behold, the mighty pollinator

Pollinators such as bees, flies, moths, butterflies, beetles, hummingbirds and bats are crucial to the survival of entire ecosystems.

A FEW REASONS TO SHOW POLLINATORS SOME LOVE:

• Numerous animal species—from birds to bears to humans—eat fruit and seeds that require pollination.
• 75% of all the food we eat benefits from pollination.
• Honey bees are responsible for as much as $5.2 billion in agriculture production in the United States alone.
protecting our pollinators

The Nature Museum is committed to the conservation of our locally-imperiled pollinators.

From propagating butterflies for release into the wild and implementing critical habitat restoration initiatives, to species population monitoring through our citizen science program called the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network, our scientists, staff, and volunteers are at the forefront of our region’s pollinator conservation work. In fact, the Nature Museum itself is an urban refuge for pollinators; featuring rooftop beehives, pollinator gardens, and prairie ecosystems.

Our pollinator conservation work focuses on five regionally imperiled species: the regal fritillary butterfly, swamp metalmark butterfly, Baltimore checkerspot butterfly, monarch butterfly, and rusty patched bumblebee. Learn more about these species, as well as our conservation work with turtles and snakes, at naturemuseum.org/conservation.
PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS

a handy guide to starting your pollinator garden

PEGGY NOTEBAERT
NATURE MUSEUM
OF THE CHICAGO ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

SPONSORED BY ROSE PEST SOLUTIONS
why a pollinator garden?

Many pollinator species have experienced declining populations in recent years. You can help them recover by providing extra food for these important animals and, in the process, create a beautiful garden alive with the fluttering and buzzing of butterflies and bees.

If you’re worried about stings, remember: when they are away from the hive gathering food, bees almost never sting.
The Rusty Patched Bumblebee, Regal Fritillary and Swamp Metalmark are imperiled native pollinators.
choosing the right plants

• Many native plants are excellent nectar sources, but carefully selected non-natives can also be useful and attractive in the pollinator garden.

• Look for plants that are as close to “wild” as possible. Humans breed flowers for attractive colors and shapes, but we often inadvertently reduce nectar availability in the process.

• There are many lists of pollinator friendly plants online—some better than others. Check out naturemuseum.org/top5plants to view our horticulturist-selected list.

• Don’t stop with flowers; consider the trees around your home. Many of our native butterflies spend their caterpillar days feeding on trees such as willows, elms, black cherry, and hackberry.

• Consider including plants that bloom at night to attract moths, beetles and other nocturnal pollinators.

• Ensure that you will have plants in bloom throughout the season. It is especially important for many pollinators to have flowers that bloom in early spring and late fall when resources are scarce.