

Plant for Pollinators

Bare soil will erode in Kentucky's intense rainfall events which can negatively impact water quality. A healthy lawn does a great job of preventing erosion and protecting water quality, however if you are looking for an alternative to turfgrass, consider converting part of your lawn to a native plant garden for pollinators. This is a perfect way to create a beautiful space in your yard while building a habitat for some of nature's most interesting and colorful pollinators, butterflies, bees, hummingbirds, and insects!

What are pollinators?

What are pollinators? Pollinators come in a wide variety of organisms and can be bees, butterflies, birds, bats, small mammals, and other insects such as beetles and even wasps! Pollinators help flowering plants reproduce. They move pollen from male parts (anthers) of one plant to the female parts (stigma) of another plant, fertilizing what will become seeds and fruits. Globally, pollinators are responsible for production of [at least 35% of our food crops](#)! You have pollinators to thank for apples, bananas, blueberries, almonds, coffee, chocolate, sugar, pumpkins, tomatoes, beans, and many other foods.

How to attract pollinators to your garden

To attract the widest variety of pollinators, choose native flowering plants from every color of the rainbow and plants that bloom at different times of the year. Pollinators need a water source as well so adding a shallow water dish with half-submerged rocks will provide a friendly stopover for your new pollinator friends. Did you know butterflies like to sunbathe? Flat rocks soak up heat from the sun and help to attract these sunbathing beauties. Add all these elements together and you are sure to have a successful and beautiful pollinator habitat.

Why should I plant native plants?

Native plants require less effort to upkeep because these plants are adjusted to your area's environmental conditions, so they require no fertilizer, have few pest issues, and rarely need watering. This conserves our drinking water supply and reduces runoff of chemicals into the environment all while saving you time and money!

Check out these resources for native plant ideas for pollinators!

[Attracting Butterflies with Native Plants](#)

[Creating Native Pollinator Habitat: Video](#)

[Bee Friendly Trees and Shrubs](#) *

[Native Plants for Landscaping](#)

[KY Native Plant Society - Native Plant Resources](#)

*This resource contains both native and non-native plants. For the most benefit, choose native plants from the list.

Suggested Social Media Text

Tired of trying to keep the grass green? Consider converting part of your lawn to a native plant garden for pollinators. Native plants are adjusted to our environmental conditions, so they require no fertilizer, have few pest issues, and rarely need watering. This conserves our drinking water supply and reduces runoff of chemicals into the environment. Once established you will have a low maintenance garden that provides habitat for pollinators and hours of entertainment for you and your family.

References and Resources:

Link to bee friendly trees and shrubs:

https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/files/bee_friendly_shrubs_and_trees_handout.pdf

FOR-98: Attracting Butterflies with Native Plants:

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/for/for98/for98.pdf>

Kentucky Pollinator Handbook: <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/KY/KPH5a.pdf>

KDFWR video on pollinator gardens: <https://youtu.be/bSxkFmJrF6g>

Plant Native - KY/TN native species for landscaping: <https://www.plantnative.com/rpl-kytn.htm>

KY Native Plant Society – Links to plant resources: <https://www.knps.org/external-links/>