Bee Plants

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Most bees utilize plants for nectar and/or pollen. Bees prefer flowers that are tube-like or bell shaped and are yellow, white, blue, or purple with ultraviolet nectar guides. Bee flowers often require complex behaviors by a bee to access the nectar or pollen. When planning a bee garden you should choose native or well behaved non-native plants. Provide bees with continuous blooms throughout the foraging season and a diversity of plants to support a variety of pollinators. Planting the same species of plant in clumps can increase pollinator efficiency. Clump planting allows a bee to more easily visit the same type of flower over and over, reducing the need to relearn how to enter the flower. Below is a list of plants commonly used by bees for nectar and/or pollen and approximate bloom times for Maine.

Flowers (Native)

Black Cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*) June-Sept
Milkweed (*Asclepias* spp.) May-Aug
Red Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) May -July
Blue Wild Indigo (*Baptisia australis*) May- June
Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) May-June
Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) July-Aug
Wild Geranium *(Geranium maculatum*) April-July
Sunflowers (*Helianthus* spp.) July-August
Scarlet/Blue/Inflated Lobelia (*Lobelia* spp.) June-Oct
Wild Lupine (*lupinus perennis*) June-July
False/Canadian Lily of the Valley (*Maianthemum canadense*) May-June
Wild Bergamot, Beebalm (*Monarda* spp.) July-Oct
Phlox, Wild Sweet William (*Phylox* spp.) Apr-Oct
Penstemon, Hairy Beard Tongue (*Penstemon* spp.) June-July
Obedient Plant (*Physostegia virginiana*) Aug-Sept
Black Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) June-Sept
Blue Eyed Grass (Sisyrinchium angustifolium) May-July
Goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.) Jun-Oct
New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*) July-Oct
Red and White Trillium (Trillium spp.) May-June
False Hellbore (*Veratrum viride*) June-July
Culver's Root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*) June-Aug

Shrubs and Trees (Native)

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) May-June
Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) June-July
Roundleaf Dogwood (*Cornus rugosa*) May-Aug
Bush Honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*) June-July
Trailing Arbutis (*Epigaea repens*) May-July
Eastern Teaberry, Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*) July-Sept
Choke/Black/Pincherry, Canadian Plum (*Prunus* spp.) May-June
Sumac (*Rhus* spp.) June-Aug
Blackberry, Raspberry (*Rubus* spp.) June-Sept
Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) June-July
Meadowsweet (*Spirea* spp.) June-Sept
American Basswood (*Tilia americana*) May-June
Blueberry & Cranberry (*Vaccinium* spp.) May-June
Wild Raisin (*Viburnum nadum var. cassinoides*) May-June

Ornamental Plants and Herbs (Not Native)

Garlic/Chives (Allium spp.)
Borage (*Borago* spp.)
Cosmos (*Cosmos* spp.)
Buckwheat (*Fagopyrum* spp.)
Mint (*Lamiaceae* spp.)
Lavender (*Lavandula* spp.)
Clover, Sweet (Melilotus spp.)
Catnip (*Nepeta* spp.)
Oregano (*Origanum* spp.)
Russian sage (*Perovskia* spp.)
Parsley (*Petroselinum* spp.)
Sage (*Salvia* spp.)
Clover (Trifolium spp.)
Zinnias (old fashioned) (*Zinnia* spp.)