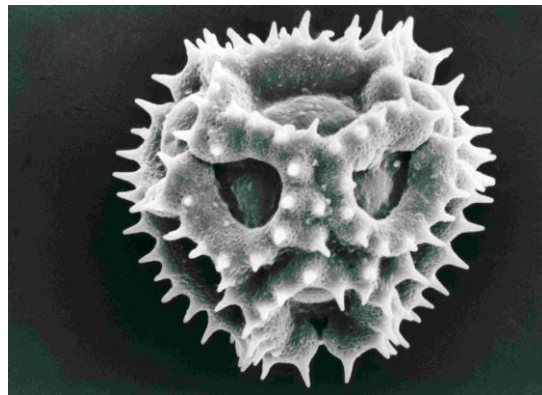


What makes a good pollinator?

- Dependence on flowers for food
 - Bees aren't trying to be good pollinators. They are visiting flowers to gather food and in the process come into contact with pollen grains. Their attraction to flowers is part of what makes them a good pollinator.
- Hairy bodies and pollen carrying structures
 - Bees generally have hairy bodies that trap pollen grains. As they move from flower to flower, some of it brushes off. Some bees even have a special structure called a corbicula (a pollen basket), which is used to collect and carry large quantities to their home.
- Floral fidelity (Visiting flowers from the same plant species)
 - When bees find a valuable food resource, they tend to forage on that species exclusively until it is gone. This means more pollen is being transported to the same plant species for cross-pollination.

Why is pollen sticky?

Wind-pollinated plants produce lots of lightweight, smooth pollen. However, insect-pollinated plants don't produce as much pollen and the pollen is heavy and sticky. When an insect visits a flower for food, the pollen gets caught in hairs for easy transport to another flower.



Dandelion pollen

What insect body parts or structures make pollination possible?

Pollinators use their **eyes** and **antennae (sense of smell)** to locate flowers (usually ones with bright colors that smell). **Wings** or **legs** allow pollinators to move easily from flower to flower, taking pollen along with them. Many bees are also great pollinators because they have hairy bodies. Pollen gets caught in these **hairs** and drops off on other flowers they visit.