



University of Nevada  
Cooperative Extension



Evening-primrose

# *Flowers at the Border*

Plant native flowers around your  
yard to attract pollinators and  
other beneficial insects.

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Pollinators, including bees, moths, beetles and butterflies, are critical to the production of nearly one-third of the world's food supply. Our pollinator populations are decreasing due to a combination of factors, including habitat loss and fragmentation, overuse of pesticides, malnutrition, disease and parasites. It is imperative that we, as responsible gardeners, provide food and habitat for pollinators by creating patches of sanctuary habitats to support and preserve these valuable creatures.

Other beneficial insects that deserve a place in the garden include those that protect our crops and ornamental landscape plants from herbivory by pest insects. Sometimes these insects are called natural predators or natural enemies. They help protect our plants by feeding on or parasitizing pest insects. Examples include ladybeetles, lacewings, parasitic wasps, ground beetles, minute pirate bugs, praying mantis and arachnids, such as spiders and predatory mites.

You can protect these valuable garden allies by planting flowers that not only attract them but also provide valuable nectar and shelter for breeding and overwintering. If you want beneficial insects to stick around and do their job, you must provide their basic living needs. Provide nectar by planting native flowers that bloom at different times of the year; and don't forget to put out a container of water, such as a birdbath, or even small dishes of water around your yard. Leave garden cleanup until late spring. Perennials and ornamental grasses left standing give shelter and provide winter interest. Homemade bee houses, small piles of stones and areas of bare ground also provide overwintering sites for

beneficial insects.

Why native plants? Native plants attract native pollinators. Most people are not aware of the complex relationships among plants, insects and other beneficial organisms that have evolved over millions of years. Insects pollinate flowers while they feed on nectar and pollen. Sure, you can attract honeybees by planting almost any nectar-producing flower. But honeybees are not our only pollinators, and they are not our best pollinators.

Honeybees are not even native to North America, so they have not developed the specialized plant-pollinator relationships typical of many of our native pollinators. Bottom line, native pollinators, such as solitary bees and wasps, bumblebees, butterflies and moths do a better pollinating job, and are attracted and supported by the native plants with which they evolved.

This publication provides a list of 50 of the most attractive flowering species native to the intermountain western region of the U.S. Included is information on each species' lifecycle, size potential, flower color and bloom period, cultural requirements, and benefit to pollinators and other beneficial insects.

But this is only the beginning. If you are serious about providing a pollinator-friendly habitat, there are other steps you should take. Limit your use of insecticides, particularly systemic insecticides, which are absorbed through the leaves and stems and transported throughout the plant. Purchase untreated seeds and organic vegetable and bedding plant starts. Purchase native plants and seeds from local vendors when possible.

## ANNUAL FLOWERS

Rocky Mountain beeplant (*Cleome serrulata*)

Indian blanket (*Gaillardia pulchella*)

common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*)

baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*)

hoary verbena (*Verbena stricta*)

## PERENNIAL FLOWERS

common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

nettleleaf giant hyssop (*Agastache urticifolia*)

tapertip onion (*Allium acuminatum*)

western pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*)

rosy pussytoes (*Antennaria rosea*)

Mohave sandwort (*Arenaria macradenia*)

flatbud pricklypoppy (*Argemone munita*)

heartleaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*)

columbine (*Aquilegia* spp.)

butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

milkvetch (*Astragalus* spp.)

arrowleaf balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)

purple poppymallow (*Callirhoe involucrata*)

lavenderleaf sundrops (*Calylophus lavandulifolius*)

western white clematis (*Clematis ligusticifolia*)

Blue Mountain prairie clover (*Dalea ornata*)

hummingbird trumpet (*Epilobium canum*)

aspen fleabane (*Erigeron speciosus*)

sulfur-flower buckwheat (*Eriogonum umbellatum*)

blanketflower (*Gaillardia aristata*)

sticky purple geranium (*Geranium viscosissimum*)

old man's whiskers (*Geum triflorum*)

Utah sweetvetch (*Hedysarum boreale*)

showy goldeneye (*Heliomeris multiflora*)

