

LANDSCAPING FOR POLLINATORS

There are at least 200 species of native bees (note that honey bees are ONE nonnative species) in New England that pollinate more than 250,000 species of plants (to pollinate means the bees transmit male pollen to female parts of a flower allowing fertilization to occur and seeds to develop). The food of these bees is pollen and nectar. Most of these native bees are solitary or sometimes aggregate in small groups (unlike honey bees). These bees live and overwinter in the ground or in the dried stems or twigs of plants. An example is the familiar bumble bee.

How can we landscape our gardens to attract bees and other pollinators? Note that some plants such as oak trees and grasses are wind-pollinated and so have not evolved large, colorful flowers. Instead their flowers produce lots of dusty, light-weight pollen that blows around in the wind.

1. Plant a diversity of flowers that bloom at many different times and in colors that are mostly blues, purple, white, and yellow that bees can see. See some suggestions in the examples in the photos.

2. Plant more native plants, although some introduced plants do attract native bees (see reverse side of this sheet).

The New England Wild Flower Society's Garden in the Woods in Framingham is a great place to see and buy native plants that have not been treated with insecticides.

3. Avoid double flowers that have been bred to have extra petals, which are attractive to people but replace the pollen and nectar producing plant parts.

4. Don't forget the moths and butterflies, which lay their eggs on specific plant species. For instance, monarch butterflies lay their eggs on plants in the milkweed family such as *Asclepias syriacas*, common milkweed, or the very attractive and less aggressive *Asclepias tuberosa*, butterfly weed.

5. Plant in masses or repetitions of one kind of plant so pollinators can find your plants.

6. Don't be such a neat gardener. In the fall leave the stems and twigs and most of the leaves on all of your yard, except for the lawn and paths. Where the leaves tend to pile up unusually high, remove only some. Put your extra leaves in a compost pile, add vegetable scraps from the kitchen, and broadcast the fully-decayed compost around your garden next year.

**Some native (unless marked otherwise) plants that attract bees.
The numbers correspond to the numbers on the photos in the
display.**

1. trumpet honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens* 'Alabama Crimson'.
This twining vine blooms from June to October and attracts bees & hummingbirds.
2. sourwood tree, *Oxydendron arborea*
3. goldenrod (*Solidago*) & asters (*Symphyotrichum*)
4. Kalm's St. John's wort, *Hypericum kalmianum*
5. summersweet, *Clethra alnifolia*
6. threadleaf coreopsis, *Coreopsis verticillata*
7. mountain mint, *Pycnanthemum muticum*
8. highbush blueberry, *Vaccinium corymbosum*
9. bee on clover in the lawn

Some native bees are attracted to some nonnative plants such as #10 - #14 below:

10. panicle hydrangea, *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Kyushi' – Be sure you choose a cultivar like Kyushi that has fertile flowers with male & female structures as well as the larger, sterile flowers. See item #3 on the reverse side of this sheet.
11. fall anemone, *Anemone vitifolia robustissima*
12. spring bulbs such as crocus (*Crocus tomasinianus*), snowdrops, Siberian squill, glory-of-the snow, and grape hyacinths
13. apple & crabapple trees, *Malus* species
14. common lilac, *Syringa vulgaris*