

# Lawn Pollinator Challenge



**Age**  
5-16



**Time**  
10 mins. a day  
for about a week



**Difficulty**  
easy

## About the Experiment

Pollinators, such as bees, birds, and butterflies, are essential components of our ecosystem. They help pollinate our food crops and support biodiversity. Pollinators also need food and water themselves to survive, and you may be surprised to learn that your lawn can provide essential nutrients for them.

In this experiment, you'll learn what types of pollinators hover around your lawn, what type of grasses/weeds they feed on, and how mowing your grass can affect pollinator activity in your lawn.

## What You Will Need

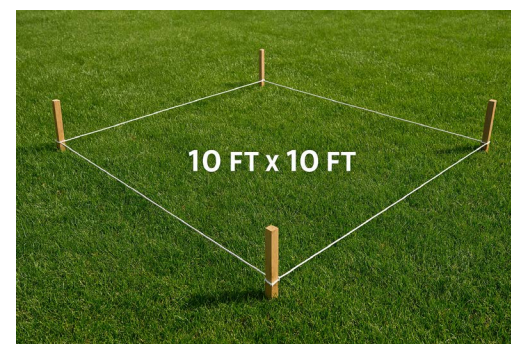
- 4 yard stakes
- String
- Tape measure
- Pencil/paper
- Timer (phone or stop watch)

*Safety Note: Some pollinators such as bees may sting when confronted or in their flight path. Be careful when observing all pollinators.*



## Let's Do This!

- Measure out a 10 ft x 10 ft square in your lawn.
- Add yard stakes to the corners and add string around the stakes to mark the square you will be observing.
- Record when the lawn was last mowed, and measure the height of the grass. Write down all the plant species you see (grass, weeds, dandelions, etc.) If you are unsure of a grass species, take a picture and look it up on your phone.
- Set your timer to 10 minutes, and during that time observe from a safe distance insects/birds that visit your 10x10 area. Write down all insect/bird types and what they are doing (hovering around, landing on a flower, sitting on the grass, etc.)



*Image created with AI technology*

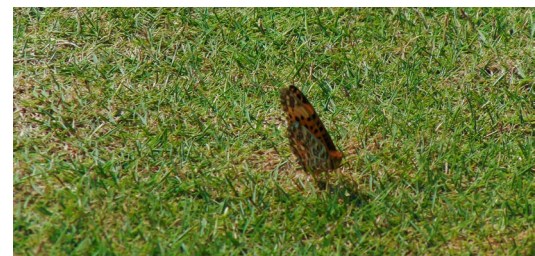
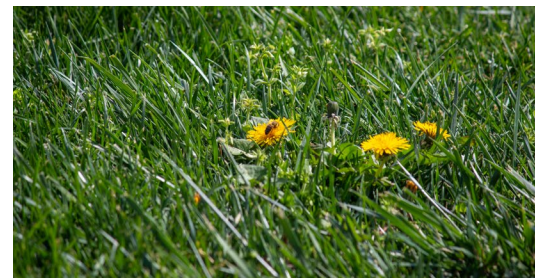
Continued on next page →

# Lawn Pollinator Challenge

## Let's Do This!

continued from previous page

- Wait a few days until the grass grows approximately 1/2 to 1 inch, and then observe for 10 minutes, recording what you see.
- Wait another few days until the grass grows another 1/2 to 1 inch, and observe again and record what you see.
- Wait until the lawn is freshly mowed, and then observe and notate your observations one last time.
- Make sure to remove the stakes and string when mowing, and then add them back after mowing. Remove the stakes and string at the end of the experiment.



## Observations



- How many plant species did you find in your lawn? Do you think having more or less plant species is beneficial for pollinators?
- Which insects/birds frequented your 10x10 square? What did they appear to be doing? What do you think they were looking for?
- As the grass grew longer, did you see fewer or more visitors to your 10x10 square? Did you see more of a certain species (bird, bee, butterfly, etc.) as the grass grew longer?
- What happened after the lawn was mowed? Did you see more or fewer visitors to your 10x10 square?
- What does this experiment tell you about your lawn's ability to attract pollinators? How does mowing affect pollinator activity in your lawn?

To learn more about ARS's research on lawns and pollinators, watch this [video](#).

Find more fun and challenging science projects at



[aglab.ars.usda.gov](http://aglab.ars.usda.gov)

**USDA** Agricultural Research Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

For The Latest Research Updates

Follow



Watch



Listen



Learn 

SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES