

The color and life of the Meadow around...

Many eyes go through the meadow, but few see the flowers in it ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

What is a Meadow?

Meadows are open areas covered with low-growing plants such as grasses, sedges, and wildflowers. Native meadow habitat is a vital part of the ecosystem as many species of animals, including mammals, birds, insects, and reptiles use this area for feeding, shelter, nesting, breeding and raising their young.



Monarch Butterfly
(*Danaus plexippus*)



Ruby Throated Hummingbird
(*Archilochus colubris*)

European Honeybee
(*Apis mellifera*)



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
(*Papilio glaucus*)

Promoting Pollinators

Meadow pollinators like bees, butterflies, birds and moths help to sustain and beautify our surroundings. Pollinators move pollen from flower to flower, insuring the continuation of thriving, sustainable ecosystems, and food crops. Without pollinators, our berry, flower, fruit, nut, medicine, seed, and vegetable producing plants would not be able to reproduce.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of life in an ecosystem. The more diverse an ecosystem is the healthier it is and more life it can sustain. Threats to biodiversity include habitat conversion, invasive/exotic species, pollution, over collecting, and over herbivory. As you pass through this meadow watch and listen and see how many different plant and animal species you can identify.



Red-Tailed Hawk
(*Buteo jamaicensis*)



Red Fox
(*Vulpes vulpes*)



Eastern Wild Turkey
(*Meleagris gallopardo silvestris*)



Eastern Cottontail Rabbit
(*Sylvilagus floridanus*)



New England Aster
(*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*)



Common Milkweed
(*Asclepias syriaca*)

Native Wildflowers and Grasses

A variety of grasses and wildflowers grow in meadows. Wildflowers use fragrance and color to attract pollinators to perch on them and drink their nectar, the energy-packed sugary liquid produced by flowers. The plant's pollen (powdery seed dust) rubs off onto the feet, wings, and bodies of pollinators as they drink. The pollen is then transported by the pollinators from flower to flower, helping plants to reproduce by making fruits and seeds. Grasses also serve as a food source for animals, birds, and insects.



Switchgrass
(*Panicum virgatum*)



American Goldfinch
(*Spinus tristis*)



Common True Katydid
(*Pterophylla camellifolia*)



Field Cricket
(*Gryllus pennsylvanicus*)



Eastern Garter Snake
(*Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis*)



Early Goldenrod
(*Solidago juncea*)



Purple Coneflower
(*Echinacea purpurea*)



Little Bluestem
(*Schizachyrium scoparium*)



Eastern Bluebird
(*Sialia sialis*)