

Plant a Honey Bee Friendly Garden

In the winter of 2006 the honey bee population began to die out. Since then, as much as 70% of some bee populations have died as a result of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Seventy farm grown crops, about one-third of our natural food supply, rely on honey bees for pollination. Imagine peanut butter without jelly. If the honey bees disappear, so will the grapes and the strawberries, along with many of the other foods that have become not only favorites, but staples of the modern diet. You can help restore the honey bee population with a bee friendly garden.

It isn't difficult to make your yard, garden or even patio space a haven for beneficial bees. You'll be helping these important insects, as well as bringing more nature to your backdoor.

The greater the plant diversity, the more bees you will attract and support. Always try to choose as many native plants as possible, and consult with nursery staff or other experts to find vegetation that will thrive in your specific conditions.

Honey Bee Friendly Plants. Attract and nourish honey bees with nectar producing plants. Wild flowers, including asters, goldenrod, sunflowers, even dandelions will provide food for the hives, and the native bee population as well. Plant flowering vegetables and fruits.

Plant Long Blooming Flowers or a variety of plants that will bloom at different times throughout the spring and fall. Honey bees need to eat until they retreat to their hives for the winter. Try to group at least ten bee plants in a bunch or grouping.

Honey Bees Need Water: Provide a pond, a fountain, or some other fresh water source. Not only do the bees need nectar, they need water as well.

Native bees will make their homes in sand. Provide a space in your garden for native bees to make their home. Native bees do not live in hives, but in single living units underground. Leave a space in your garden un-mulched for them to gain access and set up housekeeping. A pile of undisturbed sand will work as well.

No Pesticides or Herbicides. Do not use pesticides and herbicides. Some of them are toxic to bees, and some aren't. Many of them will leave a toxic residue for days or weeks. It is better to introduce good bugs to provide natural protection against pests, and to weed by hand.

Following is a partial list of tried-and-true bee attractors:

Annuals:

Asters
Calliopsis
Clover
Dandelions
Marigolds
Poppies
Sunflowers
Zinnias

Perennials

Buttercups
Clematis
Cosmos
Crocuses
Dahlias
Echinacea
English Ivy
Foxglove
Geraniums
Germander
Globe Thistle
Hollyhocks
Hyacinth
Rock Cress
Roses
Sedum
Snowdrops
Squills
Tansy
Yellow Hyssop

Garden Plants

Blackberries
Cantaloupe
Cucumbers
Gourds
Peppers
Pumpkins
Raspberries
Squash
Strawberries
Watermelons
Wild Garlic

Herbs

Bee Balm
Borage
Catnip
Coriander/Cilantro
Fennel
Lavender
Mints
Rosemary
Sage
Thyme

Shrubs

Blueberry
Butterfly Bush
Button Bush
Honeysuckle
Indigo
Privet

Trees

Alder
American Holly
Basswood
Black Gum
Black Locust
Buckeyes
Catalpa
Eastern Redbud
Fruit Trees (especially
Crabapples)
Golden Rain Tree
Hawthorns
Hazels
Linden
Magnolia
Maples
Mountain Ash
Sycamore
Tulip
Poplar
Willows

Read more:

<http://www.thedailygreen.com/going-green/tips/bee-friendly-plants#ixzz111xwPBHf>