



The Home Garden Seed Association promotes gardening from seed — an easy, economical, and rewarding way to garden. All HGSA content is provided for the free use of garden professionals. When reproducing information from this or other articles, please credit [ezfromseed.org](http://ezfromseed.org) as the source.

## Priority: Pollinators

Honeybees have been disappearing in record numbers, and they are not the only pollinators that are imperiled. Some butterflies and native bees have experienced significant population declines also, says Eric Mäder, Assistant Pollinator Program Director for the [Xerces Society](http://Xerces Society).

It was just a few years ago that homeowners were asking what they could plant that would *not* attract bees. Now, the question is more likely to be, “How can I attract bees and other pollinators to my garden?”



Pollinators are a diverse and fascinating group of invertebrates, and we have them to thank for beautiful blooming meadows, juicy summer berries, bountiful vegetable gardens, and colorful pumpkins and gourds.

The Home Garden Seed Association, inspired by the conservation work of the Xerces Society, encourages all home gardeners to help the cause of pollinator protection by planting more flowers, an important food resource for all kinds of bees and butterflies. Every flower border, bed, and windowbox helps!

Visit [www.bringbackthepollinators.org](http://www.bringbackthepollinators.org) and sign the Pollinator Protection Pledge. You can also order a Pollinator Habitat sign for your garden.

**“Providing patches of flowers is one thing we can do to improve the environment for pollinators.” *The Xerces Society***

### FACTS

- Flowers clustered in clumps of at least four feet in diameter are more attractive to pollinators than scattered individual flowers.
- A succession of flowering plants that lasts from spring through fall will support a range of bee species.
- Flowers of different shapes will attract different types of pollinators.
- Pesticides are a major threat to insect pollinators.
- The value, in dollars, of pollinators’ services to our food business is estimated to be upwards of \$4 billion—nothing to sneeze at!



## How to Grow a Pollinator Garden from Seed

Now is the time to plan for a bounty of pollen plants that will help pollinators in your region thrive from spring through fall.

**Early spring:** Where winters are cold, pollinators rely on blooming trees in spring, but early-blooming flowering plants provide additional resources.

**Late spring through summer:** Choices abound! Many pollinator favorites are annuals that can be easily, and inexpensively, grown from seed.

**Late summer into fall:** Sunflowers, agastache, herbs, and marigolds supplement late blooming perennials in sustaining pollinators into the fall.

### Bee and Butterfly Plants You Can Grow Easily from Seed



#### EARLY-BLOOMING POLLINATOR PLANTS (Bloom time may differ, depending on location)

Agrostemma  
Baby Blue Eyes  
Bishop's Flower/ Ammi majus  
California poppy  
Cerinthe  
Chives  
Clarkia

Clover  
Dianthus  
Larkspur  
Lupine  
Mustards  
Osteospermum  
Parsley

Pea  
Poppy  
Sweet Alyssum  
Viola  
Wallflower

#### MID-SEASON POLLINATOR PLANTS

Bachelor's button  
Basil  
Black-eyed Susan  
Blanketflower/ Gaillardia  
Borage  
Butterfly Flower/ Asclepias  
Calendula

Cilantro  
Coneflower/ Echinacea  
Cosmos  
Dill  
Feverfew  
Foxglove  
Lavender

Lovage  
Monarda  
Portulaca  
Squash, Pumpkin  
Thyme  
Tickseed/ Coreopsis

#### LATE-BLOOMING POLLINATOR PLANTS

Agastache  
Amaranth  
Cleome  
Dahlia

Marigold  
Mexican sunflower/ Tithonia  
Salvia  
Scabiosa

Sunflower  
Zinnia