

### (Fun, continued)

microscopes and determine water quality. They also measure, tag and release their fishing catch and log all the information online.

"With many parents working two jobs and kids engaged in computers and videogames, they don't have the opportunity to get outdoors," Fobian says.

Another grant program introduces kids to fishing and boating in a family setting at local parks. RBFF and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) created the Take Me Fishing™ Community Grants Initiative that helps local park and recreation directors offer instruction and loaner equipment, and provide convenient access to safe, public fishing and boating facilities.

According to RBFF Education and Outreach Manager Jim Stewart, "Providing meaningful introductions to these activities at safe, family-friendly public facilities can help spark and sustain children's interest and participation, and expose these activities to families of all backgrounds and incomes."

Kathy Spangler, NRPA's director of national partnerships, says the grant program raises awareness about more than just boating and fishing. "Public lands don't exist without stewardship, and people of all ages need to understand how to conserve them," she says. "We see the programs as a valuable first step in reconnecting

children with nature. From there, we can teach them how to properly care for these precious resources."

RBFF offers other programs and resources aimed at piquing children's interest in outdoor activities. The Passport to Fishing and Boating Program, which many organizations use to plan events throughout the year and during National Fishing and Boating Week in June, provides materials to enable even non-anglers and boaters to introduce the sports to kids and families. To help newcomers get started, RBFF also offers downloadable tip sheets on kids and freshwater fishing, basic boat care, fishing terminology, how to tie knots and more. These materials may be downloaded at <[www.RBFF.org](http://www.RBFF.org)>.

RBFF's TakeMeFishing.org Web site hosts a database with more than 11,000 locations to boat and fish. Site visitors can search by state, region or zip code to get all the information they need to plan a day on the water, including "Family Friendly Hot Spots" — places to fish and boat that make it easy to take the family. The site also features the Kids Fishing Hall of Fame, where parents, friends and relatives can honor the accomplishments of junior anglers.

For more information about RBFF programs that help connect children with nature, visit <[www.RBFF.org](http://www.RBFF.org)>. □

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*Stephanie West, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, Alexandria, Virginia*

### Learning About the Birds and Bees

What do raspberries, chocolate, and almonds have in common? Besides being best-selling ice cream sundae toppings, they are also foods from plants that require pollinators. Raspberries are typically pollinated by bees, as are almonds. Chocolate is pollinated by a small fly called a midge.

Pollinators are critically important to both the ecosystem and the U.S. economy. More than 75 percent of the flowering plants rely on pollinators, and honey bees alone are responsible for an estimated \$15 billion worth of pollinator services to agriculture in the U.S. Many of our fruits, vegetables, and nuts, as well as other food products rely on pollinators. Pollinators include endangered and threatened species, such as the long-nosed bat, and migratory birds, such as the ruby-throated hummingbird.

Activities centered on pollinators are a great way to connect children to nature, and questions can be explored with little or no equipment required. For example, how are wind-pollinated flowers distinguished from animal-pollinated flowers? What does the color, shape or smell of a flower tell us about its pollinator? What happens if pollinators are not available?

Information on pollinators can be combined with tips on good nutrition, since diets high in fruits and vegetables (foods dependent on pollinators) are healthy. Without animal pollinators, our diets would be much more limited and less flavorful. We are not the only animals whose diets include animal-pollinated food. Fruits and berries are a component of the diet of many birds and some mammals, such as bears.



The Service has a partnership with the Coevolution Institute, the nonprofit administrator for a collaboration known as the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC). Through NAPPC, more than 100 government, private, university, and nonprofit organizations are working to promote the health of resident and migratory North American pollinators. NAPPC partners have created a variety of educational products on pollinators. The most exciting is Nature's Partners: Pollinators, Plants and You: a comprehensive pollinator curriculum for grades 3-6. The curriculum is available online <[www.napcc.org/curriculum](http://www.napcc.org/curriculum)>.

NAPPC also has a Web site with tools helpful to educators, such as information on gardening for pollinators, things children can do to help pollinators and fact sheets on pollinators and wildlife. These documents and links are located in the "Resources" section of the <[www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org)> .

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