

CREATING A POLLINATOR GARDEN

Pollination occurs when pollen is moved from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma of a flower. The transfer of pollen may be due to wind or water but is most commonly the result of a visit to a flower by animal pollinators such as bees, flies, butterflies, moths, beetles or hummingbirds searching for food in the form of nectar or pollen. Successful pollination results in healthy fruit and fertile seeds, enabling the plant to reproduce and contribute to a sustainable ecosystem.

A pollinator-friendly garden offers the resources and conditions needed by animal pollinators to flourish in an environment free from pesticides.

When you choose plants with the needs of pollinators in mind, you are also supporting other wildlife such as birds and small animals that feed on the seeds, berries and insects that will become plentiful in your garden.

EMPHASIZE PLANTS THAT ARE NATIVE TO OUR ECO-REGION

- Native plants have evolved closely with native insects and meet many of their needs. Some pollinator species are entirely dependent on the availability of certain plants to complete their lifecycles – for example the Monarch butterfly is reliant on milkweed as a site for egg laying and as food for its caterpillars.



K. West



L. Widmer

PLANT A CLUMP (3-5 PLANTS) OF THE SAME SPECIES AND COLOUR

- This will reduce the time and energy spent by the pollinator locating the food source and obtaining the nectar and pollen from multiple blooms.

TO ATTRACT A DIVERSITY OF POLLINATORS TO YOUR GARDEN

- Plant a variety of nectar and pollen-rich flowers of varying colours and shapes that will bloom in succession throughout the growing season.
- Most herbaceous plants bloom during late spring-summer. Plants that bloom in early spring and later in the fall are particularly valuable to pollinators who over-wintered in your garden or will be making a fall migration.



C. Kent



S. Seahra

POLLINATORS ARE DRAWN TO CERTAIN COLOURS AND SHAPES OF FLOWERS

- Bees have good colour vision and are drawn to blue, purple, white and yellow. Butterflies and hummingbirds are particularly attracted to brighter colours such as red, purple and orange.
- The shape of the flower influences the type of pollinator that can readily access its nectar and pollen. In general, short-tongued bees and wasps prefer more open, bowl-shaped flowers or tightly-packed clusters of small flowers. Bees with longer tongues and hummingbirds can reach the nectar within trumpet and bell-shaped flowers. Butterflies prefer a "platform" of blooms on which to land and feed.



S. Caron

AVOID PLANTS THAT HAVE BEEN INTENSIVELY BRED WITHIN THE HORTICULTURAL INDUSTRY

- Plants bred to have larger, denser blooms, unusual colours or enhanced perfume are often associated with less accessible nectar and reduced quantities of less nutritious pollen or nectar.



A MIXTURE OF NATIVE TREES, SHRUBS AND HERBACEOUS PLANTS IS IDEAL

- Spring blooming trees and shrubs such as dogwood, blueberry, cherry, plum and willow are a valuable source of nectar and pollen early in the growing season before most herbaceous plants come into bloom. Witch hazel blooms and is a source of food in late fall.
- The leaves of certain native plants are food for the larvae of pollinating insects, such as the caterpillars of butterflies and moths.
- Leaves are used by some species of pollinators such as leafcutter bees to line/partition their nests. The bees tend to favour leaves with anti-microbial properties such as those of redbud, grey dogwood, staghorn sumac, New England aster and chokecherry.

PROVIDE SITES AND MATERIALS FOR NESTING AND OVER-WINTERING

- Leave cut plant stems (minimum of 8 inches long) standing or on the ground as some species of bees will burrow into the pith or hollow stems to nest or over-winter.
- Leave twigs and brush and even rocks in small piles around the garden to provide sheltered places.
- Leave areas of ground bare (un-mulched). Most native bees live solitary lives in burrows in the ground so leave some bare ground, preferably in sunny, well drained areas.



PROVIDE WATER IN THE FORM OF SHALLOW POOLS OR MUDDY PATCHES

- A mud patch can be a good source of essential minerals for pollinators as well as providing nest-building material for some species of bees and wasps.




OTHER WAYS TO MAKE YOUR GARDEN MORE ATTRACTIVE TO WILDLIFE, INCLUDING POLLINATING INSECTS

- If your growing space is limited, use containers filled with a well-drained soil mix. There are many species of pollinator-friendly plants, both annuals and perennials, that will do well in containers provided they are regularly watered.
- Reduce nighttime outdoor lighting (e.g. by using motion-sensitive lighting) as many birds and insects are highly sensitive to artificial light which can impede their navigation and ability to reproduce and find food.
- Leave snags and logs in your garden as they provide habitat for many insects which in turn are food for birds.
- Provide spaces for wildlife (small mammals, birds and insects) to shelter by planting hedges or dense stands of native shrubs.



For more tips on how you can garden for pollinators, visit pollinationguelph.ca or scan the QR code

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

-  facebook.com/PollinationGuelph
-  twitter.com/PollinateGuelph
-  instagram.com/pollinateguelph



**Pollination
Guelph**