

## What is a Pollinator?

A pollinator is anything that helps carry pollen from one part of a flower to another. This movement of pollen must take place for the plant to be fertilized and produce fruits and seeds. Some plants are self-pollinating, while others need to be fertilized by pollen carried by wind or water. Other flowers are pollinated by insects and animals such as bees, wasps, moths, butterflies, birds, flies and small mammals, including bats.

Insects, bats, beetles and flies visit flowers in search of food, shelter, nest-building materials, and sometimes even mates. Some pollinators, including many bee species, intentionally collect pollen and transport it specifically for pollination. Others, such as butterflies, birds and bats, move pollen accidentally. Pollen sticks on their bodies while they are drinking or feeding on nectar in the flower and is transported unknowingly from flower to flower, resulting in pollination.

## Why are Pollinators Important?

Over 75% of all flowering plants on earth need help with pollination – they need pollinators. Pollinators provide pollination services to over 180,000 different plant species and more than 1,200 crops. That means that one out of every three bites of food you eat is there because of pollinators. In addition to the food that we eat, pollinators support healthy ecosystems that clean the air, stabilize soils, protect from severe weather conditions, and support other wildlife. This ecosystem of birds, bats, bees, butterflies, beetles, and other small mammals are a precious resource that requires attention and support - and in disturbing evidence found around the globe, is increasingly in jeopardy.

## Why are bees important?

Bees are some of the hardest working creatures on the planet, our world would be a much different place if bees didn't exist. To illustrate this fact, consider these numbers: bees are responsible for pollinating about one-sixth of the flowering plant species worldwide and approximately 400 different agricultural types of plants. Honeybees provide us with approximately \$19 billion worth of agricultural crops in North America

## What can I do to help?

Use pollinator-friendly plants and choose a mixture of plants which will bloom for spring, summer, and fall. Different flower colours, shapes, and scents will attract a wide variety of pollinators. If you have limited space, you can plant flowers in containers on a patio, balcony, and even window boxes.

## Plant a Pollinator Garden

The most obvious need for pollinating species is a diversity of nectar and pollen sources. Consider the following when choosing plants for your garden to attract bees and other pollinators:

- Choose plants that flower at different times of the year to provide nectar and pollen sources throughout the growing season.
- Plant groups of three or more plants in an area, rather than single plants, to attract pollinators.
- Provide a variety of colors and shapes to attract different pollinators. Specifically, bees are attracted to bright colours, in particular purples, blues and yellows. For example, bees are very attracted to flowers from the mint family.
- Bees can access pollen from single bloom flowers (1 ring of petals) much more easily than double blooms because the nectar is more exposed. Plants from the aster family are an example of this.
- Bees also prefer more flat/shallow blooming flowers over deeply cupped blooms.
- Whenever possible, choose native plants. Native plants will attract more native pollinators. It is okay to plant non-native species, as long as they still attract pollinators; for example, exotic plants (non-native) attract honey bees.
- Monarch butterflies live in St. Catharines, consider planting milkweed so their caterpillars have food. Milkweed is the only plant that the larva of the monarch butterfly will eat. The decline in population of monarchs has been tied to the decline in milkweed plants.

### Grow your knowledge:



**Pollinator  
Habitat  
Guide**



**Selecting  
Plants for  
Pollinators**



**Grow me  
instead**



## Some Pollinators you can consider for your Garden:

Plant any of these flowers if you wish to attract bees and other pollinators.

Native Plants	Colour	Bloom Time	Height
<b>Wild Geranium</b> ( <i>Geranium maculatum</i> )	Pale Pink	April-May	45cm-60cm
<b>Wild Columbine</b> ( <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i> )	Red/Yellow	April-May	60cm-90cm
<b>Foxglove Beardtongue</b> ( <i>Penstemon digitalis</i> )	White	April-June	90cm-150cm
<b>Lance-Leafed Tickseed</b> ( <i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i> )	Yellow	May-July	30cm-60cm
<b>Purple Coneflower</b> ( <i>Echinacea purpurea</i> )	Pale Purple with Brown Centre	June-July	60cm-90cm
<b>Smooth Oxeye</b> ( <i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i> )	Orange/Yellow with Brown Centre	June-August	90cm-180cm
<b>Blazing Star</b> ( <i>Liatris spicata</i> )	Red/Purple	July-August	60cm-120cm
<b>Wild Bergamot</b> ( <i>Monarda fistulosa</i> )	Pink/Lavender	July-Sept.	60cm-120cm
<b>Anise Hyssop</b> ( <i>Agastache foeniculum</i> )	Lavender-Purple	June-Sept.	60cm-120cm
<b>New England Aster</b> ( <i>Symphyotrichum novae-angliae</i> )	Deep Pink-Purple	August-Sept.	90cm-180cm
<b>Helen's Flower</b> ( <i>Helenium autumnale</i> )	Yellow with pale Yellow Centre	August-Oct.	90cm-150cm
Non-Native (Exotic) Plants			
<b>Winter Aconite</b> ( <i>Eranthis hyemalis</i> )	Yellow	March-April	7cm-15cm
<b>Catmint</b> ( <i>Napeta racmosa</i> )	Lavender-Blue	April-Sept.	60cm-75cm
<b>English Lavender</b> ( <i>Lavendula angustifolia</i> )	Purple	June-August	60cm-90cm
<b>Woodland Sage</b> ( <i>Salvia nemorosa</i> )	Blue-Violet	June-Sept.	30cm-60cm
<b>Showy Stonecrop</b> ( <i>Sedum spectabile</i> )	Pink to Copper	August-Oct.	45cm-60cm
<b>Japanese Anemone</b> ( <i>Anemone x hybrida</i> )	White or Pink with Yellow Centre	August-Oct.	60cm-120cm

\*Some nurseries may not offer the plant species listed above - cultivars of these plants will also attract pollinators.



## Welcoming Pollinators to your garden



**Environmental  
Stewardship  
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