

Bee the Change

Library Program Reference Guide

Planting Guide for Your Pollinator Garden

Educating the community about the importance of pollinators begins with small things that we can all do to improve pollinator habitats in our own spaces. First, locate a suitable place on your campus to place your **Pollinator Garden** and accompanying sign in an outdoor area near the entrance to the building to catch the eye of your patrons.

Pollinators need year-round food! Plan to have at least one plant blooming during each season. Use the following [Ecoregional Guide](https://www.pollinator.org/guides) (<https://www.pollinator.org/guides>) for a list of native, seasonal plants for your area. Local plant nurseries can help you pick out just the right plant no matter what time of year. Consider the optimal growing conditions your plant requires including sun/shade and soil conditions. And a mixture of seasonal plants with varying height and flower colors will make an appealing garden for your visiting pollinators.

Your garden soil is as important as your plants. We recommend choosing a high-quality garden soil that is labeled for outdoor container gardens. This will provide all of the nutrients your plants will need. Again, your local plant nurseries can assist you in getting the right garden soil.

Native Bee House Maintenance

Native Bees are incredible pollinators! There are many native and solitary bees in North America that have evolved alongside the native plants in your area. They will happily visit thousands of blooms in your garden and increase flower productivity in any community. They are a welcome addition to any garden!

When choosing a place to hang your Native Bee House, consider a few details. The bees prefer for the house to be securely affixed rather than swinging. Attaching it to a fence, side of the building, or tree will keep the house from rocking in the wind. The native bees also like to be out of the rain so think about placing it under the edge of an existing roof or under the canopy of a tree. These solitary bees also prefer to face cooler morning sun rather than hotter afternoon sun.

Your Native Bee House is designed to be the perfect nesting spot for mason bees and leafcutter bees. Mason bees prefer to use moist, clayey mud for their nests. If none is available you can create a small muddy patch on the ground near the Native Bee House to assist in their work. Leafcutter bees live up to their name and need to have access to a diverse area of different types of plant materials. They cut circles in thin leaves, roll the leaves like cigars, and tuck the rolls into their nests.

Learn more about [Mason Bees vs. Honey Bees](#) -- both are great pollinators but have different methods! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9jWyGt2VHE&t=340s>

Enjoy the [ABCs of raising solitary, hole-nesting mason and leafcutter bees](#) as well!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrJVeDokctE>

Your Native Bee House is designed to sustain up to two years of healthy lifecycles. At the end of that time, you should consider a maintenance plan to ensure that you are hosting healthy, happy bees. This process can take as little as 30 minutes each time, thus taking just a few hours total each year.

Check out the following sites to learn more about Native Bee House Maintenance.

- [Mason Bee House Maintenance](#)
<https://blog.duncraft.com/2018/09/07/mason-bee-maintenance/>
- [How To Clean A Mason Bee House](#)
<https://beekeepclub.com/how-to-clean-a-mason-bee-house/>
- [Gardener's Supply Company](#)
<https://www.gardeners.com/buy/mason-bee-house/37-481.html>
- [Homestead Essentials Chateau Bee House](#)

Suggestions for *Bee A Friend To Pollinators* Community Event

The [Bee A Friend To Pollinators Lesson Plan](#) will help guide you through the steps to access your community space and outline what pollinators need to thrive. Your community event could be with children or families depending on interest in your area. Foresters volunteers have assembled the 25 bee-themed activity kits for children and families. This would also be a great time to highlight the eleven book titles that are available for check-out included with this grant. Don't forget to take pictures and get quotes from your participants!

The *Bee A Friend To Pollinators* Lesson Plan is also available on the [Bee the Change](#) webpage at (<https://www.thebeecause.org/bee-the-change/>). The companion YouTube video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cxkeo7R74vs>. We also have a fun interactive digital game that can be played by two competing individuals or teams on Facile at <https://www.playfacile.com/kffuwvpy1y>.

Links to Lesson Plans for the Pollinator Literacy

The book titles we've included in this grant are some of our favorites! We've covered a wide variety of ages of interest, reading abilities, and genres with our Book Club Challenge Lessons.

Please use these lessons as a resource for hosting a kid's book club, a summer reading program, or for read-aloud experiences in your branch. All of our educational resources are free, downloadable, printable, and shareable at [The Bee Cause Project](#)

(<https://www.thebeecause.org/>) as well as our [OER Commons Group](https://www.oercommons.org/groups/the-bee-cause-project/5505/) (<https://www.oercommons.org/groups/the-bee-cause-project/5505/>).

