

Why Get Involved?

Enhancing biodiversity on golf courses



OperationPollinator
Multifunctional Landscapes

syngenta.



Why are pollinators important?

Pollinating insects are a vital part of the natural ecosystem. They are responsible for the successful pollination of a wide range of plants that provide essential food sources for birds and animals, as well as the pollination of many fruit, vegetable, and oilseed food crops.



Bumblebees play a crucial role as one of nature's pollinators. Helping bumblebee populations and other pollinating insects will help to demonstrate that golf courses can be managed in harmony with the environment and to provide valuable wildlife habitats.

What is Operation Pollinator?

Operation Pollinator is an international biodiversity program from Syngenta, designed to boost the number of pollinating insects on farms and in out-of-play areas on golf courses.

Golf courses provide great potential to create essential habitat and food sources for a range of native bees and pollinating insects. Independent research trials have shown the creation of even small areas of dedicated habitat can significantly increase the number of pollinating insects.

The program provides the knowledge and expertise to achieve the successful management of pollen and nectar habitats, alongside conventional management of the golf course to deliver the best possible playing conditions. Management practices developed to deliver pollen and nectar rich habitat for bumblebees will also be beneficial for other flora and fauna on the golf course.

Attractive Proposition

There is immense pride in the knowledge that your club is doing something positive for the environment and providing the habitat that could help bumblebee species. Operation Pollinator provides added interest for players, and the chance to see something new on every round. This pride and satisfaction extends to the greenkeeping team and club managers, with the knowledge they are responsible for providing a much needed environmental resource, alongside great playing conditions and an enhanced golfing experience for all players.

Operation Pollinator helps clubs engage and generate beneficial links with the local community. Building goodwill with the community promotes clubs in a positive light and gets more people onto the course and experiencing the pleasure to be gained from the game.

Operation Pollinator seed mixtures

The mixes provide the optimum range of season-long pollen and nectar sources for pollinating insects, providing interesting natural visual features that are easy to manage on the golf course.





Wildflowers can provide a colourful visual enhancement for golf courses, particularly with native species selected to fit into the local environment. Operation Pollinator aims to provide a succession of flowering plants that provides a continual supply of pollen and nectar for pollinators through the season and gives an ever changing visual interest for players.

Where can I put Operation Pollinator around the course?



Illustration of the 9th Hole at Bearwood Lakes Golf Club, Berkshire, courtesy of Strokesaver ©.

Choosing your Operation Pollinator site

Operation Pollinator areas are best established on well drained soils, with sufficient light to encourage flowering and pollination activity. They are ideally situated on south-facing areas; avoid cold, north-facing sites that lie wet for prolonged periods.

Areas of the golf course identified as having potential for Operation Pollinator habitat include:

- Deep rough
- Tee surrounds
- Immediate carry area off tees
- Around lakes and water features

Establishing your Operation Pollinator site

Step 1: Prepare the site

Remove current vegetation down to the bare ground. For best results, seed in the spring, with fall as an alternate option.

Step 2: Control weeds

Use a glyphosate-based (e.g. non-residual) product or similar product with non-selective weed control. This creates a terrain for wildflowers to thrive without competition from other vegetation.

Step 3: Prepare the seedbed

Some light vertical mowing or raking may be necessary to ensure the seed comes in direct contact with the soil.

Step 4: Seed

Seed by hand, or preferably using a grass seeder for even coverage. Covering the seed is not required but lightly covering with soil or peat is an option to reduce loss by wind, etc. Irrigation is recommended for best results, but not required.

Step 5: Manage growth

Control early season weeds with the use of Primo Maxx® to delay the growth of wild grasses or apply a post-emergent herbicide such as Venture®. For small areas, hand weeding is a viable option.

Step 6: Enjoy the growth

Initial results can be seen within three to six months after habitat establishment. The vegetation will transition over time and wildflower abundance will improve over multiple years.

Step 7: Fall maintenance

Once bloom has ended, cut and remove all vegetation from the Operation Pollinator plot. This will help reduce weed pressure and improves wildflower stand the following year.