

# NECTAR, POLLEN, HONEY... WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES?

## General Information

Pollinators are all attracted by flowers. They are often rewarded for their visit, in the form of food: pollen or nectar.



## Curious fact

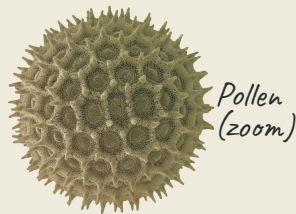
### Fir honey

This is not produced from flower nectar, but from honeydew! Honeydew is secreted by certain sap-feeding insects, such as aphids. The honeybees feed on the aphids, and make the celebrated fir honey!



Pollen

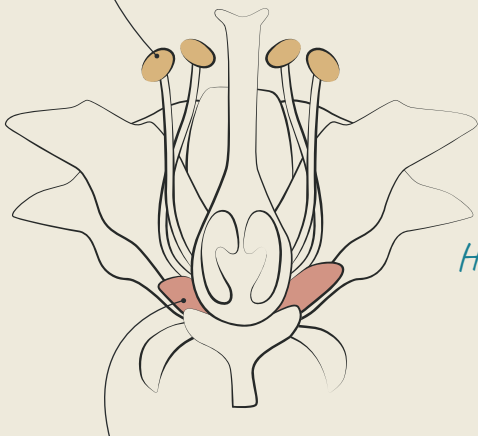
is the tiny, microscopic grains on the tip of the stamen. When it is deposited on the pistil, it enables the flower to be fertilized. Highly rich in proteins, it is a food for the pollinators, particularly the larvae of honeybees and bumblebees.



Pollen (zoom)

is produced from the nectar from flowers. Honeybees use their crop (a kind of second stomach) to store it and convert it into honey!

Honey



Nectar

is generally produced by glands in flowers called nectaries. It is a sweet and liquid substance which pollinators feed on, particularly in their adult stage: bees, wasps, hoverflies, butterflies... It is a lure that flowers have found to attract the pollinators and enable the flower's pollen to be dispersed!



Bees sipping nectar at the community garden Transition Pétrusse

## Ecology

Faced with a collapse in the population of pollinating insects, some flowers would produce less nectar. Producing nectar costs them energy, and they would seek alternative solutions to adapt, such as self-fertilization. This development would risk accelerating the decline in pollinators, which would have wider impacts, notably on agricultural production.

## Quiz

How many species of bee produce honey in Europe?

Answer: Just 1 in Europe, out of the 20,000 species worldwide! *Apis mellifera*, a bee that lives in a colony, out in the wild or in hives. The others do not need to make honey, because they lay eggs and die in the autumn. They do not make a store. Globally, 8 species of bees produce honey.

