

Growing a Pollinator Garden

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As we are all learning, we must do all we can to save the bees and butterflies.

More gardeners are realizing the importance of beneficial insects, and growing plants that support them. A pollinator garden offers a safe place to rest and refuel. By supplying food in the form of pollen and nectar, we are ensuring that these important pollinators stay in our area and continue to do their important work. Pollinator plants allow crops to continue producing seeds and fruits via insect population as well as a healthy garden and vibrant ecosystem. We can work these plants into the landscape or small patio pots.

Pollinators need nectar in the spring, throughout the summer and fall. Choose plants that bloom at different times to help you create a beautiful garden for you and the pollinators. Providing a water source makes it easier for them as well.

Include a diversity of plants, different shapes, and colors as well as varied heights and growth habits. Use native plant species, and herbs as well. Common herbs such as rosemary, oregano,

basil, and marjoram are an excellent choice. Fruit trees, maples, serviceberry, crape myrtle and privets provide a great food source.

About one-third of the food eaten by Americans comes from crops pollinated by honeybees, including apples, almonds, broccoli, melons, cranberries, pumpkins, and squash to name a few. Some scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators like bees, butterflies birds, bats, and other insects.

Peg's picks for pollinator plants.

*Purple coneflower
sunflowers
Yarrow
aster
Columbine
sedum
Lavender
anise hyssop
Milkweed
honeysuckle*

