

Pollination



VOCABULARY:

NECTAR: a sweet liquid reward for pollinators that is produced by flower glands called nectaries.

PISTIL: the female part of the flower including the stigma, style and ovary.

POLLEN: the fine, powder-like material produced by the anthers of flowering plants.

POLLEN BASKET: a smooth, slightly concave surface of the outer hind leg of a bee that is fringed with long, curved hairs that hold the pollen.

STAMEN: the male part of the flower consisting of the anther and filament.

To make a seed, pollen has to find its way to a pistil and travel down to reach the egg. This called "pollination."

Just like making new people, plants need a male and female to make a new seed which will grow into a new plant. The difference with plants is that plants have both the male and the female parts in a single flower. The male part of the flower makes "pollen." Pollen looks like powder or dust. The female part of the flower (called the pistil) makes the egg.

Pollination is the way "pollen" from the male part of a flower gets to the egg in the female part of a flower to form a seed.

Pollinators love to drink the sugary-sweet nectar that is made by flowers at the base of the pistil. Pollinators move from flower to flower in search of more sweet nectar.

When pollinators go in to suck up the nectar, they brush against the anthers and get pollen on their bodies.

When they land on a flower, the pollen will rub off their body onto the pistil. If the pollen ends up near the opening at the top of the pistil, the pollen will make its way down the pistil to the egg. When the egg and the pollen meet, a seed is formed.

A seed has everything it needs to form a new plant.

You can see the bee gathering pollen. Bees have sacs on their hind legs in which to store the pollen and carry it as they fly back to their hive.