- [***Flight of the Honey Bee***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_flight_of_the_honey_bee.pdf) by Raymond Huber
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_flight_of_the_honey_bee.pdf
- [***The Bee Tree***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_the_bee_tree.pdf) by Patricia Polacco
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_the_bee_tree.pdf
- [***What If There Were No Bees? A Book About the Grassland Ecosystem***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_what_if_there_were_no_bees.pdf) by Suzanne Slade
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_what_if_there_were_no_bees.pdf
- [***The Thing About Bees: A Love Letter***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/bee_cause_book_cub_the_thing_about_bees.pdf) by Shabazz Larkin
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/bee_cause_book_cub_the_thing_about_bees.pdf
- [***The Honey Makers***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_the_honey_makers.pdf) by Gail Gibbons
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_the_honey_makers.pdf
- [***The Beeman***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_the_bee_man.pdf) by Laurie Krebs and Valeria Cis
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_the_bee_man.pdf
- [***Honeybees and Frenemies***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_honeybees_and_frenemies.pdf) by Krisi Wientge
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_honeybees_and_frenemies.pdf
- [***Farmer Will Allen and The Growing Table***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_farmer_allen.pdf) by Jacqueline Briggs Martin
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_farmer_allen.pdf
- [***Our School Garden***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_our_school_garden.pdf) by Rick Swann
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/bee_cause_book_cub_our_school_garden.pdf
- [***Flower Talk: How Plants Use Color to Communicate***](https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/bee_cause_book_cub_flower_talk-1-1.pdf) by Sara Levine
https://www.thebeecause.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/bee_cause_book_cub_flower_talk-1-1.pdf

There is also a list of books from the Whole Kids Foundation at [Pollinator Books for Young Readers](https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/blog/dig-in-books-about-pollinators-and-pollination-for-young-readers) (<https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/blog/dig-in-books-about-pollinators-and-pollination-for-young-readers>).

Pollinator Activity Kit

Foresters volunteers will assemble your *Plight of the Pollinator Awareness* kits and deliver them to your library.

Activity 1. Add a Mason Bee House to your backyard

Mason bees are excellent pollinators and encompass 139 species across North America. They are known for building their nests in unique places. Mason bees are solitary and thus do not swarm. Mason bees like to nest in holes, they find hollow stems or holes in deadwood to build them. Since all they need is a safe place to live, we can build homes for Mason bees and help their population grow.

- There are 139 species of mason bees that are native to North America! Find out more about Mason Bees and how they are a Gardner's Best Friend [Video Link](#)
- Did you know that there are more than 4,000 native bees in North America? Take a peek at some of these vital and unique pollinators - Native Bee Diversity in North America [Video Link](#)

Activity 2. Plant a Wildflower Bee Garden

Bees use nectar and pollen from flowers as a food and energy source. Depending on your area there may be an abundance of wildflowers, landscape flowers, crops or trees, and shrubs. Bees will fly about 3 miles from their hive to find their nectar and pollen source. The Garden you plant will become a wonderful place for bees to visit all Spring and Summer!

- Use the following [Ecoregional Guide](https://www.pollinator.org/guides) (<https://www.pollinator.org/guides>) for a list of native, seasonal plants for your area. Local plant nurseries can help you pick out just the right plant no matter what time of year.
- Learn more about turning your yard into a wildflower garden for pollinators! Planting Wildflower Seeds [Video Link](#)

Activity 3. Save the Bee Bracelet

The Save the Bee bracelet raises awareness of one busy pollinator! Bee a voice for taking action! You can wear it proudly, but be ready you may have answer questions from about the meaning of your bracelet. Luckily, after completing this project you will have all the tools you need to be a bee a friend to a pollinator! They make great gifts too!

- As part of spreading the awareness for the plight of pollinators you can download this Adopt a Bee certificate as part of completing your Save the Bee project.
- Learn more about the Critical Importance of Pollinators from the experts as well as what you can do to help! [Video Link](#)

Activity 4. Honey Tasting Experience

Did you know that the flavor of honey changes based on the season and the region in which it is produced? The flavor of honey is based on the floral variety near the hive. You can support bee populations by buying local honey. It is more vital than ever to support local bee farmers who are helping raise and maintain healthy bees. The

percentage of fructose, glucose, amount and type of amino acids, and organic acids can also affect the flavor of honey.

- Honey Wheel - Honey I Hardly Know You! [Article Link](#)
- Learn how to appreciate the different flavors, colors, and textures of honey with Taste This: The Connoisseurs Guide to Tasting Honey with Amina Harris @ UC Davis - [Video Link](#)
- UC Davis Honey Wheel [Link for Purchase](#)