Missouri is home to hundreds of native bee species. Most bees are solitary, unlike the social hive-producing honeybee or bumblebee. They nest singly in the ground, in tree cavities, or in the hollow stems of grasses or wildflowers. Native bees are typically found in places that are relatively undisturbed, are rarely sprayed with pesticides, and support a diversity of native wildflowers.

**Nature’s Most Important Pollinators**

While gathering nectar from wildflowers, adult bees use specialized leg and body hairs to collect pollen that is later mixed with nectar to make a nutritious food. Some pollen inadvertently falls onto flowers as the bee flies from blossom to blossom. This act is called pollination and leads to the production of seeds. Without pollination, seed production and native plant populations can decline or even become extinct.

**Native Wildflower Favorites**

Want to attract native bees to your yard or school? Here are a few plants that attract native bees:

- Purple Poppy Mallow
- Blue Wild Indigo
- Prairie Blazingstar
- Gray-head Coneflower
- White Wild Indigo

Produced by Shaw Nature Reserve of the Missouri Botanical Garden and the Missouri Department of Conservation.