

# 4 Ways Your Garden Can Support More Pollinators

## 1. Plant a diverse set of flowering plants

Gardens with more plant species support greater pollinator diversity and generally more liked by the public. Diversify the ABCs when selecting flowers:

**A. Appearance:** A garden with differently shaped flowers supports more kinds of pollinators. For example, bell-shaped flowers of foxglove beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*) are favored by long-tongued bees whereas the flat umbels of golden Alexander's (*Zizia* spp.) are favored by short-tongued masked bees and hover flies.

**B. Bloom time:** Many pollinators have active seasons less than 6 weeks, so growing plants that bloom sequentially from spring to fall means your garden supports more pollinator biodiversity.

**C. Colors:** A colorful garden attracts more different kinds of pollinators. For example, hummingbirds visit red flowers like cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) whereas bees most often visit yellow flowers like those of sweet black-eyed susan (*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*).

## 2. Choose native plants when possible

Although non-native plants can support many native pollinators, many pollinators rely exclusively on native plants. Native plants are also less likely to act as “evolutionary traps” whereby native pollinators are attracted to the plant but perform poorly on it. Visit QR code our recommended native plants.

## 3. Avoid ‘doubled’ cultivars

Double-flowered varieties are bred to have extra petals, such as in many roses, dahlias, and chrysanthemums. Often, this doubling comes at a cost: the reproductive flower parts (where pollen and nectar are produced) are converted to petals, meaning the flower no longer feeds pollinators! Instead, choose cultivars that resemble wild types or the straight species themselves. Visit QR code for our favorite native cultivars.

## 4. Add vegetation structure

Incorporating structural (physical) diversity, including bare soil and woody plants, provides nesting habitat and food resources for many pollinator species. For example, many solitary bees need leaves or sap from trees to line their nests and many butterflies nectar as adults on flowers but consume leaves of trees and shrubs as caterpillars. Adding structure means your garden supports pollinators throughout their life cycles.

Pollinator-unfriendly ornamentals	Pollinator-friendly alternatives
Wildflowers	
Short, fast annuals e.g. Angelonia, snapdragons, petunias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black-eyed Susan (<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>)</li> <li>• Lance-leaf coreopsis (<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>)</li> <li>• Spotted horsemint (<i>Monarda punctata</i>)</li> </ul>
Colorful clumps e.g. <i>Salvia nemorosa</i> , catmint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anise hyssop (<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>)</li> <li>• Mountain mint (<i>Pycnanthemum</i> spp.)</li> <li>• Shrubby St. John's wort (<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>)</li> </ul>
Daylilies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purple coneflower (<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>)</li> <li>• Orange black-eyed susan (<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>)</li> <li>• Butterflyweed (<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>)</li> <li>• False oxeye (<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>)</li> </ul>
Hostas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foxglove beardtongue (<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>)</li> <li>• New Jersey tea (<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>)</li> <li>• Meadowsweet (<i>Spiraea tomentosa</i>)</li> <li>• Culver's root (<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>)</li> </ul>
Tall colorful spikes e.g. Cleome, dahlias, gladiolas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild bergamot (<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>)</li> <li>• Bee balm (<i>Monarda didyma</i>)</li> <li>• Blazing star (<i>Liatris</i> spp.)</li> <li>• Cardinal flower (<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>)</li> <li>• Russian sage (<i>Salvia yangii</i>)</li> </ul>
Short border plants e.g. Mondo grass, sweet alyssum, marigolds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hairy beardtongue (<i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>)</li> <li>• Golden alexander's (<i>Zizia aurea</i>, <i>Z. aptera</i>)</li> <li>• Nodding onion (<i>Allium cernuum</i>)</li> <li>• Golden ragwort (<i>Packera aurea</i>)</li> <li>• <i>Liatris spicata</i> 'Kobold'</li> </ul>
Ground cover e.g. <i>Vinca minor</i> , pachysandra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aromatic sumac (<i>Rhus aromatica</i>)</li> <li>• Wild strawberry (<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>)</li> <li>• Bearberry (<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>)</li> </ul>
Walkway containers e.g. petunias, geraniums, creeping phlox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swamp milkweed (<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>)</li> <li>• Foxglove beardtongue (<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>)</li> <li>• Smooth blue aster (<i>Symphotrichum laeve</i>)</li> </ul>
Shrubs & Trees	
Foundation shrubs e.g. boxwoods, yews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winterberry holly (<i>Ilex verticillata</i>)</li> <li>• Summersweet (<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>)</li> <li>• Chokeberry (<i>Aronia</i> spp.)</li> <li>• Bayberry (<i>Morella caroliniensis</i>)</li> </ul>
Border/hedge shrubs e.g. Euonymus, Arborvitae	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buttonbush (<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>)</li> <li>• Shrubby dogwoods (<i>Swida racemosa</i>, <i>S. sericea</i>)</li> <li>• Arrowwood (<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>)</li> </ul>
Short trees e.g. Bradford pear, Kousa dogwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flowering crabapple (<i>Malus</i> spp.)</li> <li>• Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier</i> spp.)</li> <li>• Eastern redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i>)</li> </ul>
Street trees e.g. London plane, Japanese zelkova	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American basswood (<i>Tilia americana</i>)</li> <li>• Tulip tree (<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>)</li> <li>• Red maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)</li> <li>• Red oak (<i>Quercus rubra</i>)</li> </ul>
Grasses	
Short, filler grasses e.g. Chinese fountain grass, Blue fescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little bluestem (<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>.)</li> <li>• Purple lovegrass (<i>Eragrostis spectabilis</i>)</li> </ul>
Tall border grasses e.g. Chinese silver grass, Feather reed grass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Switchgrass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i>)</li> <li>• Big bluestem (<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>)</li> </ul>