

Bees and Flies

TOP 7 TIPS FOR GARDENERS TO SUPPORT OUR POLLINATORS

BY DR. IVAN LIN

1

PLANT A VARIETY OF FLOWERS FOR NECTAR AND POLLEN DIVERSITY

A diversity of food sources supports the health of our bees and flies that feed on nectar and our baby bees which feed on pollen.



2

PLANT FLOWERS FOR EACH SEASON SO THAT SOMETHING IS ALWAYS IN BLOOM

This provides a stable food source for bees and flies all year round. Blue and yellow flowers are particularly attractive to bees.



3

PROVIDE SOIL BANKS WITH LOOSE, UNDISTURBED SOIL FOR OUR GROUND-NESTING NATIVE BEES

Most of our native bees are solitary and their nests can be identified by a cluster of small holes in the ground.



4

LEAVE DEAD PLANT STEMS TO HELP OUR NATIVE BEES SPECIES THAT NEST IN PLANT MATERIAL

Support some of our solitary native bees species that like to nest in hollowed out tubes.



5

PROVIDE A SHALLOW SOURCE OF WATER

Place pebbles or twigs in a saucer of water or float wine corks on a bucket of water so that your bees can have a safe landing pad to drink.



6

DON'T FORGET OUR FLIES AS IMPORTANT POLLINATORS

Fly species help pollinate plants and these include drone flies which are especially attracted to the flowers of plants from the carrot and cabbage families.



7

GROW A PESTICIDE-FREE GARDEN

Pesticides are harmful to our bees and flies.

Adopt pesticide-free approaches where possible such as companion planting and integrated pest management.



Butterflies and Moths

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1

PLANT YOUR FLOWERING PLANTS IN GROUPS

Butterflies are near-sighted, so they are attracted to masses of colour from large stands of flowers rather than individual plants.



2

PROVIDE SHELTER FROM THE WIND

Plant trees and shrubs as windbreaks because if it is too windy, your butterflies won't stay for long after they emerge from their chrysalides.



3

PLANT HOST PLANTS TO FEED YOUR CATERPILLARS

Each butterfly species needs specific host plants for their caterpillars, such as milkweeds for Monarchs, nettles for Admirals, muehlenbeckias for Coppers, and legumes like broad bean and pea for blues.



4

BE FRIENDS WITH YOUR CATERPILLARS

Allow caterpillars to move from one plant to another, so that they can pick the best plants that are most suitable.

Avoid handling caterpillars with hands as chemicals or germs can be harmful to them.



5

PLANT NECTAR PLANTS TO FEED YOUR BUTTERFLIES

Select simple, traditional flowers such as those with daisy shapes rather than flowers which are highly modified with double or complex petal arrangements as butterflies need a landing pad to feed.



6

DON'T FORGET OUR MOTHS AS IMPORTANT POLLINATORS

Our night-active moths are guided through the darkness by floral perfume from night-blooming flowers which are usually white so our moths can see them.



7

GROW A PESTICIDE-FREE GARDEN

Pesticides are harmful to our butterflies and moths.

If you are buying host plants from the garden centre for your caterpillars, ensure that it is pesticide-free or you can grow your own host plants from seeds.