

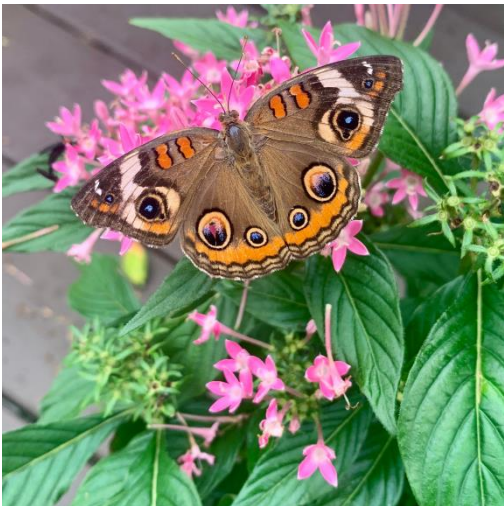


Planting for Pollinators

Pollinators are important. They are the reason you can grow great harvests of fruits and vegetables. The food on your table? It's all because of bees and other insect pollinators. Below are some things that you can do to make sure your garden is the place for pollinators to be (pun intended).

Plant the Right Colors

Bees see color differently than you do. They prefer the colors white, blue, yellow, and purple. Red is a difficult color for bees to see, although it is a favorite of butterflies, who are also pollinators as they flit from flower to flower. Some of our favorite flowers for bees are Mystic Spires, Lavender, and Heather.



Plant for Access

There are some gorgeous flowers with double and even triple layers of petals. And as pretty as they are, when it comes to bees and other pollinators, they can't always easily get to the pollen they are after. Make sure some of the flowers in your garden have a simple single layer of petals.

Plant for All Seasons

Keep pollinators fed all year long by planting flowers that bloom in different seasons or that bloom throughout the year.

Limit or Eliminate Pesticide Sprays

Pesticides kill bugs, and sometimes plants in your yard will get an infestation that needs to be controlled. However, pollinators are bugs, too, and pesticides are not selective enough to kill some bugs and not others. Take care never to spray plants that have active bees, and plan to reduce the amount of pesticide used around your gardens, lawn, and house. The pollinators will reward you with great garden harvests.

Create Habitat

If your yard is too neat and tidy, there may not be enough areas for pollinators to find nesting materials, shelter, and forage. Even if you can't let everything go wild, try to keep some spaces that are a little overgrown with a little fallen brush or old tree branches. These small bits of habitat can help keep pollinators around.