



Beetles as Pollinators



Beetles were one of the first animals to pollinate plants and have helped to develop the evolutionary relationship between plant reproduction and insects. This early pollinator makes up 40% of all known insect species and 25% of all known living species.

Flower foraging beetles use pollen as a main food source and plants that they visit must produce large amounts of pollen in order for there to be enough to be transferred for pollination. While beetles do not have a specialized structures to carry or transfer pollen, they tend to spend long periods of time at each flower and the pollen grains become stuck to their bodies which they then carry to the next plant. Beetles tend to be generalists but do prefer species that either provide easy to access pollen or they are able to eat their way through.

Beetles rely largely on their sense of smell to find food and as a result, they are attracted to heavily scented flowers often described as sweet, spicy, or fermented.

Beetle Flower Characteristics:

Cup or bowl like flowers, open during the day, leathery or tough petals and leaves able to withstand herbivory, heavily scented, ample pollen, clusters of small flowers, large single flowers,

Plants Frequented in This Garden:

Milkweed Species, Black-Eyed Susan, Chokeberry, Wild Ginger, and Smooth Leaf Hydrangea

