

# POLLINATOR GARDENS

## What is a Pollinator?

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A pollinator can be a bee, beetle, ant, wasp, butterfly, moth, hummingbird, bat or even a small mammal. These creatures assist a vital life stage for all flowering plants - something essential for healthy ecosystems. Pollinators visit flowers in their search for food (nectar and pollen). During a flower visit, a pollinator may accidentally brush against the flower's reproductive parts, unknowingly depositing pollen from flower to flower. The plant uses the pollen to produce a fruit or seed. Many plants cannot reproduce without pollen carried to them by foraging pollinators.



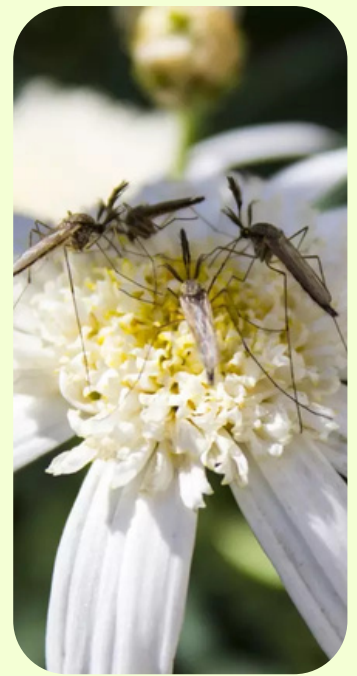
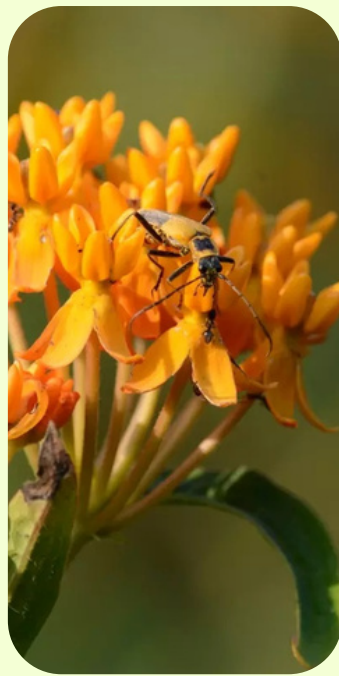
## Quick Facts

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In tropical and desert climates, bats are important pollinators - more than 300 types of fruit need bats

Butterflies and moths can help spread pollen, but they don't have any specialized structures for collecting pollen

Beetles pollinate more than 80% of all flowers - clusters of flowers are ideal because beetles are clumsy fliers



## How To Plant For Pollinators

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An ongoing way to enjoy pollinators and all the work they do is to plant a pollinator-friendly garden. Just like everything else, pollinators need food, water and shelter to survive. You can help provide these essentials by planting a wide variety of plants that bloom from early spring into late fall. Be thoughtful when planting and remember that clumps of plants will be easier for pollinators to find than single plants.

Focus your plant choice on native and non- invasive species . Hybrid species should be avoided because they are often lacking the nectar, pollen and fragrance that a natural flower would have. If a plant claims doubled flowers, it's a hybrid.

If you like seeing beautiful butterflies, consider adding the plants that caterpillars need as well. Remember that providing a home for caterpillars means having plants that will be eaten. Keep this in mind and place caterpillar host plants accordingly so they aren't too visually prominent. While some of these host plants may be less beautiful, they will provide essential habitat and allow you to watch the butterfly lifecycle right in your own yard!