
FlorAbeilles: a database studying plant-bees relationships

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Abstract

Plant-bee relationships have been studied from the standpoint of coevolution, community ecology and population dynamics. But there is no comprehensive source on these relationships for the French bee fauna and flora. So an online scientific database has been developed (www.florabeilles.org) in the context of the National Action Plan on wild pollinators launched by the ministry of ecology. FlorAbeilles has two main goals 1) to provide reliable data about the plants used by these essential pollinators that often have very specific needs to support research and action by professionals involved in land management, conservation and agriculture, and 2) to provide up-to-date information with attractive visual photographs to the general public to document the importance and diversity of the large wild bee fauna and the flora it relies upon and probably pollinates too. This project was launched as a follow-up of the citizen science project FlorApis that collected observations on plant-honeybee interactions. After three years, FlorApis' volunteers have photographed *Apis mellifera* on 750 different plant species (1500 observations), which is almost four times the number of melliferous species reported in the most recent book on the topic (Sielberfield&Reeb, 2013). FlorAbeilles will build upon the data collected in FlorApis. But to collect scientific data on most wild bees is not easy as, unlike honeybees, they cannot be readily identified from photographs. So the interactions recorded are based mainly on extensive reviews of the scientific literature for each species of bees on the plants that they visit to collect pollen and nectar.

Keywords: Abeilles, interactions, pollinisateurs, science participative, base de données

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