



melindamyers.com



# SUPPORTING NATIVE BEES

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# WHY NATIVE BEES NEED OUR HELP

OFTEN OVERLOOKED FOR THEIR IMPORTANCE IN POLLINATING FLOWERING PLANTS, INCLUDING MUCH OF THE FOOD WE EAT

- Native Bees are Better Pollinators
- Native Bee Benefits
- Bee Basics
  - 20,00 species of bees world wide
  - 4,000 species native to North America
  - 500 species identified in Wisconsin according to the Audubon Society

## WISCONSIN BEE IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

### MORE INFO ON BEES

### THREATS TO NATIVE BEES AND OTHER POLLINATORS

- Loss of habitat
- Diseases, predators and parasites
- Pesticides

### NO MOW MAY

- Allowing dandelions, clover and other early blooming plants to reach flowering stage, providing food for pollinators, especially bees
  - Some municipalities have restrictions on lawn height, always check
  - If killing weeds in lawn - no point in participating
  - Inform your neighbors
  - Mow before dandelions set seed
  - Consider expanding pollinator-friendly habitats
- Helping your lawn recover
  - Mow as high as possible and gradually reduce grass height to 3 1/2-4"
  - Memorial Day / early June fertilization
    - Consider a low nitrogen, slow-release fertilizer like Milorganite that will help the lawn recover, but will not burn the grass if weather turns hot and dry

### CREATING BEE-FRIENDLY HABITATS

- Supporting Native Bees
- Making and Caring for a Bee House
- 90% of bees are solitary - but neighborly
- 70% are ground nesting
- 30% nest in holes in trees, snags, plant stems...

## **About ATC**

ATC was formed in 2001, as the first multi-state, transmission-only utility in the United States. Unlike most other utilities, we have a single focus: transmission.

Our high-voltage transmission lines enable utilities to move power from a variety of different sources and locations to substations and lower-voltage lines that serve communities.

While we are required to keep trees and brush out of transmission rights-of-way, we do understand they are an important part of the landscape. Since 2013, we've donated over \$425,000 to support community planting projects and establish quality pollinator habitat within transmission rights of way.

Visit [atcllc.com](http://atcllc.com) to learn more.



Helping to keep the lights on,  
businesses running and communities strong®

- Leafcutter bee
  - Lays eggs in holes, lines nest with leaves
- Mason bee
  - Lay eggs in holes and seals each one with a dab of mud
- Some are specialized pollinators - visiting only certain plants
  - Squash bee - squash, pumpkins, melons
  - Long horned bees - members of the Aster family

## **BUMBLEBEES**

### **BUMBLEBEES OF WISCONSIN**

- Important pollinator
  - Managed hives being used commercially
- Social (50-500 per colony)
- Nest
  - In the ground - abandoned rodent holes
  - Grass tussocks
  - Cavities in trees or under rocks
  - Abandoned bird nests
  - Queens overwinter in shallow holes in ground
    - Avoid raking, tilling or mowing in early spring
    - Leaf litter provides insulation
- Large size - generate heat so can fly earlier and later in day as well as on cooler days than honey bees
- Buzz pollinator - vibrate flowers to release pollen to form more fruit
  - Berries, peppers, tomatoes, especially greenhouse tomatoes
- Lifecycle of bumblebees
  - Fertilized overwintering queen emerges in spring (late April - early May in Wisconsin)
  - Locate nesting spot
  - Forages for food
  - Fills with food (secretes wax pots and fills with nectar)
  - Lays eggs in pollen balls
  - Eggs hatch, larvae grow larger, form cocoons and hatch as adult workers (early summer)
  - These workers take over foraging for food so queen begins laying eggs
    - Unfertilized eggs become drones and workers
    - Fertilized eggs become gynes, become new queens
    - Drones and gynes leave the nest and mate - sometime between late June and September in WI
    - Original queen dies

## **About Grow Smart®**

ATC's Grow Smart® program encourages planting low-growing, native perennials within the transmission rights-of-way. This flowering vegetation can thrive within the rights-of-way, making utility corridors ideal for pollinators who benefit from the contiguous flight path.

