

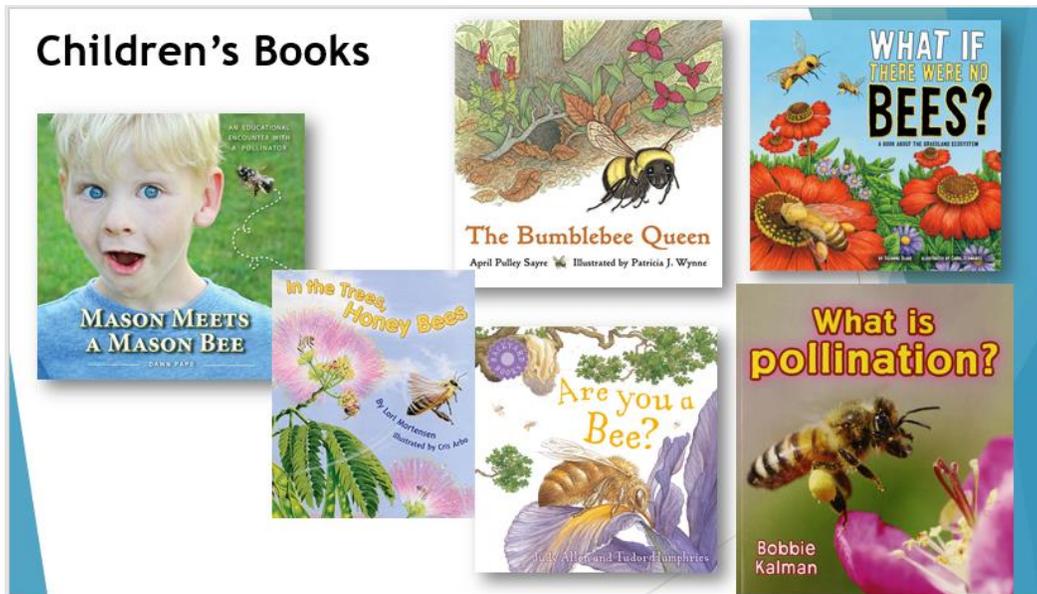
Bee and Pollinator Activities

By: Kerry Wixted

Spring is here, and the bees are busy at work collecting pollen and nectar to feed themselves and their young. This is a great time of year to learn about pollinators in your own backyard or neighborhood. Check out our [pollinator picture pack](#) to learn a little more about different types of animal pollinators. A wealth of bee identification resources can be found [here](#). You can also learn more about bumble bees [here](#).

Early Learners (preK-2nd grade)

1. Bees are insects. Sing and dance to the [Head, Thorax, Abdomen song](#). Point out the different parts are also found on bees. Show [pictures of bees](#) and try to identify the different parts you see. Grab natural materials like rocks, leaves, and sticks. Make your own “bees”.
2. Honeybees communicate with one another to disclose the locations of food. This dance is called the waggle dance. Grab someone else and see if you can do the [waggle dance](#) to help them find a “flower”.
3. Find a flower and look to see if any bees are visiting it. For older students, use our [flower and bee sheet](#) to record your observations.
4. After learning about bees, use our [bee and butterfly anatomy worksheet](#).
5. Check out the [Bee and Pollinator Activities for Kids](#).



Upper Elementary (3rd-5th)

1. Watch the brief video on [flower pollination](#).
2. See if you can match the plant to the bee who pollinates it using our [bee matching cards](#).
3. Find a flower and look to see if any bees are visiting it. Use our [flower and bee sheet](#) to record your observations. Dissect the flower to see if you can find the different parts like the petals and stamens. Here is a handy [dissection sheet](#).
4. Check out the [NEEF Pollinator Backyard Activity guide](#).
5. Glue felt to the tip of a craft stick or other handle to make a “bee body”. Rub the felt on different flowers to see how much pollen it picks up. What flowers have the most pollen?
6. After learning about flower anatomy, [design a flower](#).
7. Color a honeybee using the [Enchanted Learning sheet](#).
8. Did you know? Bees see in different light than we do. If you have a safe, outdoor place like a backyard, go outside at night with a UV light (like a blacklight) and look at flowers, fungi, lichen, and more! See which things fluoresce under the light. How do flowers look different? Some flowers have nectar guides to help bees and other pollinators find nectar. Can you see the nectar guides under the UV light?
9. View the life cycle of a honey bee with this [video](#).
10. Check out the [Sweet Virginia Hive Alive](#) program which includes lesson plans on bee anatomy and honey.

Middle School and High School (6th-12th)

1. Watch the video on [Beneficial Pollinators](#) and/or check out the [Solitary Royals video](#) to learn about solitary bees.
2. Did you know? Bees create static electricity when they fly through the air. Learn more about [Electrically Charged Bees](#) and try it out for yourself!
3. Different types of flowers attract different types of pollinators. You can look at the shape, color, and pollen of a flower to determine who generally pollinates that plant. These profiles are known as [pollinator syndromes](#). Go on a walk around the neighborhood and examine the different types of flowers you see. Record characters for the different flowers and guess who is supposed to pollinate each plant. Make a list and see if you find more plants pollinated by bees, butterflies, flies, wasps, etc.
4. Head outside and look for pollinators. Log your sightings into the [Great Sunflower Project](#) or [Bumble Bee Watch](#).
5. Play [Pollinator Jeopardy](#).
6. Grab a couple pairs of dice and print off our [Great Monarch Migration activity](#). See if you can survive the migration a monarch faces. What are some hazards that you encounter along the way? How can you help monarchs and other insects safely travel?
7. Native bees need places to raise their young. Consider [constructing and managing bee hotels](#) for wild bees.



Gardening for Pollinators

1. Make goals for yourself and start small to see what works for your site.
2. Use the [Chesapeake Bay Native Plant Center](#) to find the right plants for your site.
 - a. Some bees are pollen specialists. Learn about the plants that support these specialized species [here](#).
 - b. For a list of the butterfly species in Maryland, and the plants that support them, check out our [checklist](#).
3. Check out our [Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat](#) pages including the new [Simple School Wildlife Garden Guide](#).
4. Use the [Maryland Native Plant Society Native Plant Source guide](#) to find local nurseries and native plant sellers.
5. Check out the [Wild Acres page](#) for additional information on how to make your habitat wildlife friendly.

