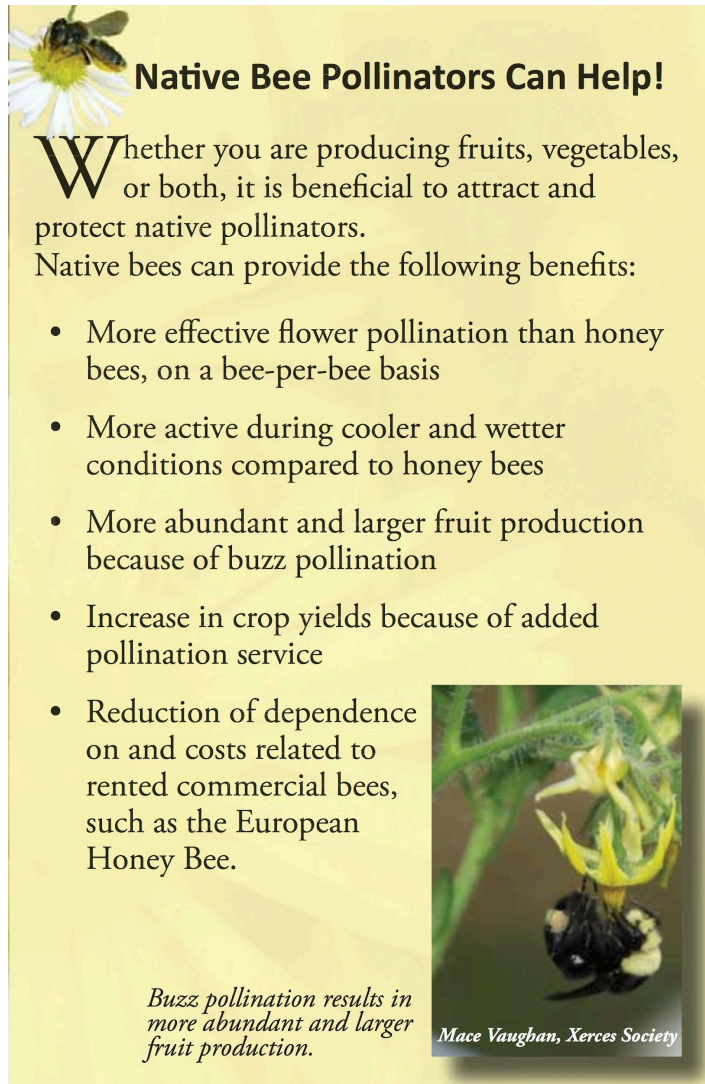


Attracting Native Pollinators to Your Farm

Native leaf-cutter bee on aster.
Courtesy of Eric Mader, Xerces Society.

The Importance of Pollinators

One out of every three mouthfuls of food and drink we consume is available because of pollinators. Although there are many animals that play a role in the pollination of our food, bees are the most important of these pollinators.



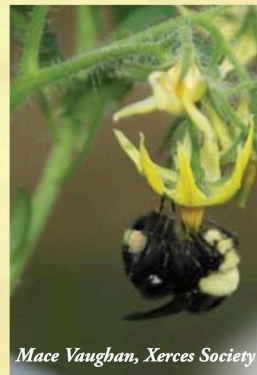
Native Bee Pollinators Can Help!

Whether you are producing fruits, vegetables, or both, it is beneficial to attract and protect native pollinators.