Once established, the native vegetation beautifies the right-of-way and provides exceptional habitat for other species, while also maintaining the safety and reliability of the electric grid.

ATC is uniquely positioned to help establish habitat for pollinators because of the 9,921 miles of transmission line right-of-way we manage. Approximately 40% of our rights-of-way have been identified as having suitable pollinator habitat.

Visit [atc-GrowSmart.com](http://atc-GrowSmart.com) for low-growing, native plant suggestions.



- Mated gynes build fat reserves and find overwintering homes
  - ◆ Enters diapause and slumber for 6 to 9 months

- Bumblebee nest boxes

- **Bumblebee Watch**

## **WATER**

- Bird bath with gently sloping sides
  - Or rocks on bottom so bees can take a sip without getting wet
- Damp puddle for mineral rich sip of water
  - Shallow container filled with damp sand
  - Sprinkle sea salt or wood ash on sand

## **MANAGING THE LANDSCAPE FOR BEES**

- Leaf litter - insulation for overwintering butterflies and moths
- Perennials
  - Winter - leave perennials standing in garden
  - Spring
    - Cut back old growth once temperatures hover in the 50's
      - ◆ If can't wait, stack out of site
      - ◆ Remove some stems to ground level
      - ◆ Leave some stems 8-24" tall
        - \* These will provide summer homes
  - Summer
    - New growth hides the stubble
  - Winter
    - Bees hibernate in stems

## **BEE PLANTS FOR MIDWEST**

**BEES ARE ATTRACTED TO BRIGHT WHITE, YELLOW, BLUE OR UV**



### **About Melinda**

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including *Can't Miss Small Space Gardening*, the *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, and *Jackson and Perkins' Beautiful Roses Made Easy*. She hosts the nationally-syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program airing on over 115 TV and radio stations throughout the U.S. Melinda also hosts the internationally distributed Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series, including the latest *Food Gardening for Everyone* DVD set. She is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine, writes the twice monthly "Gardeners' Questions" newspaper column and a nationally-distributed gardening column. She appears regularly as a guest expert on national and local television and radio shows.

Visit Melinda's website,  
**[melindamyers.com](http://melindamyers.com)**

## **MARSH MARIGOLD**

*Caltha palustris*

- 1' tall
- Space 6-12"
- Moist to wet soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms March - April
- Bees and other pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 7

## **YELLOW TROUT LILY**

*Erythronium americanum*

- 6" tall
- Space 6-8"
- Moist soils
- Dappled sun to shade
- Yellow flowers April - May
- Bees
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

## **BLOODROOT**

*Sanguinaria canadensis*

- 6-12" tall and wide
- Moist, well-drained organically rich soils
- Part to full shade
- Dry shade tolerant
  - Dormant mid summer
- White flowers early spring, close at night and cloudy days
- Black walnut tolerant
- Bees and other early pollinators
- Reddish sap used as dye
- Zones 3 to 8

## **DUTCHMAN'S BREECHES**

*Dicentra cucullaria*

- 6" tall
- Space 6-8"
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Dappled sun to partial shade
- Fragrant white flowers in early spring
- Bees, butterflies, songbirds
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Zones 3 to 7

## **BLUE FALSE INDIGO**

*Baptisia australis*

- 3-4' tall
- Space 2-3'
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms June - July
- Attractive seed pods
- Butterflies, pollinators
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Tap root helps it adapt, but challenging to move established plants
- Zones 3 to 9

## **PERENNIAL SALVIA**

*Salvia nemerosa (Salvia x superba)*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 15-18"
- Moist, well-drained to occasionally dry soil
  - Drought tolerant once established
- Full sun
- Blooms June - July

- Deadhead to extend flowering
- Bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, songbirds, bats
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Zones 4 to 8
- Caradonna more clay tolerant
- May Night less subject to opening in center
- Wesuwe has vibrant violet flowers

