



# POLLINATOR CITIZEN SCIENCE SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

## WHAT IT IS:

A **pollinator survey** – or bioblitz – is an opportunity to sample what **pollinating organisms** are at a **given location**, observed in a **short timeframe**. A number of participants sample a local area together to cover more space. The goal is to **record as much accurate data as possible** within a 20 minute timeframe. The individual data will be added up, and we can assess what kinds of pollinators are supported by this location and what is lacking. From this, we can plan to make **informed decisions** on what kind of flowers, and nesting provisions are necessary for the local **pollinator community**.

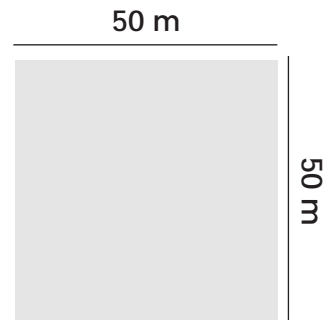
In our pollinator citizen science survey, you will collect information that NatureKids BC will gather and review to give us baseline information about pollinators in BC and in local communities. We will produce a project report with key findings that we will share with the pollinator research community.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR SURVEY:

### 1. Pick your site:

**As your goal is** to collect as much information as you can about pollinators, it is key to select a site that you predict may be good pollinator habitat.

- Choose a natural area (not cultivated)
- Does NOT need to be a square, but survey space needs to be approximately 0.5 hectares (size of half of a race track)
- Has flowers in bloom on site (preferably multiple species in bloom)
- Not grass lawns (can take up some space, but not the major focus of your site)
- Participants can walk up to/examine flowers within the site
- Not forest-dominated or shaded



### 2. Pick your day:

Pollinators are out and about on warm, sunny days with little wind. Therefore try and select days that are weather appropriate. Pollinators are more active in the morning than later in the afternoon, and tend to be more active on a beautiful day right after a few days of poorer weather. Try your best!

- Above 12 degrees C
- Open sun in sky
- Zero to light breeze
- 3pm cutoff for end of survey time
- April – September (optimal months: May – June)

### 3. Gather your survey materials

- Individual survey sheet
- Clipboard
- Pencil
- ID card
- Mobile device (for surveys done using Border Free Bees app only)

As a group leader you will also need a timer.

#### 4. Use NatureKids BC's pollinator species ID card to help you practice species identification

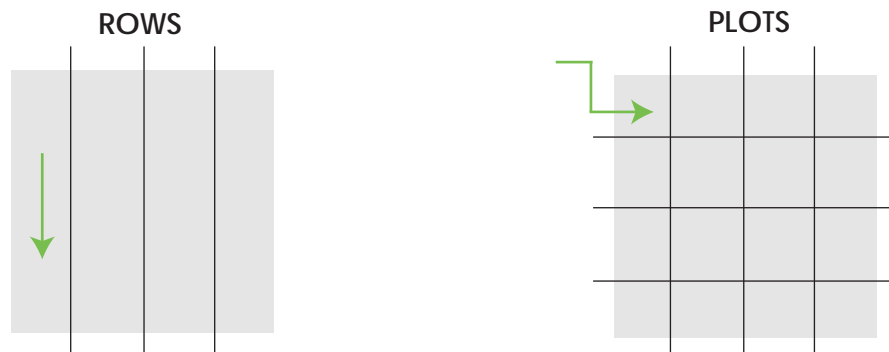
#### 5. Decide on survey method

##### Divide Up Your Participants:

So now you are on site... now what? Your goal is to get your participants to observe your whole site within the timeframe. Divide your participants up in one of two ways:

**Rows:** Get your site into rows (approximate sizes are fine). Choose as many rows as there are participants. Each participant is given a row to cover for their survey. They are free to explore their row walking up and down, but expected to give all blooming flowers that are within their row their attention within the given timeframe.

**Plots:** Divide your site up into square plots according to how many participants you have. Each participant will then be responsible for their own plot.



##### Time Your Participants:

- Participants are free to move around their space in whatever manner they choose, and can stop for sections that are good survey spots (eg. patches of flowers)
- Participants must look over the whole area in the timeframe given to them
- Can go back and repeat-visit areas already observed within their row/plot
- You can pause observations, and rotate participants to give them more diverse experience with the entire area
- Total survey minutes must equal 20 min

#### DOING YOUR SURVEY:

6. Now that you have read the instructions, picked your site, gathered your equipment, brushed up on pollinator identification and decided on how your group will do the survey, now is the time to get started!



### Tips for surveying pollinators:

- Only count pollinators that actually stop and visit a flower.
- When stopped at a flower, kneel down and lower sightline to the flower. There may be something small inside that you haven't seen yet.
- Move slowly. Pollinators get disrupted by your movements, so give them time to return to flowers.
- Don't judge a flower by its petals. Some of the showiest flowers are not of interest to pollinators while small, seemingly inconspicuous flowers gain more attention. Make sure you have your eyes open for all sorts.
- Your eyes are your measuring stick. When watching a large blooming area for pollinators (eg. flowering tree or shrub with many blossoms), use your eyes to scan across the bloom for about 10 seconds. Count the number of pollinators on flowers in that time and then watch something else. You can come back to this spot repeatedly throughout your 20 minutes.
- Not sure what group of pollinator that just flew off was? Do your best! Try to be as accurate as possible, meanwhile capturing your best guess. An educated guess is better than no data.

### AFTER YOUR SURVEY:

7. After the survey is over, walk around the site a bit more, filling in the remaining sections.

8. Scan or photograph this survey sheet and send it along with any photos to NatureKids BC:

coordinator@naturekidsbc.ca or

1620 Mt. Seymour Road, North Vancouver, BC V7G 2R9.

Please label your images: YOUR NAME\_LOCATION\_DATE.

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**TD Friends of the  
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