

Powerful Pollinators

- 1 What's the first animal you think of when you think about pollination? Most people think about bees when they think of insects that help spread **pollen** from flower to flower. But lots of animals do the very important work of pollination. These animals have special body structures to help them pollinate.



A bumble bee pollinates a flower while sipping its nectar.

Pollination

- 2 Plants need pollination. **Pollination** is when pollen from a plant's flower gets moved to another flower. This movement of pollen has to happen for a plant to grow new seeds.
- 3 Wind can move pollen from flower to flower. But most plants do not rely on the wind to spread their pollen. Instead, they depend on insects and animals to move pollen.

Pollinator Body Structures

- 4 Pollinators have special body structures that allow them to feed on the nectar inside flowers. When they eat, these animals spread pollen between the



same types of flowers. Many pollinators, like bees, bats, and birds, fly from flower to flower using their wings. Wings are not the only special body structure that pollinators use to get the nectar they need.

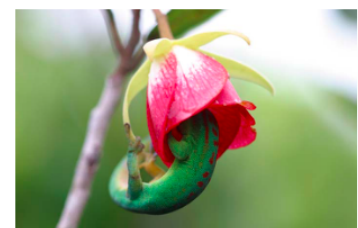
Surprising Species

- 5 Honey Possums are a kind of pollinator most people haven't heard of. These mammals live in Australia and pollinate flowers from plants like eucalyptus. The honey possum's long pointy snout helps it sip the flower's **nectar**.



A honey possum sips nectar from a flower with its long snout.

- 6 Some kinds of lizards are also pollinators. One kind of lizard that pollinates flowers is the Noronha Skink lizard, which lives on an island in North-Eastern Brazil. As this lizard sips up nectar from a tree's flowers, pollen sticks to its scales. When the lizard goes to another flower, it moves the pollen.



You can't see this lizard's face because it's inside the flower!

7 Lemurs are some of the world's largest pollinators. The Ring-Tailed Lemur of Madagascar eats the nectar of flowers in a tree called Traveler's Palm. The lemur's long tail helps it hang from tree branches so it can reach high up flowers. Lemurs stick their paws or snouts into the flower to get the nectar, and pollen gets stuck to them. Then, when they go to the next flower on the Traveler's Palm, the pollen goes with them!



This lemur uses its climbing skills to reach high up flowers.

Protecting Pollinators

8 Want to learn more about this giant pollinator? Maybe you can visit one at the zoo. Some zoos help study and protect ring-tailed lemurs. Zoologists learn about the behaviors and needs of ring-tailed lemurs at the zoo so that they can teach other scientists how to protect lemurs who live in the wild. Zoologists know that pollinators are an important part of our world's **ecosystem**. Without pollinators, many of the plants and fruits that humans enjoy and depend on would not continue to exist!

Glossary

pollen	the fine yellow dust on a flower that fertilizes seeds
species	a group of related, or similar, living things
nectar	a sweet liquid inside of flowers that attracts pollinators
ecosystem	a group of animals and plants living in one place and impacting each other