



Hi folks! I'm Lily, the Pacific chorus frog, and I help the City of Eugene teach people about stormwater in our community.

Some of my wildlife friends have important jobs that help plants to grow and produce fruit and seeds.

Keeping your yard pesticide-free helps them and keeps our water cleaner too!

Teachers:

Find us on Facebook at Eugene's Teaching Connection. Share ideas, request SPLASH materials and learn about upcoming events. Let's be friends!



What do cotton, chocolate and cabbage have in common? They all need pollinating friends!

Worldwide, roughly 1,000 plants grown for food, beverages, fibers, spices and medicines need animal assistants to produce products that we use every day. One third of our food crops rely on these animals that carry pollen, called pollinators.

A sample of foods that need the help of pollinators includes apples, blueberries, chocolate, melons, peaches, potatoes, pumpkins, vanilla, and almonds. Bumblebees are the best pollinators for tomatoes.

Pollen is the dusty powder that plants produce while they are in bloom (and that makes many people sneeze in the spring and summer months). Flowers share pollen to fertilize blooms, which turn into seeds and fruits that help the plants reproduce. For some plants, pollen may be carried by the wind, but scientists have learned that nearly 80 percent of the world's plants need insects, birds and other animals to visit their flowers and carry pollen on their noses, legs and bodies from blossom to blossom.

Bees, Birds, Beetles and Bats...

All over the world, scientists are noticing that many pollinator animals are becoming more rare, and the plants that depend on them are becoming less healthy. Fewer natural places to live, diseases and toxic chemicals all contribute to problems for pollinators.

The animals that carry pollen, including bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, can become sick or even die when they are exposed to the chemicals some people use in yards to kill bugs or weeds that they don't like. These chemicals are called pesticides. Many of these products have detailed warnings on their labels, reminding people not to use them when it is windy or when plants are blooming. They must also be used carefully so they don't end up in our rivers and streams. Many people don't realize that when they use these sprays, they are harming the helpful insects and birds that visit our yards.

You can help!

Many of the things you can do to help the pollinators are good for the rest of the environment too. These include:

- Be kind to pollinators: Look but don't touch! Butterflies and bees are delicate, and prefer that you watch quietly while they are near. They also enjoy a drink of fresh water from a birdbath or saucer.
- Don't use pesticides: encourage your family to skip spraying pesticides in your yard. It is healthier for everyone! If bugs or weeds are really a problem, remind your family to use as little pesticide as possible and use it very carefully.
- Plant a pollinator-friendly garden: Have a special place in your yard with lots of flowers where you can watch pollinators at work. Teach your family and friends about the important job they do.

For more information about the importance of pollinators in our environment, visit the Pollinator Partnership at www.pollinator.org



Red-bellied lemur



Scarab beetle



Tiger swallowtail butterfly

The list of animals that assist with pollination includes bees, bats, flies, hummingbirds, beetles, moths, lemurs and geckos. If you are a teacher and would like an illustrated poster of some of the world's pollinators for your classroom, call us at 541-682-8482.



Day gecko