



Prairie Pollinator Garden

Full Sun • Native Perennial Plants • <50 sq ft

You can still create habitat with limited space! Pollinator gardens don't need to be big, they just need to provide some basic resources - pollen, nectar, and shelter.

Site Preparation

- Remove the grass turf, clear weeds, and loosen the soil for planting. Sod can be cut away so that the bare soil is exposed.
- Solarizing (covering the soil with plastic to bake away weeds) and tilling will help to you start off with a clean area to plant.
- If you need to add fill, avoid manure, as this can contain weed seeds.

Selection, Planting, and Patience

- Talk to a local grower about species selection. Sunlight, soil moisture, lifespan, and spreading vary by species.
- Choose different floral colours, shapes, and sizes that can be used by a variety of pollinators.
- Consider how long each plant will bloom so that pollen and nectar are available through the growing season.
- Choose plants that are also larval hosts for native caterpillars.

- When planting, a rough rule of thumb is one plant per square foot, though this may vary by growth habit.
- Consider height - Place the tallest plants in the back or middle, and place shorter plants around the edges.
- Perennials often put more energy into roots than flowering in the first season.
- Plants will become drought tolerant and bloom in the second year.

Garden Care

- Seedlings will be sensitive to drought and can be out-competed by weeds. Water and weed regularly in the first season.
- A layer of thatch can help the soil stay moist and keep weeds at bay.
- Leave stems and garden litter in place in fall. This is overwintering habitat for pollinators.
- The garden can be cleared after the last frosts in spring. Cut the stalks at the base of the plant and compost.
- Consider your neighbours - seeds that are transported by air can be collected for planting, or seed heads can be clipped off before opening.
- Heavier seeds make great food for birds.



All of these plants provide pollen and nectar. Some are larval host plants or provide seeds for birds.

- 1 Prairie crocus
Anemone patens
- 2 Northern bedstraw
Galium boreale
Hawk and tiger moths
- 3 Blanketflower
Gaillardia aristata
- 4 Prairie coneflower
Ratibida columnifera
- 5 Giant hyssop
Agastache foeniculum
- 6 Bergamot
Monarda fistulosa
- 7 Prairie sage
Artemisia ludoviciana
American painted ladies
- 8 Swamp milkweed
Asclepias incarnata
Monarchs
- 9 Smooth fleabane
Erigeron glabellus