

I-Pollinate Citizen Science

with the University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign



University of Illinois Extension invites lovers of bees, butterflies, and other pollinators to join University of Illinois scientists in tracking their distribution and habitat use across the state, from the comfort of your home, school, or community garden.

I-Pollinate is a citizen science research initiative run through the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Volunteers can join up to three research projects and help collect critical data on monarch butterfly eggs and caterpillars, pollinator visits to ornamental flowers, and statewide bee distribution. Your efforts will help inform conservation plans and how to plant gardens for pollinator habitat.

Research projects

Monarch response to garden variability— Collect data on garden monarch egg and larva abundance in order to better understand how much gardens contribute to monarch conservation.

Pollinator attraction to ornamental flowers—Observe ornamental flower species and for pollinator visits to help evaluate which species attract pollinators and create the best environment to host butterflies, bees, and flies.

Bee demographics and distributions—Take photos to help the BeeSpotter program establish long-term monitoring of Illinois honey bee and bumble bee populations.

How to participate

The monarch and pollinator attraction projects are done in conjunction, and data collection for these projects requires the installation of a small I-Pollinate research garden. Once the research garden has been set up, participants register their garden online at ipollinate.illinois.edu and spend one week each month between June and September collecting flower and pollinator data. This consists of 3- minute pollinator visitation surveys, examining milkweed plants for monarch eggs and caterpillars, and performing a flower survey. Ideally, participants will spend at least 1.5 hours each month collecting data.

Participation in BeeSpotter can be done independently or in union with the monarch and pollinator attraction projects. Participants will need to create an account at beespotter.org and then take and submit photographs of honey bees and bumbles bees.

Visit ipollinate.illinois.edu
to learn more and join

