**Interdependence of Living Things – Fact Sheet 2**

**Senita** **cactus and Senita moth**

Senita cacti and Senita moths live in the deserts of North America and Mexico. The mature cacti flower from sunset to sunrise and attract moths at night-time searching for nectar.

The moths benefit from the sugary nectar and in turn, by visiting the flowers on many cacti, help to pollinate flowers as the sticky pollen attaches to their bodies. Female moths also make use of the flowers as a place to lay their eggs; as the flowers close during the day, the eggs are safe from diurnal (daytime) predators.

**Dugongs and sea grass**

Dugongs are the world's only vegetarian marine mammal and are reliant on seagrasses for food. Dugongs can remain underwater for 3 to 12 minutes while feeding and travelling. They can eat up to 40 kilograms of seagrasses per day.

Seagrasses are a group of flowering plants adapted to exist submerged in shallow marine environments. Sea grass forms an important environment for many species and is also a significant contributor to carbon storage. Dugongs help sea grass by consuming its seeds and depositing them elsewhere for new plants to grow (a method of seed dispersal).

**Blue salvia and hummingbird**

Blue salvia, sometimes know as hummingbird sage, is native to South America. This plant produces a rich amount of nectar and therefore is very attractive to hummingbirds looking to feed on this sugary treat.

Hummingbirds drink up to two times their body weight per day. As they move from plant to plant, they carry pollen and therefore help plants by achieving pollination, necessary to produce seeds. Hummingbirds have adapted by having very long thin beaks to access nectar from tubular flowers, a longue tongue and a light frame to help them hover.

**A picture containing mammal, squirrel

Description automatically generatedBottlebrush plant and honey possum**

Honey possums live in Australia and are mainly nocturnal. They are very small, weighing just 7-10 grams yet can drink 7ml of nectar a day, which would be like a human drinking **50 litres of soft drink!** They have bristles on their tongue that help them to collect nectar when visiting flowering plants and shrubs, such as the bottlebrush plant. Honey Possums pollinate many plant species by transferring pollen collected on their head and body between flowers. In this way, the possum benefits from being fed and the plant benefits as pollination enables the process of reproduction to begin.