

Watching bees buzz and flowers bloom...

Bees are just one of many animals that we call pollinators. Pollinators are responsible for enabling a plant to produce, seeds and fruits. Many of the foods we love would not be possible without pollinators and especially bees.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ta154f5Rp5Y>

But how does the bee pollinate the plant to create seeds and fruit? To understand this, we must take a closer look .

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txv2k7OoY7U>

Common Flower Parts



The anther holds the pollen which is picked up by the pollinator. It is then taken to another flower. There it gets stuck on the sticky top of the pistil which receives the pollen and sends it to the ovary to form seeds and fruit.

Flowers usually form at the joints of plant stems or at the base of leaves. Each plant has its own way of forming the many sizes and shapes of flowers but the parts listed above are common to most flowers. First a flower stem will form , then at the end ,one or a cluster of flower buds. When the flower begins to open the sepals and petals will fold back exposing the stamens and the pistil at the center.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJqAO2a_g-Y

Watch for the stamen and the pistil as the flower opens in this video.

Watching bees and buds...

Now let's take this information outside to watch some bees and flowers in action. Bring a journal or calendar to record what you see.

- Can you find a new flower bud? How long does it take to open up revealing the pistil? Days...a week? Check it each day to find out. Do some flowers take longer than others?
- Take a flower from different types of plants and carefully dissect it to see the parts closer
Flower dissection activity: <https://www.sciencebuddies.org/news/article?id=802587>
- Watch a bee visit several flowers. (Be very quiet and still so as not to disturb the bee as it works. They usually do not mind as long as you do not threaten them so don't swat at them.)
- How many different types of bees do you see? Remember honey bees and bumble bees are hairy on their bodies. Wasps have no hair, and are usually more aggressive! Watch out for them!

Bee ID: <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/ENT-57>