

Blackcreek Nursery & Garden

Pollinator Awareness & Protection!

Think About This: Pollinators provide 1 out of every 3 bites of food we eat.

- More than 1,000 of all pollinators are vertebrates such as birds, bats, and small mammals. Most (more than 200,000 species) are beneficial insects such as flies, beetles, wasps, ants, butterflies, moths, and bees.
- In the U.S., pollination produces nearly \$20 billion worth of products annually.
- Monarch butterflies have declined by 90% in the last 20 years.
- 25% of bumble bee species are thought to be in serious decline.

Natural pollinators like *Bees, Butterflies & Hummingbirds* are instrumental in our survival as a species. If it were not for pollinators, much of the food we consume would not be available. Chemicals, deforestation, and building booms have pushed our natural pollinators almost to the brink of extinction. Much of the bigger cities are loaded with buildings, parking lots, and roads with little space available for our natural pollinators to survive. But we can help....We can all do our part in saving the pollinators and here are a few tips on just how we can do it.

BEE wary of Chemicals

Look Before You Leap

Pesticides and herbicides are the #1 issue with the decline of our pollinators. You have to be very careful that what you are using will not harm the beneficial pollinators. **READ THE LABEL** should be your first step. Always look for what the chemical controls and if there are any precautions for beneficial pollinators.

Apply As directed

Always use the chemical *for the intended use* and follow the guidelines for proper dosage and application including any personal protective equipment required.

Be Careful of Systemic Chemicals

If a chemical is designed to be absorbed by the plant, this means that the entire plant could be affected including the flowers and pollen. If you have pollinators they could be eating or collecting pollen that contains harmful chemicals.

Protect Beneficials

Some insecticides that are designed to combat Aphids, Scale, Mites, etc will harm beneficial insects. These beneficial insects like Lady Bugs, feed on bad insects. When you spray for one you may be killing the other.

Use Organics and Pollinator-friendly Products

There are many great organic chemicals on the market and you can find insecticides, herbicides, and even fungicides that are designed to be environmentally friendly. As with all chemicals, read the label. Even some organics may not be good for pollinators so investigate what you use to make sure it's safe.

Create More Garden Spaces

With so much building going on, we are having less and less land that is feeding our pollinators. We will feel the sting of this at some point if we haven't already. We need to be adding back as many pollinator plants to our gardens to help offset the loss of so much land.

Creating a haven for our pollinators is not a difficult thing to do. Almost every yard or garden can be adapted to provide food for our beneficial pollinators. Adding pollen-producing shrubs, trees, perennials, and annuals into the garden beds, along fences, and just about anywhere you can tuck in a plant is a great help in providing food sources. It is so easy to create a landscape that will feed the *beneficial Insects* and you won't have to sacrifice a thing in functionality or in beauty.

Container gardening is a great way to add color and food for the pollinators if you have limited space. Try several varying sizes of containers or even hanging baskets in places around your garden for food sources.

And don't forget the water! All of our pollinators will benefit from a drink of water from a water garden, fountain, or just a dish of water. This is especially true in the late afternoon as the dew dries from plants – they can get thirsty and they will be so happy to take a drink!

BEE wary of Invasive Species

More and more of our plants are being replaced by invasive species. These unwanted plants can take over and keep beneficial plants from reproducing. Know your plants – check to see if it is invasive and if you must use them, use them with caution.

Use Pollinator Friendly Plants

Here is list of pollinator-friendly plants we will carry from time to time at Blackcreek Nursery & Garden

- Salvia
- Echinacea – Cone Flower
- Lantana
- Cigar Plants
- Firecracker Plants
- Chaste – Vitex
- Sweet Almond Bush
- St. Johns Wort
- Camellias – Ornamental
- **Camellia Sinensis Tea Plants**
- Monarda – Bee Balm
- Buddleia – Butterfly Bush
- Mexican Sage
- Crape Myrtle
- Fothergilla
- Clethra alnifolia 'Summersweet'
- Oak Leaf Hydrangea
- Gardenia
- Hibiscus
- Swamp Milkweed
- Heather
- Coreopsis
- Gaillardia – Blanket Flower
- Guara – Wand Flower
- Aster, Stokesia
- Viburnum densa, tinus and other species