

## My 'starter kit' of tried and tested pollinator friendly plants for all seasons.

(Woody & herby shrubs)



Rosemary (Any variety)

Something about this plant makes me deeply happy, when I smell it or look at the gnarly woody stems, I can close my eyes and imagine I am on a rocky landscape in the Mediterranean. (Oh and pollinators love it too!).



Potentilla (any variety)

Such a beauty, for a warm spot in your garden. Adorned with lovely open flowers, what better offering for pollinators doing a fly-by.



Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)

Wonderful, woody, aromatic, with deep flowers that will attract bees with longer tongues that can reach inside the blooms.



Mahonia (pick a good flowering variety to suit your size garden)

It is thought that a whopping 70% or more of the winter flying bee species, visit this life line plant for much needed and often thin on the ground; winter food. If you get no other winter food plant for pollinators, do consider getting this. While all other gardens offer nothing, you will be the Ritz!



Cistus (White flowering species are my favourite)

Another shrubby open flowered plant, to delight pollinators far and wide. Sometimes I walk past this plant and can hear the contented buzz from it's visitors.



Lavender (I believe some research exist on which varieties, do better for bees)

A well-known plant for a sunny spot! You know the rest.



Fuschia (choose simpler bloomed varieties, doubles won't do)

I used to think this plant had little to offer until I observed a bee 'nectar robbing' on a bloom one day. Look it up, it's a fascinating way that bees get around the problem, of difficult to reach blooms.



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(Trees and hedgerow)



Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*)

There are other Willows to choose from, but I love this one with fat catkins and abundant bees!



Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

Beautiful May blossoms, with a delicate scent. One not to be overlooked.



Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)

As with the Hawthorn, the Blackthorn also blooms beautifully, but this one blooms before it produces leaves; a little earlier in the year.



Wild cherry (*Prunus avium*)

Flowering Cherry is getting full of buds in late March, ready for an April awakening, in time for hungry bees!



Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*)

Very attractive to pollinators indeed with sweetly scented blooms.



Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)

Tiny flowers for oh so important tiny pollinators and of course we may be in the habit of taking a few of the blooms home to make Elderflower drinks with. The fruit are a bonus later in the year, again for us and for wildlife. So many myths exist around this plant, as with many other native hedgerow species. Well worth a look. Tip: If you can replace a fence in your garden, with a mixed native hedgerow, you have done a huge service to wildlife of all species. It is one of the biggest and best actions you can possibly take in your garden or green space, to increase diversity.



Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*)

This is not a tree, but it is a fantastic plant to underplant your trees with. A woodland aspect suits these gentle upright purple flowers that bees and other pollinators feast on.

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(Easy annuals)



**Calendula** (*Calendula officinalis*)

I always think of Calendula as little landing platforms, hoverflies love them and as we know; they are some of the unsung heroes of the pollinating story!



**Cosmos daisy** (*Cosmos bipinnatus*)

As with the Calendula, these always look so easy to land on, pollinators of all species seem to drift on and off with ease. Collect the seeds for next years elegant yet sturdy plants.



**Snapdragon** (*Antirrhinum*)

These are endlessly fascinating for children, when they see how a bumble bee tips and twists its body into the closed mouth of the snapdragon blooms! When you see the fluffy bee bottom, hanging from the flower, legs wiggling you think 'it must be worth it'. Nature knows best.



**Poached egg plant** (*Limnanthes douglasii*)

If you love to serve your hoverfly populations, look no further than this marvellous self seeding plant.



**Cornflower** (*Centaurea cyanus*)

We all love this plant, I am sure along with the Poppy; it is a real national favourite. Watch bees create a wonderful colour compliment to these bluer than blue blooms.



**Corncockle** (*Agrostemma githago*)

A plant that we do not talk about so much, but no less worthy. Revive it in your garden and watch the pollinators plant themselves on the attractive pink upward looking flowers.



**Nasturtium** (Take your pick of varieties!)

I am never without Nasturtiums! I like to grow them up trellis so I can pick and eat the flowers, leaving plenty for large bees to visit.



**Starflower** (*Borage*)

This plant gets 100 gold stars in my book, known to fill up with nectar very quickly after the last pollinators visited.

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(Really wild but bloomin marvellous)



Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*)

I cannot speak highly enough of the value this plant brings to wildlife. It will beat any other plant in flower at the same time, for sheer numbers of visitors. It will be absolutely crammed with hungry pollinators. The list of visitors is very, very long indeed. Don't bash the bramble, before you take a second look.



Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

The sticky, other wordly green flower buds are rich in life giving energy drinks for pollinators. It saddens me to see people destroy vast stands of it, where it could happily have been left, just because it has a bad rep. I say keep it where ever you can, dedicate a sturdy fence to it, what ever you can do to accommodate a bit of it in or indeed around your green space. There is also the small matter of a little bee called the Ivy bee (*Colletes hederæ*) that feeds almost exclusively on it in late summer, too.



Lungwort (*Pulmonaria*)

This is another plant I see people ripping out of the ground as if it has deeply offended them. If only we could speak more loudly of how the hairy-footed flower bee finds it in Spring, for one of its very first drinks of the year!



Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*)

Here we are with another wild plant that I see people fume about, as if they were wronged by it. It gets called invasive, but just keep it divided and in check each year and you'll avoid it romping around. The pollinators that visit this with its cheerful button like flowers, are of the small variety, this is an army of pollinators that we must start to value and this is a good start!

