What’s All the Buzz About Pollinators?

What is Pollination?
Pollination is the process of transferring pollen (the male fertilizing component of flowering plants) from one plant to another, which helps plants reproduce and grow flowers, fruits, and veggies. Bees, birds, butterflies, moths, bats, and other insects can act as pollinators.

Why are Pollinators Important?
Without insect pollinators, many of the flowers, fruits, veggies, and plants we rely on wouldn't exist. About one-third of the food we eat is made possible by insect pollinators. Non-native honeybees are key pollinators of agricultural crops, but scientists have discovered that wild native bees are more efficient pollinators than honeybees on a bee-to-bee basis. Research suggests that native wild bees provide critical pollination services that may help lessen the impact of honeybee declines in North America.

Why are Pollinators in Peril?
In recent years, many pollinators—especially native pollinators—have seen drastic population declines due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and disease. Pollinators need habitats with native plants to survive, thrive, and efficiently pollinate plants.

What Can You Do to Help?
There’s lots we can do to help! We can plant native plants in our yards, avoid the use of pesticides, and re-think our lawns. We can also become citizen scientists with apps like iNaturalist and Seek. Join the Pollinator Pathway and spread the word with your own lawn sign! (See www.pollinator-pathway.org.)

Thanks to Con Edison for partially funding this Westchester Land Trust program and for supporting local efforts to make our communities more pollinator friendly.

For more information on pollinators, visit bit.ly/WLTbees.