



# Wild Pollinators Oceania

Fact sheet 1

## About Us

Wild Pollinators Oceania are dedicated to evidence-based conservation of native pollinators through the conservation and restoration of pollinator habitat and relevant ecosystem functions. Our goal is to promote and support research, education and conservation focused on wild pollinators and their ecology. We provide factual, easy to understand information on wild native pollinators in the Oceania region. Our main focus is on invertebrate pollinators, but we also acknowledge the importance of other native animal pollinators.

## Why care about wild pollinators?

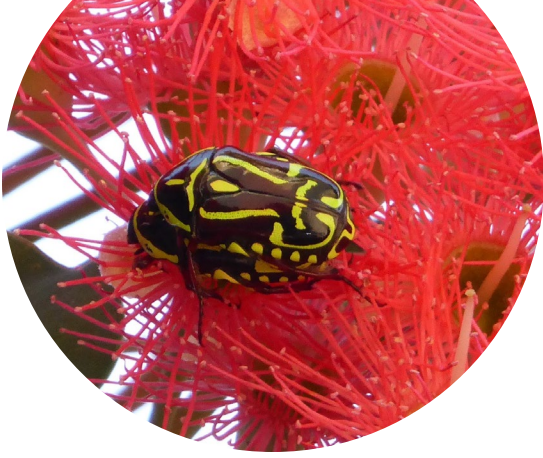
Pollination is a critical ecological process. Plants rely on pollen vectors to reproduce and increase genetic diversity within their populations. Most flowering plants depend on animal vectors to move their pollen<sup>1</sup>.

Bees, particularly the European honey bee, get the most attention as pollinators. But there are hundreds of thousands of other invertebrates globally that contribute to pollination, including flies, beetles, moths, butterflies, wasps and more<sup>1,2</sup>. Vertebrates, such as birds, reptiles and small mammals, are also important pollinators for some plants<sup>3,4</sup>.

Managed social pollinators are domesticated animals and their populations can be buffered from some negative environmental conditions. In contrast, wild pollinators depend on natural habitat, healthy ecosystems and specific environmental conditions to persist.



Wild Pollinator Count is a nationwide citizen science activity that anyone in Australia can get involved in. You can participate in the count every year in the second full week of April and November. Find out more at [www.wildpollinatorcount.com](http://www.wildpollinatorcount.com).



## Why Oceania?

*The Oceania geographic region has one of the most diverse and unique pollinator faunas in the world.*

Knowledge of insect diversity and ecology is dominated by research from the northern hemisphere, because of a longer history of modern scientific effort in those countries. There are many excellent organisations that promote wild pollinator conservation in North America and Europe.

We saw a need for similar efforts in Australia and neighbouring countries. Wild Pollinators Oceania is an accessible evidence-based portal for information on wild pollinator ecology and conservation in Oceania.

We refer to Oceania as Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific island nations and territories that make up Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia. This region has one of the most diverse and unique insect fauna in the world and supports many unique plant-pollinator interactions that face many threats, including climate change and habitat loss<sup>5-7</sup>. There are no native *Apis* or *Bombus* species in this region.

We advocate for greater effort on conservation initiatives and research on all native animal pollinators in the Oceania region.

Our board are all trained scientists. Our aim is to provide an accessible evidence-based portal for information on wild pollinator ecology and conservation in Oceania. Our overall goal is to promote and support wild pollinator-focused research and conservation programs, including (but not limited to): research and observation of pollinator ecology and distributions; habitat restoration to support pollinator communities; plant-pollinator interaction studies; natural history studies; and education and citizen science programs.

*Wild pollinators are vital to ecosystem function in natural and managed ecosystems.*

**References:** 1. Ollerton. 2017. Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics 48:353-376; 2. Rader. et al. 2016. PNAS 113:146-151; 3. Olesen & Valido. 2003. Trends in Ecology & Evolution 18:177-181; 4. Ratto et al. 2018. Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment 16:82-90; 5. Groom 2011. Apidologie 42:759-770; 6. Cox & Elmqvist. 2000. Conservation Biology 14:1237-1239; 7. Austin et al. 2004. Australian Journal of Entomology 43:216-234. Picture credits: Manu Saunders.