Preferences of Pollinators for Specific Flower Features

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Abstract

Pollinators are very important to everyday life. Plants need pollinators for their reproductions and humans and animals need plants for food. Without pollinators, plants would die off and humans would lose a huge food group. In theory, pollinators look for specific characteristics in flowers they pollinate. For example, bees are attracted to blue/purple flowers while beetles are attracted to whitish-green flowers. The purpose of this study was to observe the preferences of pollinators for specific flower features and see if the data backed up the theory that they are attracted to different features. Two sets of data were used for this study. Both sets were collected in the Butterfly Garden at Grandfather Mountain, Avery County, NC, in two consecutive years, but one year apart. There were nine plant species observed and only three pollinators were taken into account-bees, beetles, and butterflies. The data show eight plants pollinated by bees, five plants pollinated by beetles, and two plants pollinated by butterflies. After each plant's features were analyzed, it was concluded that the theory of pollinator preference for specific features was supported. The bees, beetles, and butterflies observed were attracted to specific features in each flower.