CREATE YOUR POLLINATOR GARDEN : GOALS

*You do not need to rebuild your garden, you just need to plant a few of the native plants suggested on the attached sheet. Perhaps you already have some of them. My own garden is abuzz with bees and insects all season, with only a few native plants. Mary Lou*

Bees and insects need flowers containing lots of nectar for their own food and for pollen to bring to pollinate other plants. They need this nectar and pollen all season long. They need a large variety of different flowers because some bees and insects are only interested in certain plants. Flowers should be planted closely together so bees and insects can easily find more pollen and nectar, and places to hide to be protected from predation.

A large container planted with natives would work also!

What you IDEALLY need in your PPW garden:

* sunshine
* a large variety of flowering plants, including many natives
* several plants of each kind
* a long, continuous season of blooms
* winter food and home sites
* a clean water source

**Sunshine**: Select a site with at least six hours of sunshine in the summer to maximize the blooms on your flowers.

**Variety**: Most bees and insects seem to prefer a varied diet. They like to flit around from one plant to another, tasting and searching for the best nectar and pollen. Trees and shrubs also produce valuable flowers and habitats for insects, bees and birds; many are tied directly to the life cycles of native insects.

**Abundance**: More is better. Plant three-of-one-kind of perennial or five of-one-kind of annual together for the best chance for pollinators to find them.

**All season flowers**: Bees, insects and birds need food all season long, from earliest spring until well into the fall. Plant for an extended season of bloom.

**Winter**: Leave the sturdy, hollow stalks of Echinacea, Russian sage, sunflowers standing during the winter. Birds will eat the seeds from the Echinacea, asters; insects will nest in the hollow stalks. Remove any stalks that get mushy after a frost.

**Clean water** is essential for all living things. A simple birdbath is all you need. To prevent mosquitos from breeding, purchase a solar ‘water wiggler” from the CT Audubon shop.

**After planting**: Apply a 2” layer of wood chip mulch. Water well immediately after planting, then water every 2-3 days until the plants are established, ie, they have started to grow roots into the surrounding soil. Water as needed during the growing season. Most new plants need an inch of water per week.

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