



Native Plants for Native Pollinators

Hedgerows, Community Gardens, and Restoration Sites



“One touch of nature
makes the whole world kin.”
-William Shakespeare











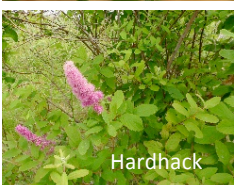

Bellingham and surrounding Whatcom County are home to scores of native pollinators as well as several common non-native pollinators, such as honeybees. Bumble bees are the most important group of native pollinators because they pollinate hundreds of species of flowers throughout the entire spring and summer. Habitat alteration, pesticide use, and insect diseases have all negatively impacted bumble bees in recent years, reducing some bumble bee populations and the pollination services they provide.

Bumble bee population declines can be addressed at many levels, including protecting natural flowering plant habitats, limiting use of neonicotinoid pesticides in all settings, restricting importation of non-native pollinators that may be carrying bumble bee diseases, and creating new protected native plant habitats in urban and rural areas such as parks, community gardens, roadsides, and farm hedgerows.

Creating new bumble bee habitat with native flowering plants is one of the easiest and most effective ways to provide support. Not only are native plants good for the bees, but they also require less work, as native plants are generally better adapted to our dry summers and wet winters. Many native flowering plants are attractive to bumble bees, but the most important consideration in creating habitat is that bumble bees have access to a continuous supply of pollen and nectar from late March to late August.

The ten native plant species selected for this guide are most appropriate for larger public and farm settings because they are highly resilient, require less maintenance than many native plant species, are less likely to spread into surrounding habitats, and, in combination, provide pollen and nectar throughout the season. The tables below feature the preferred habitat for each of the recommended plants, as well as the flowering times for each of the plants. Use this information to select a suite of plants that can thrive in your space and offer a continuous supply of pollen and nectar for bumble bees.

Selecting The Best Plants For Your Space And The Bumble Bees

| | Plant (For more info click link to see USDA Plant Guide) | Form | Height (ft) | Soil Moisture | Shade Tolerance (Sun, Partial Shade, Shade) | Attractiveness to Bumble Bees (10 = very attractive) | |
|---|--|-----------|----------------|------------------|---|---|---|
|  Osoberry | Osoberry (<i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>) | Shrub | 6-8 | middle | Su, PS, Sh | 5 |  Tall Oregon Grape |
|  Salmonberry | Tall Oregon Grape (<i>Berberis aquifolium</i>) | Shrub | 2-6 | dry | Su, PS, Sh | 8 |  Red Flowering Currant |
|  Black Twinberry | Salmonberry (<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>) | Shrub | 5-7 | mid-wet | Su, PS, Sh | 10 |  Thimbleberry |
|  Nootka Rose | Red-Flowering Currant (<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>) | Shrub | 4-8 | mid-dry | Su, PS | 7 |  Large-leaved Lupine |
|  Hardhack | Black Twinberry (<i>Lonicera involucrata</i>) | Shrub | 5-7 | wet | PS | 7 |  Douglas Aster |
| | Thimbleberry (<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>) | Shrub | 3-5 | Middle | Su, PS | 7 | |
| | Nootka Rose (<i>Rosa nutkana</i>) | Shrub | 4-6 | wet-dry | Su | 5 | |
| | Large-Leaved Lupine (<i>Lupinus polyphyllus</i>) | Perennial | 2-3 | dry | Su | 8 | |
| | Hardhack (<i>Spiraea douglasii</i>) | Shrub | 5-7 | wet | Su | 6 | |
| | Douglas Aster (<i>Symphyotrichum subspicatum</i>) | Perennial | 3-4 | mid-wet | Su | 4 | |

Bumble Bee Friendly Native Plant Flowering Times

| Plant | March | April | May | June | July | August |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|
| Osoberry | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| Tall Oregon Grape | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Salmonberry | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Red-flowering Currant | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Black Twinberry | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Thimbleberry | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Nootka Rose | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Large-leaved Lupine | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Hardhack | | | | | ■ | ■ |
| Douglas Aster | | | | | | ■ |

More Information

The Bellingham City Council voted to become a [Bee City USA](#) sponsor in 2020 to help preserve pollinator species throughout the city.



For more information on Native pollinators visit the [Xerces Society](#) online.

The [WTU Herbarium](#) at the University of Washington's Burke Museum is a great resource for learning more about native plants in Washington State.



The original research, writing, and images used in this flyer were created by Dr. Jim Davis and T. Abe Lloyd as part of a conservation initiative led by the Koma Kulshan Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society. For more information visit www.wnps.koma.org/conservation.