

Planning your garden — think like a pollinator.

Go Native. Pollinators are "best" adapted to local, native plants, which often need less water than ornamentals.

Bee Showy. Flowers should bloom in your garden throughout the growing season. Plant willow, currant, and Oregon grape for spring and aster, rabbit brush and goldenrod for fall flowers.

Bee Bountiful. Plant big patches of each plant species (better foraging efficiency.)

Bee Patient. It takes time for native plants to grow and for pollinators to find your garden, especially if you live far from wild lands.

Bee Gentle. Most bees will avoid stinging and use that behavior only in self-defense. Male bees do not sting.

Bee Chemical Free. Pesticides and herbicides kill pollinators.

Bee Sunny.

Provide areas with sunny, bare soil that's dry and well-drained, preferably with south-facing slopes.

Bee Honey. Make

small piles of branches to attach chrysalis or cocoons. Provide hollow twigs, rotten logs with wood-boring beetle holes and bunchgrasses and leave stumps, old rodent burrows, and fallen plant material for nesting bees. Leave dead or dying trees for woodpeckers.

Bee Aware. Observe pollinators when you walk outside in nature. Notice which flowers attract bumble bees or solitary bees, and which attract butterflies.

Bee a little messy. Most of our native bee species (70%) nest underground so avoid using weed cloth or heavy mulch.

Bee Diverse. Plant a diversity of flowering species with abundant pollen and nectar and specific plants for feeding butterfly and moth caterpillars.



Salvia uliginosa	Bog Sage	Lamiac.	Exotic	Per	N	X, Hb, Meg, Cer	Likes consistent water. Also attracts hummingbirds and Monarch butterflies.
Scabiosa atropurpurea	Pincushion flower	Dipsac.	Exotic	Per	P/N	Mel, Hb	
Senecio cineraria	Dusty Miller	Aster.	Exotic	Per	P/N	Meg, Hb	
Solidago californica	Goldenrod	Aster	CA	Per	P/N	H, Meg, Hb	Attractive bee plant and some cultivars (such as Soladago 'Leraft') are very attractive.
Sphaeralcea ambigua	Desert Globemallow	Malvac.	CA	Per	P/N	Wide var.	Long flowering
Teucrium x lucidrys	Wall Germander	Lamiac.	Exotic	Per	N	H, Ant, Xylo	
Thymus spp.	Thyme	Lamiac.	Exotic	Per	N	Sb, Meg	
Verbena lasiostachys	Verbena	Verben.	CA	Per	N	Hb, Ant	Dead-head and water regularly to maintain flowering.
Vitex agnus-castus	Chaste Tree	Verben.	Exotic	Per	P/N	Xylo, B, Meg, Hb	

Key To Bee Groups

B	Bombus (Bumble Bee)
Anthid	Anthidium (Megachilidae)
sb	One of the many varieties of small bees.
X	Xylocopa (Carpenter Bee)
Osm	Osmia (Megachilidae)
H	Halictid
And	Andrenid
Meg	Megachilid (Leaf Cutter and Mason Bees)
Ant	Anthophorid (Digger Bees)
Hb	European Honey Bee
Mel	Melissodes (an Anthophorid)
Cer	Ceratina (Small Carpenter Bee)
P	Peponapsis (Squash Bee)

Additional Information on the Seasonal Recommended Plant Lists

Most information used to create these lists (For example; plant form, flower color, soil and cultivation requirements) can be found in the Sunset Garden Book. Local nurseries can also be helpful with specific information. All of the plants listed here will flower within one or two years; most during the first year of planting. Other evaluated plants (for example, large shrubs and trees) known to be attractive to bees can be found in our exhaustive [Complete Plant List PDF](#) (last compiled December, 2003).

For best results in bee gardening, we recommend that advanced planning takes place to insure that continual bee floral food will be available for both Spring and Summer seasons. There are distinct groups of bees present in Spring and in Summer; some groups can also be observed year round. In our experimental gardens in the Bay Area we always plant a minimum of 10-15 diverse bee plants each season. Higher bee diversity and abundance occurs when gardens have a