

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

(Essential herbs)



Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*)

Chives are amazing in so many ways. They are reliably low maintenance, great to eat, fabulous as edging plants to create neat borders around beds and come back every year. They flower in late spring, producing masses of nectar for a variety of pollinators especially bumble bees, but beetles love chives too; which is great!

Tip: Any flowering Allium is a hit with pollinators.



Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*, also called Wild marjoram)

What can I say about this amazing plant, so often overlooked or even pulled out of the garden. This herb stands head and shoulders above many others for value to wildlife, you will see the masses of sun loving blooms, visited by hordes of pollinators from the very small species of bee to big beautiful butterflies. Don't be without this one! On many pollinator plant lists, this is rated as one of the most valuable for it's nectar producing qualities.

Tip: Grow in sunny sites to see it flower in summer. Don't forget to harvest some for culinary use too!



Cotton Lavendar (*Santolina rosmarinifolia*)

I have spoken highly of this plant for many years, through observation of it's huge value to pollinators, yet it still goes under the radar for most. This plant attracts huge numbers of smaller pollinators to its teeny nectar filled flowers and keeps on giving! You could sit by the plant for hours just to count the variety of visiting species. If diversity is what you are looking to improve, add this one to your plant list and you will not regret it!

Tip: This long lasting sun loving, shrubby plant can be easily shared with friends and family as cuttings are easy to take.



Flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*)

Again, a gem of a plant, shrubby, spring flowering and incredibly abundant with nectar for pollinators. Take cuttings to increase your stock of this versatile plant that can become part of a hedge or a stand alone shrub. Give this aromatic leaved plant a sunny spot!



Wall germander (*Teuchrium*)

When I first saw a wall germander 'in action' I had to stop and park my car, so I could go and take a closer look. Even as I drove past this little bushy herb, adorned with myriads of purple to pink blooms, I could see that it was bursting with bees! Need I say more? A must have for me now, a pollinator plant list is not complete without it.



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(Essential bulbs, corms and tubers)



Dahlia

There are so many varieties to choose, but pick one with an open face and you cannot go wrong! A great addition to a pollinator friendly garden in the later Summer months. Plant into pots, so you can just put them outside after the risk of frosts are gone in your area. Bring them in again over winter. My favourite is 'Bishop of Llandaff' but honestly, there are so many species to choose from that will delight your eye.



Sowbread (*Cyclamen hederifolium*)

Oh how I love this unassuming and undemanding plant! If you have a really difficult rooty spot under a tree, try planting some cyclamen hederifolium (or Coum) and watch them colonise the hard to plant spot. When in flower, bees dangle upside down on the reflexed blooms to reach the juice inside!



Wood anemone (*Anemonoides nemorosa*)

Plant these by mixing with soil and throwing them around in handfuls, onto woody and shady areas of your garden. They will work their way into the ground and produce a gorgeously lit corner in the gloom of the Spring. Pollinators will use the open daisy like blooms as a landing platform, to stop for lunch.



Winter aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*)

These ruffled collared yellow beauties, shine out in the gloom of the winter. After the new year comes around, expect these to appear year after year, as if by magic! Any winter flying insects can find these bright yellow landing pads as they pierce the gloom of the winters day.



Grape hyacinth (*Muscari* species)

These are often offered to me by other gardeners as people get annoyed with how they multiply. But when I say they are fabulous for bees, people often change their minds and find a more suitable back seat spot in the garden for these little power houses to colonise. They are very jolly and so worth while having. Newer species will romp around a little less than the O.G! Bees love them.



Crocus (pick your variety!)

There are many species of crocus you can plant, but the corms I often grab in Autumn when it is time to put them in, are the widely available 'Blue pearl'. I find these to be very good at self seeding too. If you love to see things pop up in a lawn in Spring, before grass cutting starts, try this one and you will increase the pollinators food source with no effort at all. For a visually appealing flower bed, I like to plant them around dark red Hellebores which tend to bloom earlier ready for the Crocus to join in with the colourful display!

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(For the traditional flower border)



Christmas rose (Hellebores/Helleborus)

A must have for pollinators that fly around looking for food in the coldest months. Self seeding readily, these are well worth having for a winter garden.



Lamb's ears (Stachys byzance)

Look for the Wool carder bee (*Anthidium manicatum*) seeking out the fibrous leaves to help make it's nest! The flowers attract all manner of pollinators.



Culver's root (Veronicastrum)

When I say the pollinators flock to this tall stately plant, I am not joking! For a fabulous backdrop to your sunny aspect flower beds this is a must have. It is always sticky with sweet sugary, energy giving nectar.



