



Pollinator Garden

A demonstration garden of the Santa Fe Native Plant Project (SNaPP), a certification and public education program of the Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners



What is a Pollinator Garden?

A pollinator garden is specifically designed to attract bees, butterflies, moths, hummingbirds and other beneficial creatures. The plants in a pollinator garden provide food in the form of pollen and nectar that attracts and sustains these insects and birds and provides a habitat for them.

Why are Pollinators Important?

When pollinators visit flowers for pollen (protein) and nectar (carbohydrates), they inadvertently move pollen from one flower to another—the act of pollination. This benefits plants by helping the plants produce seeds for propagation, maintain genetic diversity, and develop fruits to entice seed dispersers.

How to Create a Pollinator Garden in Your Yard

Regardless of whether you start with a bare plot in your yard or fill in bare spots in an existing garden, you can easily create an environment to attract pollinators to your garden:

- **Focus on native¹ plants:** Native plants are ideal for your pollinator garden because they are adapted to the local climate, soil conditions, and other environmental factors. They co-evolved with native pollinators and typically bloom and produce nectar and pollen at times that align with the life cycles of local pollinators.
- **Promote plant diversity:** Be sure to include a mix of plants that bloom at different times of the year to provide continual access to the foods and habitat that pollinators require.
- **Provide water, shelter and nesting sites:** Set up a shallow water source like a birdbath, fountain, shallow dish, or a water bottle that slowly drips. Include rocks, logs, and undisturbed soil that pollinators can use as shelter. Plant native hollow-stemmed perennials to attract solitary native bees that nest in the pith of stems.
- **Keep up with garden maintenance:** Regularly maintain your pollinator garden by removing invasive plants and deadheading flowers to encourage additional blooms.
- **Delay “fall cleanup” until early spring:** Delaying routine fall cleanup until early spring provides seeds that some birds feed on and decreases the disturbance to pollinators that hibernate or rely on dead plant matter for nesting. In addition, you will protect tender plants from winter damage and provide winter interest in your garden.
- **Avoid pesticides:** Because many pesticides are harmful to pollinators, eliminate the use of pesticides where possible. Embrace Integrated Pest Management, which promotes the use of preventive and corrective measures to keep pests from causing significant problems. Use pesticides only as a last resort.

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¹ According to the Environmental Protection Agency, native plants are those “that have evolved over thousands of years to be able to survive in a particular region, and have adapted to the geography, hydrology, and climate of that region.”

What We Planted, By Family

Unless otherwise noted, all are native to New Mexico² or neighboring states³, or are cultivars or hybrids of native plants. Named cultivars appear as *Genus species* 'Cultivar Name'. Hybrids between species have an X in the botanical name.

Anacardiaceae (Sumac Family)

Rhus trilobata (Three-Leaf Sumac)

Apocynaceae (Dogbane Family)

Asclepias hallii (Hall's Milkweed)

Asclepias latifolia (Broadleaf Milkweed)

Asclepias speciosa (Showy Milkweed)

Asclepias subverticillata (Horsetail Milkweed)

Asteraceae (Aster or Composite Family)

Berlandiera lyrata (Chocolate Flower)

Coreopsis lanceolata (Lanceleaf Coreopsis)

Coreopsis tinctoria (Plains Coreopsis)

Dieteria bigelovii (Purple Aster)

Engelmannia peristenia (Engelmann's Daisy)

Gaillardia aristata (Firewheel)

Gaillardia pulchella (Blanketflower)

Heterotheca villosa (Hairy Golden Aster)

Ratibida columnifera (Prairie Coneflower)

Senecio flaccidus (Threadleaf Groundsel)

Thelesperma megapotamicum (Cota)

Vernonia lindheimeri (Lindheimer's Ironweed)

Wyethia scabra, syn *Scabrethia scabra*
(Desert Mule's Ear)

Fabaceae (Legume Family)

Dalea candida (White Prairie Clover)

Dalea purpurea (Purple Prairie Clover)

Lamiaceae (Mint Family)

Monarda fistulosa (Beebalm)

Salvia azurea (Blue Sage)

Salvia dorrii (Desert Purple Salvia)

Salvia X Raspberry Delight® (Raspberry Delight Sage)

Teucrium aroanium (Gray Creeping Germander)⁴

Linaceae (Flax Family)

Linum lewisii (Blue Flax)

Nyctaginaceae (Four O'Clock Family)

Mirabilis multiflora (Desert Four O'Clock)

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Forestiera pubescens (New Mexico Olive)

Onagraceae (Evening Primrose Family)

Oenothera pallida (Pale Evening Primrose)

Papaveraceae (Poppy Family)

Eschscholzia californica (California Poppy)

Plantaginaceae (Plantain & Snapdragon Family)

Penstemon ambiguus (Sand Penstemon)

Penstemon palmeri (Palmer's Penstemon)

Penstemon strictus (Rocky Mtn Penstemon)

Poaceae (Grass Family)

Bouteloua curtipendula (Sideoats Grama)

Bouteloua gracilis (Blue Grama)

Hilaria jamesii (Galleta)

Schizachyrium scoparium (Little Bluestem)

Polemoniaceae (Phlox Family)

Phlox nana (Santa Fe Phlox)

Polygonaceae (Buckwheat Family)

Eriogonum wrightii (Wright's Buckwheat)

Saxifragaceae (Saxifrage Family)

Heuchera sanguinea v. *pulchra* (NM Coral Bells)

Verbenaceae (Verbena Family)

Verbena macdougalii (MacDougal Verbena)

Resources

- Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners — www.sfemg.org
- Santa Fe Native Plant Project (SNaPP) — www.sfemg.org/santa-fe-native-plant-project
- Santa Fe Botanical Garden — santafebotanicalgarden.org
- Native Plant Society of New Mexico — www.npsnm.org/gardening-with-native-plants
- Perennial Plants for Pollinators in New Mexico (NMSU) — pubs.nmsu.edu/_h/H182/index.html
- Pollinator Plants: Albuquerque & Santa Fe Region (Xerces Society) — xerces.org/publications/plant-lists/pollinator-plants-albuquerque-and-santa-fe-region
- Pocket Guide to the Native Bees of NM — pubs.nmsu.edu/bees

² Native to New Mexico: *Flora Neomexicana III: An Illustrated Identification Manual*, 2nd ed. Kelly W. Allred, Eugene M. Jercinovic. Illustrated by Robert DeWitt Ivey. LuLu, 2020

³ Native to New Mexico's neighboring states (TX, OK, CO, UT, AZ): USDA PLANTS Database (plants.usda.gov)

⁴ Native to Greece: Missouri Botanical Garden (www.missouribotanicalgarden.org and choose Plant Finder in the menu)