

Planting for Pollinators - 10 Things Pollinators Need

1. **A Pesticide Free Landscape** – Many Insecticides and Fungicides are toxic to bees and other pollinators.
2. **Include Lots of Native Plants** – they evolved with pollinators and better suit their nutritional needs. Many “imports” are ignored, offering little benefit.
3. **Host Plants for Butterfly Larvae** – most butterfly caterpillars require specific plants for nourishment.
4. **A Diversity of Flower Types** – will attract a variety of pollinators and better suite their unique sizes, shapes, and feeding needs.
5. **A Variety of Flower Colors** – bees are attracted to blue, white and yellow; butterflies like red and orange; and hummingbirds prefer red and red-purple.
6. **Grouping Flowers of Kind** – planting groupings of the same flower kind is preferable to sprinklings of different flower types.
7. **Continuous Bloom** – plant for 3-season color. Many native bees, such as the mason bee, are only active in spring. Bumble bee queens need early pollen sources to start a new colony from scratch each year. Monarch butterflies benefit from fall-blooming plants to fuel their migration.
8. **Water** – pollinators, like all creatures, need a clean, reliable source of water for drinking and bathing. A dish or bath must have shallow sides to prevent drowning.
9. **Shelter** – different layers of plants, shrubs and trees, a dead limb, uncovered soil, clumping grasses, and leaf litter all provide nesting sites and protection from severe weather and predators.
10. **Overwintering Habitat** - bumble bee queens and many butterflies overwinter under leaf litter. Try not to be too tidy with fall cleanup. Leave plant stalks and canes – bees and beneficial insect larvae are overwintering inside.