

Spring Flowers: Forsythia

Questions

1. Examine the diagram below, and identify the following: male stamens, female pistils, petals (corolla), sepals (calyx).
2. Some German towns pay an honorarium to people who report the date of the first forsythia blooms in their communities. Who would find this information critical to their business?
3. Certain Ontario municipal offices have planted the same variety of forsythia beside their office buildings. What benefit is there to planting the same variety of forsythia around the province?
4. What is the relationship between insect hatching and bloom times?
5. What effect does our changing climate have on pollinators such as bees and flies?
6. What crops can you name that depend on pollinators?



Answers

1. Compare your diagram with the labelled diagram below.
2. Many businesses benefit from knowing when the first forsythias bloom, including: farmers and fruit growers, pharmaceutical companies (allergy medication), construction workers, and more.
3. Planting the same variety of forsythia makes for easier tracking of conditions across the province. Municipalities gain a frame of reference for planning spring events and eliminate one variable from their observations.
4. Historically, bloom times and insect hatching or arrival times were the same – flowers provide food for the pollinating insects, while the insects ensure fertilization of the flowers.
5. Our changing climate has altered bloom times, meaning that insects and other animals (humans included) must change their food sources and/or activities to avoid starvation.
6. Cultivated or native fruit and nut trees depend on pollinators, like apples and peaches. Many field crops depend on them as well, like soybeans, potatoes, blueberries, and alfalfa.
 - a. Remember that some crops are pollinated by the wind, like corn and certain trees (for example, maple and white pine).