## **PENSTEMON**

*Penstemon digitalis*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sand soil
  - Tolerates clay better than other penstemons
- Full to part sun
- Blooms June - July for a month or longer
- Bees, birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3b to 8

**National Pollinators Month** in June is celebrated internationally in support of pollinator health. It's a time to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what we can do to help support them.<sup>1</sup>

Pollinator populations are changing. Many pollinator populations are in decline and much of this decline is due to a loss in feeding and nesting habitats. Pollution, the misuse of chemicals, disease, and changes in climatic patterns are all contributing to shrinking and shifting pollinator populations.<sup>2</sup>

National Pollinators Month brings attention to the importance of the relationship between pollinators and plants. Research studies estimate that about 75% of the food sources in the world are dependent on pollination. However, due to increased pollution and invasive non-native plants, pollinators like bees and wasps are in danger of extinction.<sup>1</sup>

The month focuses on supporting pollinators by creating safe places for them to live and raise their young, Creating pollinator-friendly habitats that provide food, shelter, and water and avoiding the use of pesticides is one way we can help. Protecting pollinators helps us ensure future sources of food, fiber, medicine and other resources that depend upon these important pollinators.

<sup>1</sup> [www.nationaltoday.com/national-pollinators-month](http://www.nationaltoday.com/national-pollinators-month)

<sup>2</sup> [www.pollinator.org/pollinators](http://www.pollinator.org/pollinators)

## **FLOWERING ONION** - *Allium*

Native and non-native species

- Size varies with species and varieties
- Spring, summer and fall bloomers
- Full sun to part shade
- Most reseed readily
- Bees and pollinators
- Animal resistant

## **BLANKET FLOWER**

*Gaillardia x grandiflora*

- 1-3' tall
- Space 18-24"
- Loam soil, prefers moist
  - Requires well-drained soils
  - Not tolerant of heavy, wet soils
- Heat and dry soil tolerant once established
- Full sun
- Blooms all summer long
  - May bloom itself to death
- Bees, butterflies, goldfinches eat the seeds
- Zones 3 to 10

## **LEAD PLANT**

*Amorpha canescens*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 2'
- Loam and sandy soils
  - Taproot, so very drought tolerant
- Full to part sun
- Takes a few years to mature

- Do not cut back when young
- Blooms June - July
- Hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

## **RATTLESNAKE MASTER**

*Eryngium yuccifolium*

- 3-5' tall
- Space 12"
- Clay, loam, sand soils, tolerates dry soil
- Full sun
- Steel blue flowers June - August
- Butterflies, pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 4 to 9

## **CATMINT** - *Nepeta x faassenii*

- 18-30" tall
- Space 18-24"
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Full sun
- Blooms June - August
- Fragrant foliage
- Bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, pollinators
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

## **CALAMINT**

*Calamintha nepeta nepeta*

- 12-18" tall
- Space 12-24"
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Full sun

- Blooms June - September
- Fragrant foliage
- Bee favorite, butterflies, pollinators
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Zones 4 to 9

## **GLOBE THISTLE** - *Echinops ritro*

- 4' tall
- Space 16"
- Well-drained to dry soils
- Full sun
- Blue flowers June - August
- Bees, butterflies
- Salt tolerant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

## **MILKWEEDS**

### **SWAMP OR RED MILKWEED**

*Asclepias incarnata*

- 3-5' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Clay, loam, sand soils
- Full sun
- Fragrant blooms June - July
- Bees, birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators, Monarch host plant
- Zones 3 to 9

# **UPCOMING APPEARANCES & WEBINARS**

*Check often as more appearances and webinars continue to be added.*

**June 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Ebert's Greenhouse Village**

*The Wonderful World of Hydrangeas*

**June 22<sup>nd</sup> Webinar**

*Maintaining Your Landscape with Pollinators in Mind*

## **BUTTERFLY WEED**

*Asclepias tuberosa*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Loam, sandy soils
- Full sun
- Blooms June - August
- Bees, birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators, Monarch host plant
- Deer resistant
- Slow to emerge in spring, so mark the location to avoid accidentally digging up the plant
- Zones 3 to 10

