






Pollinator Pathway

Your child has made some artful seed packets to grow flowers to feed pollinators. Here is some information on the planting requirements for these seeds. Each packet should contain about 5 seeds, and all of these seeds are annuals. They all prefer a sunny spot and each have a different number of days until they germinate or start to grow. All the seeds can be planted directly into the garden soil or a container once the ground warms – usually around mid-May.

Calendula	Sunflower	Nasturtium
 <p>Plant me in a sunny spot. I need to be covered with soil to germinate.</p> <p>I have lots of different names since I have been cultivated or grown for hundreds of years. One of my names is 'pot marigold'.</p> <p>I am often used in creams and salves to aid skin conditions.</p> <p>My seeds are very small, so to make me easier to plant I have been made into homemade seed tape – simply plant me with the tape and I will grow.</p>	 <p>My name tells you that I love the sun – I can re-position myself to face the sun. I need to be lightly covered with soil to germinate.</p> <p>My botanical name is Helianthus. 'Helois' means sun and 'anthos' means flower.</p> <p>When I flower I will help feed pollinators and when I produce seeds I will help feed birds.</p> <p>I am a dwarf sunflower and should only reach 2 feet in height, so you can plant me in a large container. My flowers will be large (12 inches across) so make sure I have a sturdy container and don't topple over or plant me in the ground.</p> <p>I like to be fertilized while I am growing.</p>	 <p>Plant me in a sunny spot. I need to be lightly covered with soil to germinate. I don't appreciate rich soil or fertilizer.</p> <p>The latin words for nose 'nas' and to twist 'tortum' refer to the reaction of eating the spicy or peppery leaves.</p>



Map Art Project

Part of this project is to show how individual actions (planting pollinator friendly flowers) can create a big impact in our environment. The lesson included information on pollinator pathways, and how Silverspring, Evergreen, and Willowgrove neighbourhoods fit into the green spaces of our river valley, Saskatoon Natural Grasslands, the North East Swale, and the Saskatoon Forestry Farm.

In July or August, when everyone's gardens are blooming walk around your neighbourhood and count how many gardens you see. They may be as small as a window box or as big as a park – but how many flowers do you see? If you were a pollinator, could you make it from one flower patch to the next?

You can draw a map of the flower patches on your street and know that your flowers are feeding pollinators this summer.

Pollinator Count

Below is information on conducting a simple pollinator count in summer to see how many pollinators are benefiting from the flowers that we planted. By multiplying the numbers of pollinators by how many children participate in this single project and it's easy to see how small actions can help build healthy ecosystems for us all.

Task your children with observing the flowers and plants in your yard or garden for pollinators for a set period of time (as little as 10 minutes), in the morning, afternoon and evening over a few consecutive days. Bees and butterflies are active in the warmth of sunshine, birds are often most active early in the morning and evening. They could make a checklist guided by the following:

1. Which insects are visiting which flowers?
2. Are some flowers visited more than others?
3. Is there more activity at certain times of day?
4. Do the insects make a direct path between the flowers, or do they meander or leave and return?
5. Which insects perch on the flowers and which hover?
6. Do the flowers themselves seem designed to support hovering or perching?
7. Does a mixture of flower types attract more pollinators?