

## **2. How do plants and trees reproduce?**

If you have visited a forest, you might have wondered, 'how do this many trees grow?'

Trees and other plants produce new plants by making seeds. When these seeds disperse, a new tree or plant begins to grow.

Some seeds disperse by falling to the ground. Seeds can be dispersed other ways, as well.

Let's talk about some scenarios.

Some plants seeds blow in the wind and land in another area, and begin to grow.

Seed can also end up in an animals fur and the seed then falls off the animals in a new area, spreading the seed. Bison are a good example of this. Bison will roll in a wallow, picking up seeds in their fur. They will roam to a new area and do the same thing, thus dispersing the seeds they may have picked up earlier.

Sometimes plant seeds can stick to us. Have you walked through tall grass and had plant parts stick to you? Plants are sometimes designed to be 'sticky' and their seeds stick to people or animals that brush against them. If this happens to you, YOU might be helping this plant spread!

Another scenario would be that perhaps a bird or a plant-eating mammal, eats the fruit or berries of a plant. The seeds are hard and do not digest. Instead, the seeds are then expelled through feces when the animals defecates, resulting in the seed being introduced to a new area, in which it begins to grow.

Yet another scenario involves birds, butterflies and other insects, which serve as *pollinators*. They take the pollen from a plant and transfer to perhaps another plant, enabling fertilization which will result in seeds developing. Some plants, such as yucca plants, could not spread at all without the help of a 'pollinator'.....In this case, the yucca moth!

When these seeds settle, and are watered by perhaps rain, they begin to grow. That process continues filling our world with beautiful plants and trees, thanks to the wind and the creatures that helped spread the seeds and disperse the pollen!