GET OUT! Kids' Club

Pollinator Water Station

All Ages

Butterflies, bees, moths and other pollinating insects are industrious and important. Carrying pollen from plant to plant is vital to our food supply. A single honeybee may visit over 2,000 flowers in a day. All that hard work leaves pollinators thirsty. They will risk drowning in birdbaths and swimming pools or being eaten by predators at rivers and ponds to find water. You can help by providing a safe place for pollinators to find fresh water.

Making a water station can be as simple as putting a rock in an old pie plate, setting it out in a shady spot and filling it with water. Or you can have fun, get creative, and upcycle old dishes into a work of functional art! Make your yard buzz-worthy!

Steps:

1. Choose a glass, china, pottery, or food grade plastic dish for a basin. Shallow dishes reduce the risk of drowning and require fresh water daily. A deep dish holds more water but requires careful planning to keep visitors safe. Use our examples to spark your imagination. Put your "off-to-the-second-hand-shop" dishes to use.
2. Choose something to use as a base or stand. Raising your water station offers some protection from predators and allows you to watch the happy visitors come and go.
3. Gather pebbles, rocks, shells, marbles (a good use for your shell and rock collections!) or floating items such as corks, sponges, or plastic scouring pad. These will provide a safe place for insects to stand while they drink.
4. Use a strong (construction grade) waterproof adhesive suitable for the material you are working with (Gorilla Clear Grip, E6000, Loctite Power Grab). Follow the instructions on the label. Young children should supervise while adults use this type of glue.
5. Place your water station in a cool, shady spot or near insect friendly flowers.
6. Fill with water. Be sure there are exposed landing spots for your visitors. Keep the water full and fresh. Rinse weekly to remove any mosquito eggs.

Note: Never add honey to the water. It can contain spores of a bacteria called Paenibacillus which is deadly to bees. No sugar either, it just not good for anyone.

Tip: Our familiar honeybee comes from a very big family of bees (4000 different types of bees in North America). While we care for and protect our honeybees, wild bees are on their own and they are in serious trouble. Learn more at Bees

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