



FEATURES OF

# Pollinator Gardens



**Do you have** a bee friendly, butterfly happy, hummingbird attractive habitat?

- **Presence of a diversity of plants.** At least 20 different plant types as sources of pollen and nectar. Replace spring annuals with summer annuals.
- **Flower bloom throughout the seasons.** There should always be a source of pollen and nectar. When one source begins to decrease in number, they look for the next source even if all is not depleted.
- **Gardens are structured.** Tallest in the back, medium height, and then the shortest. Allows for the best observation of your pollinators.
- **Garden is planted in a sunny spot.** On a clear day, observe the sun as it moves from east to west and try to keep the garden in the sunniest areas of the yard. Bees love the warmth of the sun.
- **Herbaceous shrubs, perennials, and annuals are located in the garden.** Bees possess “floral constancy” which means that each time they head out to gather pollen and nectar, they are attracted to the one or a few types of flowers; so having a variety of plants means more bees. The ideal patch size for each variety of flower is 3.5 by 3.5 feet. Shape doesn’t matter.



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- **Annuals are seeded early to allow full development.** Scratch the soil surface, generously sprinkle the seeds over the soil, lightly sprinkle compost to retain the seeds and moisture, then water without force.
- **Maintain the flowers.** Keep the perennial flowers deadheaded by pinching the spent blooms which encourages energy to go back into flower production. Annuals can go to seed after flowering. Use high quality fertilizers or compost tea to maintain health of the plants.
- **Regularly water.** Allows plants to use the energy to produce a longer flowering period. True even for native plants. Don't stress the plants.
- **Do not use pesticides.** These kill beneficial pollinators and natural predators and pests that can provide for natural pest control.
- **Plant native plants that are adapted to the climate.** Know your climate zone. May need to plant some non-natives to span the seasons from spring to fall. Consult local nurseries.
- **Habitats for nesting bees are also included.** Hives, cavities, and leaving areas unmulched or untidy, to allow ground bees to nest as well.

*As your garden develops year after year,  
more pollinator species will visit.*

Adapted by Kathy Cassin, Master Gardener, from: Frankie, G.W., Thorp, R.W., Coville, R.E., and Ertter, B., *California Bees and Blooms, A Guide for Gardeners and Naturalists*. Berkeley, CA: Heyday Publishing, 2014.

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