

# Pollinator Habitat Guide

Key Factors in Creating Quality Pollinator Habitat

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*With significant decline in pollinator populations like honey bees and native insects, creating quality habitat has never been more important. Here are some key components to keep in mind when developing habitat for pollinators:*

## Plan for the entire growing season

**Diversify! -- Aim to have at least 3 species for each bloom period to provide continuous food sources for pollinators.**

- Early season- April to early June
- Mid season- Late June to July
- Late season- August to October

**Include plants with a variety of sizes and colors. Physical shape and size will attract different species of pollinators.**

## Location and Size

**Avoid planting in areas that are subject to heavy chemical drift from neighboring fields. Planting in blocks rather strips can help reduce the creation of chemical drift "traps". If planted in strips, they should be at least 20 feet wide.**

**Areas with pollinator habitat should be at least 0.5 acre in size.**

## Use local native species

**Select plants that are native to the region. They will be better adapted to the local soils and climate and will grow more successfully. Be sure to pick species that are best suited for sites such as high sandy ground or low wet areas.**

**Do not plant non-native/invasive grasses and forbs. They can overtake native species, degrading the quality of the habitat. Always check with a biologist before planting to ensure the appropriate seed mix has been developed for your site.**



*Monarch Butterfly (Photo by Gemma Schmitz)*



## Seed Mixes

**To be most effective and beneficial, creating seed mix with a high percentage of forbs is important.**

### Forbs

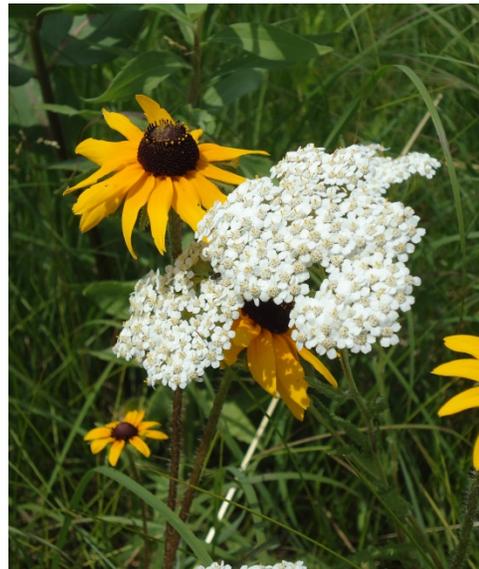
- CRP standard requires a minimum of 9 species, but more is better! Aim for at least 15-20 native species or greater.
- Seeding rate should be at least 2 PLS lbs/ac (32 oz/acre).
- Mix composition should be a minimum of 75% forbs based on seed per square foot.

### Grasses

- Use at least 2 native bunch grasses in a mix. Try to avoid sod-forming grasses which may out-compete forbs.
- Seeding rate should be between 3-5 PLS lbs/ac.
- Mix should be no more than 25% grass based on seeds per square foot. A mix with fewer grasses allows for better forbs success.



*Photo by Gemma Schmitz*



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**Pollinators come in all forms including bees, butterflies, bats, birds, insects, and other animals. By creating habitat that is excellent for pollinator species, we are also:**

- Increasing native plant populations
- Reducing soil erosion and improving water quality
- Creating aesthetics
- Providing food and habitat for other wildlife; pollinating insects are an important food source for wildlife, such as pheasant chicks

**Great Pollinator Habitat = Great Pheasant Habitat!**  
**Whether enrolling in programs such as CRP or doing habitat projects on your own, keep pollinators in mind. Please consult with your local USDA Service Center for a more in depth look at your site's specific pollinator strategy.**