Catmint (Nepeta)

Well known for its value to pollinators, *Nepeta* is a two time flowering plant giving it double value. Cut it back after the first flowering and it'll flower once more!



Verbena bonariensis

Tall, trouble free, self seeding beauties! Plant en masse for a stunning prairie feel.



Rose species

Stuff your nose in a rose for the ultimate olfactory experience, just be careful you are not nose to nose with a buzzing bee who is dancing around the middle of the bloom. Plant single flowering species rather than doubles, you can't go far wrong.



Canterbury bells (Campanula)

All the *Campanula* varieties are superb for nectar value, rating highly for small to large pollinators. A perennial often in the blue spectrum that bees seem to favour.

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(Flowers to let grow in a semi short lawn)



Red clover (*Trifolium pratense*)

The legume family, highly rated for the quality of nectar they produce. Let these grow for species rich lawns.



Common daisy (*Bellis perennis*)

As above! The tiny unassuming flowers provide a good service to pollinators of the small but important variety.



Black medic (*Medicago lupulina*)

More in the little but mighty category for your species rich lawn.



Self heal (*Prunella vulgaris*)

As above, this little gem is bomb proof and a good 'pit stop' plant for bees flying from one place to another.



Creeping thyme (*Thymus* species)

Again, if you are looking to create a wonderful species rich lawn, let low growing thyme creep into it, when in flower, this not only serves your pollinators but looks stunning too!



Birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)

Everything from butterflies to bees will visit you for this nectar rich beauty!



Speedwell (*Veronica* species)

I am fond of this often overlooked or hated plant, in a garden setting it is delicate and hardy and will do well in arid spaces or in rock gardens. There are many species of speedwell.

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(Flowers for a perennial wildflower meadow)



Ox eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*)

Taller plants for more of a meadow feel within your lawn, are always stunning to see, use this one to attract beetles, butterflies and bees.



Lesser knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*)

Another tall and beautiful meadow worthy plant. I have seen these nectar filled blooms favoured by many species, but I have noticed that leaf cutter bees seem to really like them!



Betony (*Betonica officinalis*)

Upright fairly rigid stems create pink soldier like flowers within your long grass areas, an absolutely loves plant by pollinators!



Scabious Small and large (*Scabiosa* species)

The dreamy purple colours of this plant, both small and large scabious, are to die for! Not to mention the constant coming and going you will see, from pollinators, moths, butterflies and everything else!



Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

The most delicate clusters of teeny flowers in one big dish like bloom, will attract all manner of species and don't forget to pick a leaf or two for a cleansing yarrow tea.



Rock rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*)

This hardy little beauty grows happily in the wild, so I give it similar conditions in a garden setting and have it grow on lumps and bumps, rockeries and sunny slopes.



Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)

One of the first wildflowers I ever remember! This has a special place in my long lawn areas. Delicately yellow flowers and ferny foliage do well year on year.

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(Fruit)



Raspberry varieties

The plant that keeps on giving and not just to us! A raspberry cane in flower comes with a side helping of a low hum and buzz of bees. Even if these flowers are not quite open, you will see pollinators attempting to get in -they are that good!



Currant varieties

Black, red or white, the currant bushes provide incredible food sources and of course you will be rewarded with fruit after the pollinators have done their bit! I love taking easy cuttings of these and dishing them out to friends.



Blueberry varieties

Once you see the value of a blueberry bush in the garden, you are unlikely to go back! Apart from producing their weight in gold of juicy fruits, you will have this free abundance of berries year after year. Pollinators flock to these cute little upside down urn shaped flowers. Grow in a pot of ericaceous soil and you can add interest to a dappled shade area, with this wonderful plant. Look out for the amazing Autumn leaf colour!



Japanese wine berry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*)

One of the most glorious jewel like berries I have ever grown, just visually you will love to cast your eyes upon the ruby berries and I find the birds do not go too crazy over them; which is a bonus (I always plant some fruiting bushes especially for the birds, one for me, one for them. This is my favourite tip for being wildlife friendly).



Beans and peas varieties

The flowers in the legumes family are first class. They produce really power packed pollen and nectar and your pollinators can really dine in style here, with a real power packed drink of high quality and high value.



Tomato varieties

We have all heard of 'buzz pollination' and if you haven't, just get some outdoor tumbling tomatoes growing easily in pots and watch and wait! I love 'Sun-gold' as they produce well and are usually trouble free in pots outdoors, where bees can freely fly in and hang upside down onto a bloom. Bzzzzzzzz...