

DOI: 10.21570/EDGG.PG.53.35-35

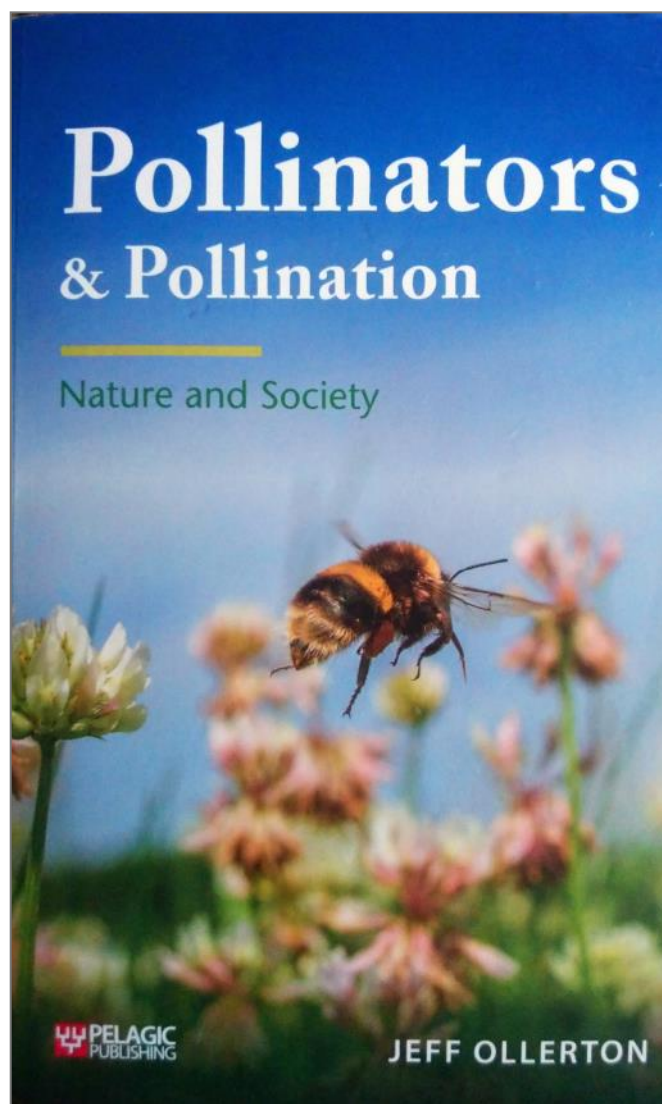
Book Review

Ollerton, J. 2021. Pollinators and Pollination - Nature and Society. Pelagic Publishing (Exeter, UK). 289 pages, 78 colour figures, ISBN 9781784272289. Price £25:00 as paperback or eBook. <https://pelagicpublishing.com/pollinators-and-pollination-ollerton>

Grassland habitats are diverse and species rich and many such habitats are in need of conservation measures. Currently the main paradigm for conservation is that of ecosystem services and nature-based solutions. Pollination is unequivocally the most widely recognized ecosystem service provided by grassland habitats. In recent years, there have been a huge number of publications on pollination and grasslands, so it can be difficult to know where to begin. The book that I now have in my hands is perfect as a comprehensive introduction to the topic, from one of the UK's most highly respected experts on pollinators and pollination, Jeff Ollerton. The author's objective for this book, as stated in the preface, is to '*provide a personal, state-of-the-art overview of what pollinators are*' and he certainly succeeds in that goal.

The style of the book lies somewhere in between scientific and popular, which has the advantage of being accessible and easily readable, though it rigorously follows normal scientific practices regarding citation, for instance, so everything is founded in expert interpretation of solid science. Accordingly, it is easy for those with a more academic interest to follow up interesting topics via those citations. Scientifically, this book encompasses a very diverse range of literature by many internationally recognized researchers in the field. There are many graphs and figures from scientific studies of which some, such as the bipartite graph of interactions between nine plant species and their pollinators (page 60), may look daunting at first sight, but they are all clearly presented and explained, so they should be helpful for any generally interested reader who wishes to learn more about pollination. However, these certainly don't disturb those who are interested in a less academic introduction to the topic. The book contains a number of intriguing anecdotes, such as the role of flies in the pollination of cocoa, plant phenologies and the '*evolutionary hangover* [?] of *Darwin and the wild carrot*', which are sure to catch the imagination of anyone interested to learn more.

A particularly endearing aspect of Jeff's approach is his patient and clear explanations of basic aspects, such as the structure of flowers, the diversity of pollinators and evolution of pollination strategies, for instance, which make them accessible to readers of different levels of expertise and interest. Jeff has clearly put a lot of thought into the chapter titles, which are imaginative and entertaining, such as '*Fidelity and promiscuity in Darwin's entangled bank*' and '*New bees on the block*', and the content of the chapters lives up to their promise; being entertaining and informative.



Whilst the book is not particularly large, it succeeds in covering a broad range of relevant topics, such as climate change, agriculture, urban environments and politics, and each in considerable depth. Whilst the book covers material from a diverse range of studies and examples from around the globe, there are also a considerable number of examples from the regions of the UK that the author is most familiar with. These may be refreshing for UK expats such as myself, though they may be unfamiliar for readers from other regions. All in all, this book is a great introduction to the topic of pollinators and pollination for people with different levels of prior knowledge and I recommend it to anyone looking for a primer in this topic and an enjoyable read.

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