## **COMMON MILKWEED**

*Asclepias syriaca*

- 2-4' tall
- Space 12"
  - Spreads vigorously by rhizome and seed
  - Sullivant's milkweed (*Asclepias sullivantii*) is a bit less aggressive
- Loam, sandy soils, tolerates dry soil
- Full sun
- Fragrant blooms June - August
- Bees, birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators, Monarch host plant
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

## **BLACK-EYED SUSAN**

*Rudbeckia hirta*

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sandy soils
- Full sun
- Blooms June - September
- Biennial that self-sows, acting like perennial
- Bees, birds, butterflies, other pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 10

## **WILD BERGAMOT / BEE BALM**

*Monarda fistulosa*

- 2-5' tall
- Space 2'
- Clay, loam, sandy soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms July - September
- Bees, birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9
- Bee Balm - *Monarda didyma*

## **PURPLE CONEFLOWER**

*Echinacea purpurea*

- 3-4' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sandy soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms July - September, 2 months or more

- Bees, birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 4 to 8

## **PURPLE PRAIRIE CLOVER**

*Dalea purpurea*

- 1-2' tall
- Space 1'
- Clay, loam, sandy soils
- Full sun
- Blooms July - August
- Birds, pollinators, host plant
- Tap root helps it adapt, but challenging to move established plants
- Zones 3 to 8

## **IRONWEED**

*Vernonia*

- 4-8' tall
- Space 2-4'
- Moist soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms July - August
- Bees, butterflies, other pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 4 to 9

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## **LAVENDER HYSSOP**

*Agastache foeniculum*

- 2-4' tall
- Space 1'
- Loam and sandy soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms July - September
- Bees, birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 2 to 6

## **RUSSIAN SAGE**

*Salvia yangii*

formerly *Perovskia atriplicifolia*

- 3-6' tall
- Space 2½ - 3'
- Well-drained to dry soils
  - Drought tolerant
- Full sun
- Blue flowers mid to late summer
- Bees
- Deer resistant
- Regular pruning or compact varieties to avoid flopping
- Zones 3 to 9

## **JOE PYE WEED**

*Eutrochium*

formerly *Eupatorium*

- 3-7' tall
- Space 18-36"
- Moist soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms July - September
- Bees, butterflies, other pollinators, host plant

- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

## **GREAT BLUE LOBELIA**

*Lobelia siphilitica*

- 1-4' tall
- Space 1'
- Forms colonies if properly sited, not overly aggressive
- Clay, loam, sand soils - easier than cardinal flower
- Full sun
- Blooms July - September
- Bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

## **SEDUM**

*Sedum, Graptopetalum, Hyloteiphium, Phedimus*

- 2-24" tall
- Space 15-24", spacing varies with species
- Well-drained to dry soils
- Full sun preferred
- Bloom time varies with species, summer to fall
- Bees, butterflies, other pollinators
- Deer and rabbit resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

## **GOLDENROD**

*Solidago*

- 1-3' tall
- Space 1'
- Loam, sandy soils
- Full sun
- Blooms August - September
- Showy, Stiff & Blue-stemmed less aggressive than some
- Bees, birds, butterflies, other pollinators
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

## **NEW ENGLAND ASTER**

*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*

- 3-6' tall
- Space 12-18"
- Clay, loam and sandy soils, prefers moist, rich soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms August - frost
- Bees, birds, butterflies, other pollinators
- Pinch for sturdier growth or next to plants with sturdier stems
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 7
- [Chicago Botanic Garden Plant Evaluation of Cultivated Asters](#)

