinators to move pollen between flowers, and more than 75% of staple crop plants that feed humans are animal-pollinated.

Who are the pollinators?

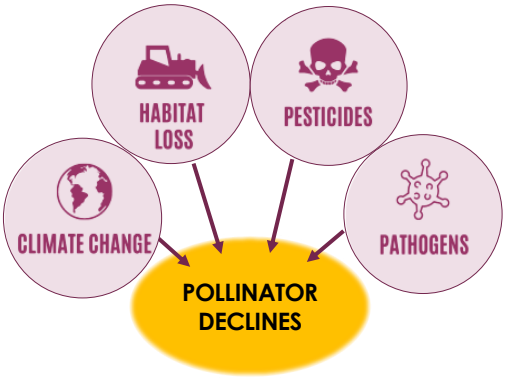
Animals that visit flowers—birds, bats, moths, flies, butterflies, beetles, and wasps—can be pollinators, but the world's primary pollinators are **bees**. Pollinators visit flowers for food like nectar and pollen, or to collect resins and scented oils, and transport pollen grains as they move from one spot to the next. They tend to have fuzzy bodies, where pollen grains can stick to hairs or feathers and are then deposited on other flowers.

Why are pollinators important?



Pollinators assist the pollination of more than 1,200 crops—roughly one of every three bites of food is produced through animal pollination. They support ecosystems and produce our natural resources by helping plants reproduce and maintain healthy, diverse communities. Pollinators also enhance overall biodiversity, help minimize pest populations, protect soil and water quality, and increase soil carbon storage.

Pollinators are at risk



Pollinator populations are shrinking worldwide—at least 42% of insect pollinators face possible extinction. Threats include habitat destruction, pesticide use, climate change, and the spread of parasites and disease. The health of wild and managed pollinators suffers as the landscape is altered and floral abundance and diversity decreases. As pollinators disappear, wild plants and crop resources that depend on pollination are affected, which leads to further environmental degradation.

Pollinators need habitat

While different pollinators have specific needs to support each stage of their life cycle, **they all need high-quality natural habitat** that provides an abundance of flowers, shelter and nesting sites, and protection from pesticides. This is where advocates like you can help — by making changes to your own landscape, as well as teaching others and spreading the word to encourage pollinator-friendly practices in your community!

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How YOU Can Help Utah's Pollinators

- **Provide diverse native flowering plants with blooming times in spring, summer, and fall.** Add other vegetation to provide shelter, roosting, and perching sites for wildlife.

- **Designate undisturbed nesting areas like bare ground, old wood, and brush piles.** Limit mowing in these areas, and mow at the highest setting to avoid disturbing nesting bees.

- **Minimize or eliminate pesticide use wherever possible.** Consider alternatives such as soap, vinegar, and providing habitat for beneficial insects and other predators of pests.

- **Grow other native plants that provide food for caterpillars.** Keeping your garden on the menu for native insects and their larvae helps feed other wildlife, too!

- **Apply for your free pollinator habitat kits from the Utah Pollinator Habitat Program!** See below for details.

  Application Period: May 1—June 19, 2023

The **Utah Pollinator Habitat Program** aims to help secure the future of Utah's pollinators by expanding access to native, pollinator-friendly plants and providing guidance for landscaping with native habitat. We contract with local nurseries to grow high-quality, native plants for habitat kits and seed packets to award recipients.

This program has been made possible with funding through UT HB 224: Pollinator Amendments (2021)

To Apply: Visit our program website **Bit.ly/Utah-Pollinator** for more information, questions, and to start the application process

Program Contacts:

Jim Bowcutt | jdbowcutt@utah.gov | 435-232-4017

Mindy Wheeler | mindywheeler@utah.gov | 385-235-1062