

Pollinators in Peril

Lesson Overview

Students will visit a local green space, school yard, or park where they will make direct observations of pollinators in action.

Learning Goals: Students will appreciate the contribution of pollinators in the production of local produce.

Overall Language/English Curriculum Expectation:

Writing - Developing and Organizing Content:

Generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience.

Preparations/ Resources

- *The Sheldon Honey Bee Book* available at <http://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/sheldon/home.aspx> (download the powerpoint)
- Camera's, iPad's or other digital media devices
- Clip boards, paper, pencils
- School garden (or local park)

Description of Activity

Time outside: 20 min **Total time:** 60 min.

Minds-On:

- This lesson is a direct link to Grade 6 biodiversity and as such students should have knowledge of pollinators and their contributions to ecosystems. A quick reference to *The Sheldon Honey Bee Book* (pp. 16-18) will show pictures of honey bees gathering nectar and pollinating various flowers. An important discussion item with students is that these pictures were taken with a 'point and shoot' camera, and neither the bees nor photographer were harmed in any way.

Action:

- Students will take their recording devices and paper and pencils and move into a position in the selected green space which will allow them to make detailed observations of any pollinators visiting the flowers in the green space. Observations can be in the form of photos, tally of number of pollinators, tally of type/species of pollinator, number of flowers visited by a particular pollinator.

Consolidate/Connect:

- With their direct observations of pollinators in action fresh in their minds, students will compose a 'Help Wanted' posting for the purpose of attracting a pollinator to work on a local farm. Job description must include the type of plant to be pollinated, the length of the pollination season, number of flowers to be pollinated, an estimate of the number of co-workers (pollinators) applicant will be working with.

Follow-Up (plus Adaptations and Extensions)

- Students will investigate the issue of declining bee populations (colony collapse disorder) and the possible links to *Neonicotinoid* use in modern agriculture. [Neonicotinoid](#)
- Students can formulate a position paper supporting the continued use of Neonicotinoids or banning their use and present these letters to local decision makers.

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