## **STEEPLEBUSH**

*Spiraea tomentosa*

- 2-4' tall
- Space 3-4'
- Moist, well-drained, occasionally wet soils
- Full sun
- Long blooming, summer pink or lavender flowers
- Bees, butterflies
- Deer and erosion resistant
- Zones 3 to 8

## **NEW JERSEY TEA**

*Ceanothus americanus*

- 2-3' tall
- Space 3'
- Loam and sandy soils
- Full to part sun
- Blooms July - August
- Bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, other pollinators, host plant
- Deer resistant
- Zones 3 to 9

## **HERBS**

### **MINT**

- Aggressive, keep contained

### **OREGANO**

- Aggressive, keep contained

### **THYME**

### **BORAGE**

### **LAVENDER**

## **ANNUALS**

### **POT MARIGOLD / CALENDULA**

*Calendula officinalis*

- 12-18" tall
- Space 12"
- Well-drained soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms best during cooler weather
- Edible flowers
- Bees, butterflies, other pollinators
- Rabbit and black walnut resistant

### **BEGONIA**

*Begonia*

DRAGON WING, WHOPPER, BIG

- 12-24" tall
- Space 1'
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Full sun to shade
- Large leaves and flowers
- Blooms all summer
- Bees, hummingbirds
- **Wax Begonia**

### **HELIOTROPE**

*Heliotropium arborescens*

- 12-18" tall
- Space 12-15"
- Well-drained, fertile soils
- Full sun
- Violet, purple, white, fragrant flowers all summer
- Can be overwintered indoors
- Bees

### **ZINNIA - Zinnia**

- 6-36" tall
- Space 8-15"
- Well-drained to dry soils
- Full sun
- Can start from seed directly in the garden
- Look for disease resistant cultivars like Profusion and Sahara
- Bees, birds, hummingbird and butterfly favorite - especially single flowered varieties
- Rabbit resistant

### **SCARLET SAGE**

*Salvia splendens*

- 1-2' tall
- Space 8-15"
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Full sun
- Various flower colors, blooms all season
- Bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, other pollinators
- Birds eat the seeds
- Perennial in Zones 10 & 11

### **ANISE SAGE**

*Salvia guaranitica*

- 2-5' tall
- Space 2-3'
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Full sun to part shade
- Blooms all summer long
- Bees, butterflies, hummingbirds
- Perennial in Zones 7 & 10

### **SUNFLOWER**

*Helianthus annuus*

- 2-20' tall
- Space 12-24"
- Well-drained to dry soils
- Full sun
- Staggering planting to extend bloom time
- Bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, songbirds



## **Join the Pollinator Month Celebration**

Visit [atc-growsmart.com/library](https://atc-growsmart.com/library)

*Youth, Teen, and Family Pollinator  
Videos and Activities for All Ages*

*Pollinator Webinars Registration and  
Recordings*

*Grow Smart Pollinator Guide*

**Contact Your Local Public Library**

**Many are Providing Pollinator Related  
Activities in June**

*Story Time*

*Reading Lists*

*Take and Make*

*And Much More*



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Visit [atc-growsmart.com](http://atc-growsmart.com)



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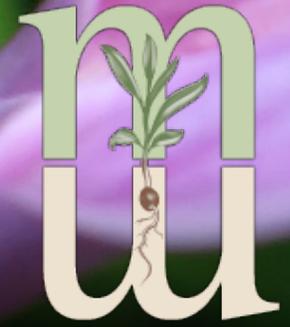
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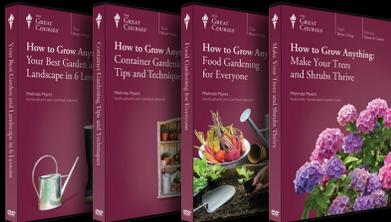
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of Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of  
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## BOOKS

Midwest Gardener's Handbook

Small Space Gardening

Midwest Lawn Guides

Minnesota & Wisconsin Getting Started Garden Guide

Month-by-Month Gardening in Minnesota & Wisconsin

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