

Pollinator Garden Guide

Creating a pollinator-friendly garden with native Texas flowers is a rewarding way to support local ecosystems. Here's a simple guide to get you started!

- **Plan Your Garden:**

- **Assess Your Space:** Choose a sunny area, as most native pollinator plants thrive with at least 4-6 hours of sunlight. Consider factors like soil type, drainage, and moisture.
- **Understand Plant Sizes:** Native plants may take up to three years to reach full size. Space them based on their mature dimensions to prevent overcrowding.

- **Select Native Plants:**

- **Diverse Bloom Times:** Choose plants that flower at different times to provide nectar throughout the growing season.
- **Recommended Species:**
 - **Antelope Horns Milkweed:** Supports monarch butterflies.
 - **Texas Lantana:** Attracts various pollinators and is easy to grow.
 - **Red Yucca:** Drought-tolerant and attracts hummingbirds.
 - **Zinnias:** These are Low-maintenance annuals that attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.
 - **Lindheimer's Muhly:** A beautiful, drought-resistant grass with feathery plumes that attracts native bees, skippers, and small birds.
 - **Texas Sage:** A hardy, drought-tolerant shrub with silvery leaves and purple flowers.

- **Texas Bluebonnet:** The iconic Texas state flower, which attracts honeybees, native bumblebees, and solitary bees.
 - **White Yarrow:** Produces clusters of tiny white flowers that are rich in nectar and attract butterflies (painted ladies and monarchs) and hoverflies (which help control pests).
 - **Autumn Sage:** A hardy shrub with bright red flowers that bloom almost year-round. Attracts ruby-throated hummingbirds.
 - **Indigo Sage:** A tall plant with deep purple-blue flowers that bloom from spring to fall which attracts all kinds of pollinators.
- **Prepare the Site:**
 - **Soil Preparation:** Native plants typically adapt well to local soils. Minimal soil amendment is needed unless the soil is extremely poor.
 - **Planting:** Follow specific guidelines for each plant regarding spacing and depth. For example, sow zinnia seeds 6 inches apart and 1/4-inch deep after the last frost.
- **Maintain Your Garden:**
 - **Watering:** Water plants regularly until they are established. Once mature, many native species are drought-tolerant.
 - **Avoid Pesticides:** Use natural pest control methods to protect pollinators.
 - **Seasonal Care:** Incorporate native evergreen shrubs and ornamental grasses to provide winter interest while other plants are dormant.