

## Why do pollinators need our support?

Worldwide, pollinators are under threat. This is because, as we urbanise our environments:

- we remove their natural habitat,
- we create 'flowerless landscapes' when we substitute concrete and grass for flowering trees and shrubs,
- our agricultural practices, such as monoculture, remove the variety of floral resources that pollinators need for good health and
- there is widespread use of pesticides which kill beneficial insects as well as pests.

The future of our pollinators is looking bleak. By simply raising the awareness of the importance of pollinators in our ecosystem, we may have a chance of improving their future. We can also improve their future by:

- planting pollinator-attracting plants, which provide food to fuel them,
- ensure they have places to nest and rear offspring by conserving their natural habitat,
- providing additional habitat and
- reducing or ceasing pesticides use.

## Why are pollinators important?

All organisms are driven to reproduce. Because plants are not mobile, they require animal vectors to aid this process. Through pollination (the transfer of pollen to the female flower-parts), ovules are fertilised and seeds develop. Over 75% of flowering plants rely on animals for pollination. Pollination is the driving force behind plant reproduction. This, in turn, enhances biodiversity which promotes ecological stability.

## Who are our pollinators?

The most effective and well known pollinators are bees, because they actively collect pollen from flowers to feed their off-spring. As they do this they transfer thousands of pollen grains between flowers. There are, however, many thousands of other animals that 'incidentally' transfer pollen as they drink nectar from flowers. These include insects such as beetles, flies, butterflies, ants, wasps, moths, as well as small animals such as birds, bats and marsupials.



Most of the information here is taken directly from

Halcroft, M. T. and M. Batley (2014). The Bee Hotel ID Guide. [Bee Aware of Your Native Bees](http://www.beesbusiness.com.au), a Community Based Project. Sydney, Australia, Office of Sustainability, University of Western Sydney. Available at <http://beesbusiness.com.au/article.html>