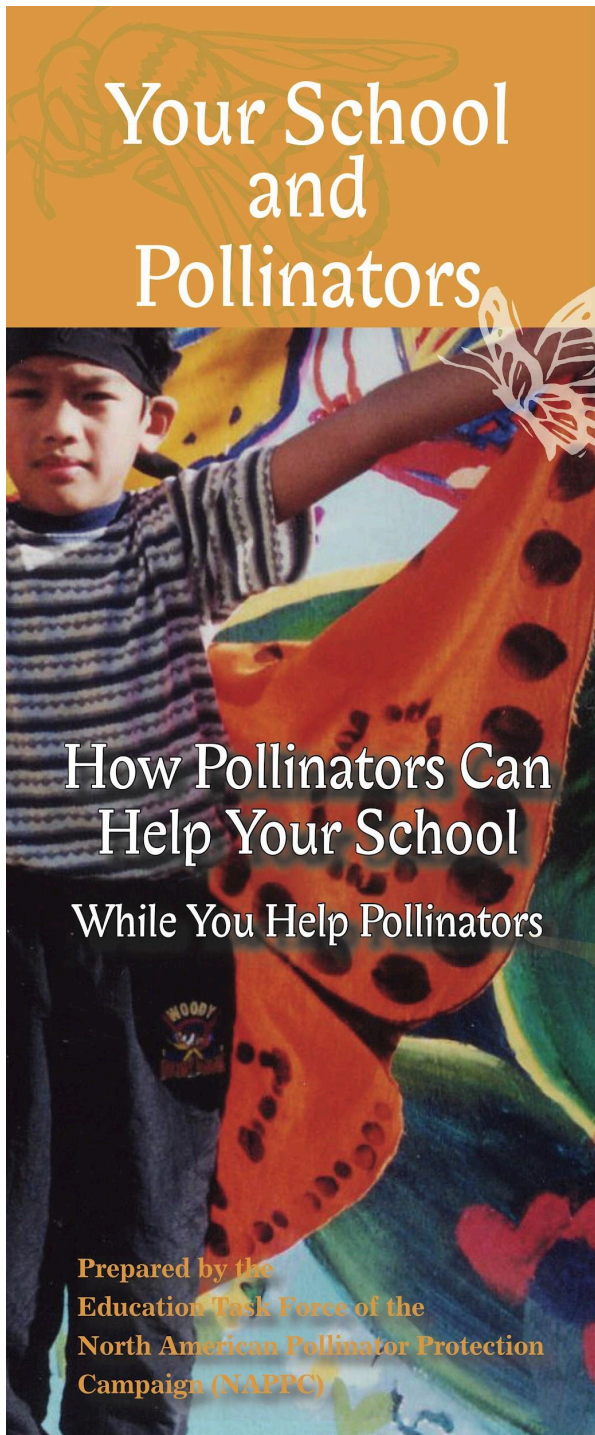
Native bees can provide the following benefits:

- More effective flower pollination than honey bees, on a bee-per-bee basis
- More active during cooler and wetter conditions compared to honey bees
- More abundant and larger fruit production because of buzz pollination
- Increase in crop yields because of added pollination service
- Reduction of dependence on and costs related to rented commercial bees, such as the European Honey Bee.

Buzz pollination results in more abundant and larger fruit production.



Mace Vaughan, Xerces Society



Why should educators and students care about pollinators?

Pollinators bring us nearly 1 of every 3 bites of food we eat and are vital in the reproduction of nearly 80% of the flowering plants on the planet. Our food, our forests, our farms and our future need good pollinator-friendly practices – and school is a great place to start.

Why does pollination matter to us?

Worldwide, roughly 1,000 of the 1,200 plant species grown for food, beverages, fibers, spices, and medicines need to be pollinated by animals in order to produce the goods on which we depend.

Foods and beverages produced with the help of pollinators include apples, blueberries, chocolate, coffee, melons, peaches, pumpkins, vanilla, and almonds, to name a few.

In the U.S., pollination by honey bees, native bees, and other insects produces \$40 billion worth of products annually.

Are pollinators in trouble?

Worldwide there is disturbing evidence that pollinating animals have suffered from loss of habitat, chemical misuse, introduced and invasive plant and animal species, and diseases and parasites.

Many pollinators are federally “listed species,” meaning that there is evidence of their disappearance in natural areas.

The U.S. has lost over 50% of its managed honey bee colonies over the past 20 years.

A lack of research has hindered our knowledge about the status of pollinators.

Whenever we look closely at pollinator populations, we see problems – the monarch butterfly migration across North America is showing extremely low overwintering numbers, and at least 10 different bumble bee species in the U.S. are not being spotted with normal frequency, in fact 4 appear to have disappeared from their normal ranges.