

'Bee' Part of the Solution

Bee populations have been in decline for several years. While no one is sure exactly WHY this is happening. We as gardeners can become a frontline group to help plant bee-friendly landscapes.

Informational Resources:

Colorado State

Beekeepers Association
www.coloradobeekeepers.org

*Pollinator Partnership &
North American Pollinator
Protection Campaign:*
www.pollinator.org

The Xerces Society
Xerces.org

Penn State
Pollinator Resource:
[http://ento.psu.edu/
publications/pollinatorfood](http://ento.psu.edu/publications/pollinatorfood)

Colorado State
University Extension:
www.ext.colostate.edu



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Bee Friendly Gardens

Practices and plants to attract
honeybees to your garden



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Getting Started

Bees are important pollinators for many of our food crops. In fact, about 1/3 of our food is pollinated by honey bees including many nuts, fruits and citrus. Yet, bee numbers are in serious decline. Although researchers point to possible causes such as pesticide use, loss of habitat, and disease... no one has been able to pinpoint the exact cause and offer a remedy.

There is now a movement in the gardening world to become a frontline for bee recovery by providing nectar and pollen-producing plants in our home gardens. Perhaps if enough grass-roots green thumbs take an active role in these 'bee recovery zones' we can swing the pendulum the other way for these important insects and undo some of the damage that has been done.

What does it mean to plant a 'bee friendly' garden? This means your garden should have a diverse group of nectar and pollen-rich plants in a pesticide free environment. Ingredients for a bee friendly garden include:

1) **Plant patches** of the same flowering plant (4' or more) to make it easier for bees to locate and harvest from flowers. Colors that particularly attract bees are: blue, purple, violet, white, and yellow.

2) **Types of flowers:** bees are attracted to 'old school' flowers, herbs and natives. Avoid hybrids that have had the nectar/pollen producing qualities bred out of them. Ex. Plant old fashioned sunflowers instead of the 'pollenless' types.

3) **Bloom time:** Plant a variety of flowers with staggered bloom times to feed bees in Spring (bulbs, fruit trees, crabapples), Summer (coneflower), and Fall (mums and asters).

4) **Avoid toxic pesticides** in your garden. No sense attracting these little guys only to poison them. If you must spray a pesticide, try to pick something that is bee-friendly or time your application when bees are not active (early morning or evening hours)

We should note that, according to the Colorado State University Extension, honey bees rarely sting. Wasps are usually the culprits here. Yellowjacket wasps are often hard to distinguish from honey bees. But, you can tell the difference because honey bees will have hairy bodies, while wasps will be smooth. Wasps will also build paper nests, honey bee nests are waxy.

Bee Friendly Plants

compiled from Colorado State University Extension, Colorado State Beekeepers Association, Pollinator Partnership, and The Xerces Society.

Dandelions (they are not weeds to bees;-)

Herbs (let them flower)

Most herbs.....Basil, Lavender, Marjoram, Mint, Oregano, Rosemary, Thyme

Trees:

Crabapple varieties (early nectar source)
Fruit Trees: All types (early nectar source)
Aspen, Hawthorn, Linden, Maple

Annuals

Alyssum, Bachelor Button, Calendula, Cleome, Cosmos (single types), Euphorbia 'Diamond Frost', Heliotrope, Morning Glory, Nasturtium, Snapdragon, Sunflowers (with pollen!), Verbena, Zinnia

Shrubs

Botanical Name
Amelanchier
Caryopteris

Common Name
Serviceberry
Blue Mist Spirea

Chrysothamnus
Cotoneaster
Forsythia
Mahonia
Philadelphus
Prunus
Rhus
Syringa

Rabbitbrush
Cotoneaster
Forsythia
Grape Holly
Mock Orange
Sand Cherry
Sumac
Lilac

Perennials

| <u>Botanical Name</u> | <u>Common Name</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Achillea | Yarrow |
| Agastache | Anise Hyssop |
| Alyssum | Basket of Gold |
| Asclepias tuberosa | Butterfly Weed |
| Aster | Aster |
| Campanula | Bellflowers |
| Centaurea | Bachelor's Button |
| Chrysanthemum | Mums |
| Coreopsis | Tickseed |
| Echinacea | Coneflower |
| Eupatorium | Joe Pye Weed |
| Gaillardia | Blanket Flower |
| Helianthus | False Sunflower |
| Liatris | Gayfeather |
| Lupinus | Lupine |
| Malva | Hollyhock Mallow |
| Monarda | Bee Balm |
| Nepeta | Catmint |
| Papaver | Poppy |
| Penstemon | Beardtongue |
| Perovskia | Russian Sage |
| Phlox | Creeping Phlox |
| Ratibida | Prairie Coneflowers |
| Rudbeckia | Black-Eyed Susan |
| Salvia | Salvia varieties |
| Scabiosa | Pincushion Flower |
| Sedum | Creeping & Upright |
| Stachys | Lamb's Ears |
| Solidago | Goldenrod |
| Tithonia | Mexican Sunflower |
| Tradescantia | Spiderwort |
| Veronica | Speedwell |