



15. Case study – plant-saving butterflies!

Requirements: internet access (YouTube video link)

7 – 11 years: teacher-led

12 – 14 years: teacher-led (discussion can be in small groups and then fed back to class)

Curriculum: Science (animals and their habitats, classification, working scientifically)

Time: 20 minutes

Many minibeasts act as pollinators by moving pollen between flowers as they drink nectar.

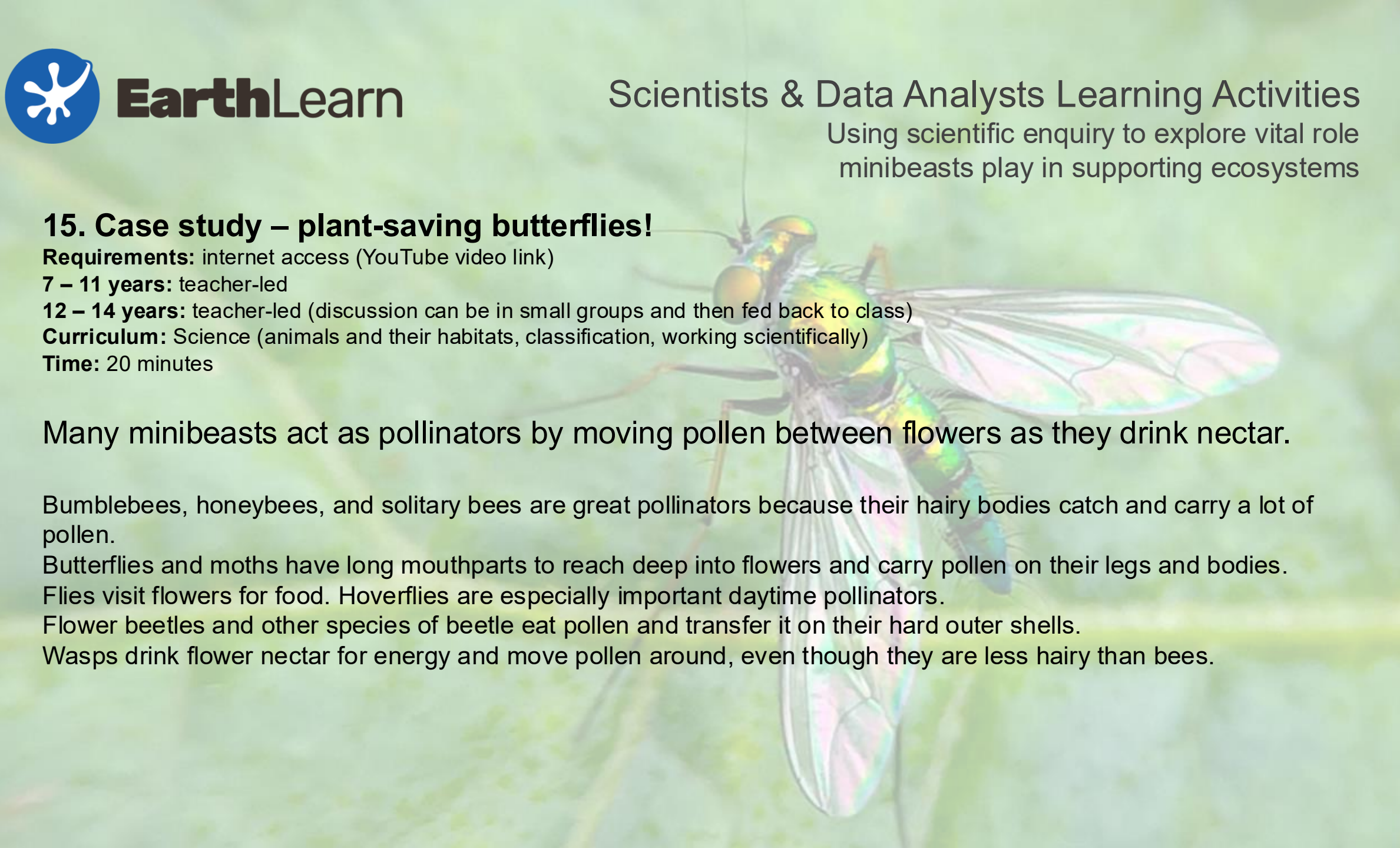
Bumblebees, honeybees, and solitary bees are great pollinators because their hairy bodies catch and carry a lot of pollen.

Butterflies and moths have long mouthparts to reach deep into flowers and carry pollen on their legs and bodies.

Flies visit flowers for food. Hoverflies are especially important daytime pollinators.

Flower beetles and other species of beetle eat pollen and transfer it on their hard outer shells.

Wasps drink flower nectar for energy and move pollen around, even though they are less hairy than bees.





EarthLearn

Scientists & Data Analysts Learning Activities

Using scientific enquiry to explore vital role
minibeasts play in supporting ecosystems

Researchers in Texas, in the USA, studied how the pipevine swallowtail butterfly (*Battus philenor*) pollinates two closely related Phlox wildflower species that occasionally grow together. [Watch this video.](#)

Discuss: How can butterfly behaviour shape plant survival?

Note: Phlox grow in the United Kingdom but the pipevine swallowtail butterfly do not live in the United Kingdom