

Attracting Pollinators

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Bringing pollinators like bees and butterflies to your garden boosts ecosystem health, plant growth, yields, and biodiversity. Start by planting a variety of native, nectar- and pollen-rich flowers that bloom from early spring to late fall, which also connects you to your local environment and encourages sustainability.

A continuous blooming period ensures pollinators have food all season. A good pollinator garden also provides shelter and nesting areas: leave bare soil for ground-nesting bees, add brush piles and dead wood for overwintering insects, and consider bee hotels for cavity nesters. These simple steps help support pollinator health.

In addition to floral resources, it is vital to offer pollinators safe access to water. Shallow water sources, such as bird baths or dishes filled with pebbles, allow insects to drink and rest safely. Natural nesting habitats are also essential: leaving some bare soil for ground-nesting bees, providing brush piles or dead wood, and installing bee hotels for cavity-nesting species all contribute to a supportive environment.

Finally, adopting a low-chemical approach by minimizing or avoiding the use of pesticides and synthetic chemicals protects pollinators from harm. When you combine these practices—diverse, native blooms, accessible water, natural nesting spots, and mindful garden care—you create a space where pollinators can truly thrive. This not only sustains local insect populations but also benefits your entire garden by improving pollination, increasing seed production, and strengthening the overall health of your ecosystem.



Photo: Microsoft CoPilot

Resources:

US Forest Service -

https://www.fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/pollinators/documents/AttractingPollinatorsEasternUS_V1.pdf