Recommended Pollinator Plant List

Welcome! This list is by no means exhaustive but it gives you a feel for some of the plants we use in many of our community garden projects.

These perennials are selected for value for pollinators, suitability to various conditions especially the ability to tolerate hot, dry spells - an increasingly common factor in a changing climate. Once established they can be divided and so are a highly sustainable choice.



Delphinium *(Delphinium elatum)*

- Tall spires in blue, pink, white; loved by bees and butterflies
- Ultimate height 0.5–1 metres
- Prefers full sun to part shade, rich moist soil, sheltered windy spots and requires regular watering

Mediterranean Sea Holly *(Eryngium bourgatii)*

- Metallic-blue, spiky flower heads
- Great for dry gardens and visually striking for pollinators
- Ultimate height 0.1-0.5 metres
- Grow in dry, well-drained, poor to moderately fertile soil, full sun is essential





Lupin *(Lupinus)*

- Classic cottage garden plant with tall flower spikes in vivid blue
- Ultimate height 0.1-0.5 metres
- Grow in full sun or light shade on light and slightly acid, well-drained or sandy soil

Viper's Bugloss *(Echium vulgare)*

- A bushy biennial that grows to 90cm tall with lance-shaped, bristly-hairy leaves, and dense cylindrical spikes of bell-shaped violet-blue flowers in early summer
- They prefer fertile, well drained soil and full sun



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Balkan Clary Sage *(Salvia nemorosa 'Caradonna')*

- Deep-violet spires aromatic foliage and a magnet for bees and butterflies
- Ultimate height 0.5–1 metre
- Grow in full sun in light, moderately fertile, humus-rich, moist but well-drained soil
- Drought-tolerant once established



May Night Sage *(Salvia × sylvestris 'Mainacht')*

- Early-season purple spikes; hardy, long-blooming, and highly attractive to pollinators
- Ultimate height 0.5–1 metre
- Best in full sun but can tolerate light partial shade. Grow in light, moderately fertile, humus-rich, moist well-drained soil



Meadow Sage *(Salvia pratensis)*

- Vivid violet-blue, upright blooms; visited by honeybees, bumblebees and a diversity of solitary bees
- Ultimate height 0.5–1 metre
- Best in full sun but can tolerate light partial shade
- Grow in light, moderately fertile, moist but well-drained soil



African Lily *(Agapanthus africanus)*

- Striking blue or white umbels atop tall stems; attracts bees, butterflies and other pollinators
- Native to South Africa, drought-tolerant once established
- Ultimate height 0.5–1 metre
- Grow in full sun in moist but well-drained soil



Pincushion Flower *(Scabiosa Butterfly Blue)*

- Sky-blue to pale purple. A long flowering period into autumn, these are irresistible to bees, moths and butterflies.
- Ultimate height 0.1-0.5 metres.
- Best in full sun, long bloom period.
- Grow in well-drained soil, drought resistant.

Common Knapweed *(Centaurea nigra)*

- A branching perennial about 75-90cm, with simple or pinnately lobed leaves
- The thistle-like purple flowerheads grow to 4cm across
- Prefers a well-drained fertile soil in a sunny position and is also tolerant of dry, alkaline soils
- Self seeds readily





Purpletop Vervain *(Verbena bonariensis)*

- Tall airy stems topped with small, lilac-purple flowers which bloom from summer to autumn
- Ultimate height 1.5-2.5 metres
- Grow in moist well-drained moderately fertile soil in full sun, self-seeds

Eastern (Purple) Coneflower *(Echinacea purpure)*

- Daisy-style purple blooms with raised central cone. Loved by bees & butterflies; blooms mid-summer to autumn
- Ultimate height 0.1–0.5 metres
- Grow in well-drained soil, ideally in full sun, although tolerant of some shade





Black-eyed Susan *(Rudbeckia fulgida var. sullivantii 'Goldsturm')*

- Golden-yellow daisy-like flowers with dark centre cones, blooms June–Sept; a reliable nectar source
- Ultimate height 0.5–1 metre
- Grow in full sun or partial shade in humus rich, moist but well-drained soil. Once established able to tolerate drought

Common Sneezeweed *(Helenium autumnale)*

- Late-summer to fall bloomer with golden-orange-red daisy blooms attract bees and butterflies
- Ultimate height 1–1.5 metre
- Performs best in fertile, moisture-retentive, humus-rich soil on sunny sites





Bird's-foot Trefoil *(Lotus corniculatus)*

- A member of the pea family. It grows in sunny grassy places, on well-drained soils, and often appears in lawns. It's a low-growing plant with downy leaves with five leaflets



Nasturtium *(Tropaelum majus)*

- Nasturtium flowers and leaves are used in cooking an natural remedies. Best grown in poor, well drained soil, requires moderate watering and full sun.
- It can reach up to 3 meters as a climber with delicate and flexible stems
- Flowers are trumpet shaped with 5 petals

Common Yarrow *(Achillea millefolium)*

- Fern-leafed clusters of white (sometimes pink) umbels, which attract bees, butterflies & beneficial insects
- Ultimate height 0.5–1 metre
- Suitable for a sunny position
- Drought-tolerant





Black & Red Currant *(Ribes nigrum & rubrum)*

- A reliable fruiting shrub, grown mainly for their berries, packed with vitamin C
- They can be deciduous or evergreen with simple leaves and small tubular or bell-shaped flowers
- Love full sun and will grow to 1–1.5 metres