

## Planting to Attract Bees, Butterflies, and Friends



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## Bees

- Visit flowers to collect pollen and nectar as food
- In the process, they pollinate
- Bees thrive best in open, sunny habitats with an abundance and diversity of flowering food plants

## Plants that Attract Bees

- Beautyberry, blackberry, grape, strawberry, milkweed, mint, vitex, loosestrife, broomweed, snowvine, woodbine, huckleberry

## Trees that Attract Bees

- Catalpa, Chinese tallow tree, maple, elm, tulip poplar, blueberry, citrus, peach, pine, apple, pear, dogwood, oak, persimmon, plum, redbud, elderberry

## Perennials vs. Annuals

- Generally richer nectar sources
- Provide a dependable food source year after year
- Encourage repeated nesting in the area
- But blooming veg and herbs are great!

## Butterflies

- Travel farther than bees
- Perch on flower head, collecting pollen on legs and body
- Longer legs and proboscis; not as much body coverage as bees
- Work during the day while flowers are open
- Eyesight: better color perception, find nectar by ultraviolet light

### Both Butterflies and Bees

- Looking for food and nectar, pollinating in process
- More than 90% of plants need a pollinator

### Planting To Attract Butterflies

- Yarrow, red valerian, daylilies, rudbeckia, showy sedum, verbena, gayfeather, hardy ageratum, swamp sunflower, coreopsis, cardinal flower, garden phlox, lantana
- Host plants for larvae: butterfly weed, swamp hibiscus, sweet violet, wormwood

### Plants that Attract Both

- Aster, Bee balm, Sunflower, Black eyed Susan, sage, Goldenrod, butterfly bush, purple coneflower, Joe-pye weed, butterfly weed

### General Guidelines

- Use local native plants - 4x more attractive to native bees than exotic flowers - heirloom herbs and perennials provide forage
- Choose several attractive colors of flowers:
  - Native bees: blue, purple, violet, white, yellow
  - Butterflies: red

### General Guidelines (cont)

- Plant flowers in clumps of one species, 4 ft or more in diameter - will attract more pollinators than individual plants scattered about
- Include flowers of different shapes to benefit as many bees as possible--due to varied tongue lengths among bees
- Have a diversity of plants with a succession of flowering throughout the season.

### “Friends”

- Hummingbirds
- Beneficial Insects

### Hummingbirds

- Also good pollinators
- Humans should provide native nectar plants, shade, shelter, source of insects for protein
- Plants: wild columbine, bee balm, butterfly weed, canna, cardinal flower, Louisiana iris, coralbells, butterfly ginger, glory-bowers, common bearded tongue

### Predators and Parasitoids

- Predators: prey on insect pests
- Parasitoids: Insects that live and develop as parasite on host insects, eventually killing them

### Who Are They?

- These are the good guys:
  - Lady beetles
  - Braconid wasps
  - Hover flies
  - Lacewings
  - Tachinid flies
  - Soldier beetles
- Spined soldier bugs
- Ground beetles
- Robe beetles
- Tiger beetles
- Assassin bugs

### Attracting Predators and Parasitoids

- Plant flowers that produce pollen and nectar
- Plant sheltering plantings (perennials)

### Sources

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