

Name: _____ Date: _____ Hour: _____

Lesson 6 Let's Take a Pollinator Safari!

Introduction

There are lots of different kinds of insects (and some vertebrates – like hummingbirds!) that pollinate flowers. Most people don't realize that these pollinators are essential for our very survival. During the growing season, blossoms and blooms, if pollinated, develop into seeds and fruits, but most of them can't do it without the help of pollinators. These tiny animals visit flowers to feed on their nectar or pollen. As they move from flower to flower they transfer pollen from flower to flower, aiding in the pollination of these flowers. Since pollinators are responsible for 1/3 of our fruits, vegetables, and nuts, our lives depend on them! **The purpose of this lab activity is to go outside and take a safari! We will take a survey of the pollinators around the school building along with the plants that are visited by those pollinators.**

Materials

The great outdoors! (a flower garden, vegetable garden, school yard, or outdoor lab)
Phone with iNaturalist app or computer
Insect identification books
Flower identification books
Lab notebook (optional)

Instructions (Work in groups of three.)

1. Locate an insect that appears to be interacting with a flower. Using iNaturalist, photograph and identify the insect by its common name. If possible, determine its genus and species name (scientific name) as well. Record this in a data table similar to Table 1.
2. Use any printed insect and flower identification guides to double-check and verify your iNaturalist results.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 above for four other types of pollinators. **You may find that members of a particular species of pollinator can sometimes be found on more than one species of plant.** Again, record your results in data Table 1.

6. After all of the groups' presentations, produce a bar graph comparing the numbers of plant species visited by each of your class identified pollinators. Label the x-axis "Number of Different Plant Species Visited."
7. Write a report summarizing your individual group results and your overall class results. Include "cleaned up" copies of the two data tables along with the bar graph of class results. Here are some questions to answer in your report:
 - a. Were there any pollinators that appear to be very specific ("picky"), that is, able to pollinate only one (or the fewest) particular plant species?
 - b. Were there any pollinators that appeared to be most versatile – able to pollinate several different species of plants?
 - c. What are some new questions that you have as a result of this study?