

What Are Pollinators? Why Are They Important?

A pollinator is an insect or animal that moves pollen within or to another flower, fertilizing the plant. There are about 200,000 species of pollinators, including bees, butterflies, wasps, beetles, birds and bats.

Many types of plants, including vegetable and fruit crops, require pollination to bear fruit. Recent declines in pollinator populations – and bees in particular – have raised concerns about the future of food supplies worldwide.



What Is the President's National Strategy on Pollinators?

In May 2015, the White House released the *National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators*. The strategy recognizes the importance of expanding federal efforts and outlines a comprehensive approach to reverse pollinator losses and help restore populations to healthy levels. It has direct implications for EPA staff, state agencies, responsible parties and contractors during the Superfund process. Major priorities include:

1. Encouraging pollinator friendly habitat as part of Superfund site cleanup and reuse activities.
2. Evaluating chemical-specific risks to pollinator species and avoiding pesticides in sensitive pollinator habitats.
3. Facilitating public-private partnerships to develop localized plans, achieve remediation goals and expand awareness about pollinators.

For more information on EPA's Pollinator Protection Plan for the National Strategy, visit: [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/Pollinator Health Strategy 2015.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/Pollinator%20Health%20Strategy%202015.pdf)



Wildflower Meadows at the Davis Timber Company Superfund Site

This 30-acre area in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, was once a timber processing and treatment facility. In 2012, 15 acres were reseeded with native plants and wildflowers.

Today, the wildflower meadows provide several benefits. They:

- Support the health of pollinators, providing natural habitat where pollinators can thrive.
- Increase the land's natural beauty and appeal to visitors on the site's walking trail.
- Enhance the remedy by requiring less mowing and erosion control.

Incorporating Pollinator Protection into Superfund Cleanup

When: Remedial investigations and feasibility studies, the remedial design process and five-year reviews are excellent windows of opportunity.

How: Examples of ways to integrate pollinator protection into cleanup plans include:

- Convert capped areas to low-maintenance, pollinator-friendly habitat.
- Integrate pollinator habitat as part of stream restoration projects.
- Consider integrated pest management with ecological reuse.
- Allow beehives on site, partnering with local beekeepers.

Why: Focusing on pollinator protection during the Superfund process can:

- Decrease site management and maintenance costs.
- Beautify communities and strengthen local relationships.
- Increase food security.

How Does EPA Highlight Pollinator Protection Efforts?

EPA is creating fact sheets and posters featuring sites where pollinator protection efforts have been successful. The audience for these materials is communities and EPA staff. If you would like to share pollinator protection highlights from your site for these materials, please provide the information below to EPA Region 4's Pollinator Coordinator:

- Basic site description (location, history, cleanup and reuse status, etc.)
- Description of the area planted for pollinators (size, plants installed, pollinators supported)
- Summary of any related activities and outcomes

Where Can I Learn More About Pollinator Protection?

- National Strategy to Promote Pollinator Health Appendices: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/Pollinator-Strategy-Appendices-2015.pdf>
- Native Plant Information Network Database: <http://www.wildflower.org/plants>
- Pollinator Partnership Ecoregion Planting Guide: <http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm>
- Native Plant Nursery Directory: <http://www.plantnative.org>
- EPA Information on Protecting Bees and Other Pollinators from Pesticides: <http://www2.epa.gov/pollinator-protection>

EPA Region 4 Native Plant Resources

State	Resources
Alabama	The Alabama Plant Atlas: http://www.floraofalabama.org
Florida	Florida Native Plant Society – Native Plants for Your Area: http://www.fnps.org/plants
Georgia	Georgia Native Plant Society – Useful Links: http://gnps.org/resources-research/useful-links
Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee	Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center – Native Plant Database: http://www.wildflower.org/plants
North Carolina	North Carolina Native Plant Society: http://www.ncwildflower.org/native_plants/recommendations
South Carolina	The South Carolina Native Plant Society – Links: http://scnps.org/education/links

Pollinator Prairie at the Chemical Commodities, Inc. Superfund Site

EPA, potentially responsible parties and organizations such as the Pollinator Partnership, Wildlife Habitat Council and Monarch Joint Venture worked together at this former chemical brokerage facility in Olathe, Kansas to develop a walk-through educational natural habitat for Monarch butterflies.

The site now features:

- Habitat for pollinators such as birds, bees and butterflies.
- A tagging station for Monarch butterflies.
- Informational kiosks along a walking trail.

In 2012, a ribbon-cutting ceremony opened the site as the “Pollinator Prairie”.



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