



**GARDEN
FOR WILDLIFE™**

Pollinator Gardening

Pollinators are animals that move from plant to plant while searching for protein-rich pollen or high-energy nectar to eat. As they go, they are dusted by pollen and move it to the next flower, fertilizing the plant and allowing it to reproduce and form seeds, berries, fruits and other plant foods that form the foundation of the food chain for other species—including humans.

Pollinators are themselves important food sources for other wildlife. Countless birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians eat the protein and fat-rich eggs, larvae, or adult forms of pollinators, or feed them to their young. Pollinators play a critical role in the food supply for wildlife and people!

Bees are well-known pollinators, but over 100,000 invertebrates—including butterflies, moths, wasps, flies, and beetles—and over 1,000 mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, act as pollinators.

**MORE THAN 85% OF
FLOWERING PLANTS
REQUIRE INSECT
POLLINATION WHICH
RESULTS IN FRUITS,
NUTS AND SEEDS THAT
25 PERCENT OF BIRDS
RELY ON FOR FOOD.
NATIVE BEES POLLINATE
15 PERCENT OF U.S
FRUIT, NUT, VEGETABLE
AND FIELD CROPS.**

Tips & Info

Pollinators worldwide are in decline. Habitat loss, invasive species, parasites, and pesticides are largely to blame. Here's how to help.

Pollinator Gardens Tips

- 1. Plant native flowering plants in your garden.**
Get a list for your zip code at [nwf.org/nativeplants](https://www.nwf.org/nativeplants).
- 2. Reduce the size of your lawn and replace with native blooming plants.**
- 3. Provide water for pollinators** by filling a shallow birdbath with gravel or creating a muddy patch in a corner of your yard.
- 4. Attract hummingbirds** by planting dense shrubs for nesting and native plants with bright red and orange tubular flowers for food. Supplement as needed with a nectar feeder.
- 5. Most native bees are solitary** and lay eggs in tiny tunnels in dead trees, fallen branches, hollow stems, or in sandy soil. Leave standing dead trees, fallen logs, and bare patches of sandy soil. You can even put out a bee house filled with nesting tubes.
- 6. Butterflies need special “host plants” as food** for their caterpillars. Monarchs, for example, rely on only one host plant, milkweed, so planting it will provide essential habitat. Find host plants for butterflies and moths native to your area at [nwf.org/nativeplants](https://www.nwf.org/nativeplants).

Join the Garden for Wildlife Movement!

Join the growing movement of people making a difference for wildlife where they live, work, learn, worship, and play!

Get more tips on creating wildlife habitat gardens that benefit pollinators and how to get your garden recognized as a Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. Every certified garden counts towards reaching the goal of the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge.

Don't Use Pesticides

Insects are a sign of a healthy garden, and an important food source for birds. No need to spray!

Attract ladybugs, predatory wasps and other natural enemies of pests. Native plants attract these beneficial pest predators.

Hand-pick pests if you have an infestation or wash them off with a stream of water from a hose.

Use only use organic or natural pest deterrents such as soap, garlic and chili pepper.

Avoid chemical pesticides, especially neonicotinoid insecticides and “weed killers” that eliminate the pollen and nectar plants pollinators need.

Learn more at [nwf.org/organicpractices](https://www.nwf.org/organicpractices)



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For more information, visit
[nwf.org/gardenforwildlife](https://www.nwf.org/gardenforwildlife)