Rocky Mountain iris (*Iris missouriensis*)

Lewis flax (*Linum lewisii*)

silvery lupine (*Lupinus argenteus*)

smoothstem blazingstar (*Mentzelia laevicaulis*)

oblongleaf bluebells (*Mertensia oblongifolia*)

Colorado four o'clock (*Mirabilis multiflora*)

wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)

mountain monardella (*Monardella odoratissima*)

tufted evening-primrose (*Oenothera caespitosa*)

penstemon (*Penstemon* spp.)

silky phacelia (*Phacelia sericea*)

longleaf phlox (*Phlox longifolia*)

slender cinquefoil (*Potentilla gracilis*)

western coneflower (*Rudbeckia occidentalis*)

purple sage (*Salvia dorrii*)

spearleaf stonecrop (*Sedum lanceolatum*)

Oregon checkerbloom (*Sidalcea oregana*)

Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*)

scarlet globemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*)

desert princesplume (*Stanleya pinnata*)

hookedspur violet (*Viola adunca*)

**Rocky Mountain beeplant**  
**(*Cleome serrulata*)**

ANNUAL

**Size:** 1 to 5 feet

**Bloom:** White, pink, purple; July—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; sandy, well-drained soil. Start from seed sowed thickly.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and honeybees; larval host for the checkered white butterfly.

**Indian blanket (*Gaillardia pulchella*)**

ANNUAL

**Size:** 1 to 2 feet

**Bloom:** Red, yellow; May—August

**Growing tips:** Full to part sun; well-drained, sandy soil. Bloom is prolonged by deadheading and extra summer water. Reseeds readily.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts butterflies and native bees.

**common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*)**

ANNUAL

**Size:** Up to 8 feet

**Bloom:** Yellow; July—October

**Growing tips:** Full sun; prefers dry, disturbed soil.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees.

**baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*)**

ANNUAL

**Size:** 6 inches

**Bloom:** Blue; May—June

**Growing tips:** Part shade; moist, organic soil; nighttime temperatures below 65 F.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees.

**hoary verbena (*Verbena stricta*)**

ANNUAL OR SHORT-LIVED PERENNIAL

**Size:** 1 to 4 feet

**Bloom:** Blue-purple; July—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, sandy soil. Seeds require two months cold-moist stratification.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies; larval host for the common buckeye butterfly.

**common yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-9

**Size:** 2 to 3 feet

**Bloom:** White, pink; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; sandy soil. May be used as a flowering ground cover and mowed to 3 inches to prevent aggressive spread.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees; supports natural enemies of insect pests.

**nettleleaf giant hyssop**  
**(*Agastache urticifolia*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 5-10

**Size:** 3 to 6 feet

**Bloom:** Pink, lavender; June—August

**Growing tips:** Part shade; well-drained soil.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and honeybees.

**tapertip onion (*Allium acuminatum*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-7

**Size:** 6 to 12 inches

**Bloom:** Pink, white; May—July

**Growing tips:** Sun or shade; sandy loam soil. Plant bulbs 3 to 4 inches deep.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and honeybees.

**western pearly everlasting  
(*Anaphalis margaritacea*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-8

**Size:** 1 to 3 feet

**Bloom:** White, yellow centers; July—September

**Growing tips:** Sun to part shade; sandy, gravelly soil. Good for dried flower arrangements.

**Pollinator benefits:** Nectar source for American lady butterfly; larval host for painted lady butterfly.

**rosy pussytoes (*Antennaria rosea*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2

**Size:** 8 to 16 inches

**Bloom:** Pink; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun; well-drained soil. Spreads from stolons. May be used as a ground cover; tolerates light foot traffic.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts butterflies.

**Mohave sandwort (*Arenaria macradenia*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-8

**Size:** 5 to 18 inches

**Bloom:** White; April—July

**Growing tips:** Full to part sun; sandy, well-drained soil. Do not overwater.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts butterflies and native bees.

**flatbud pricklypoppy (*Argemone munita*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 5-10

**Size:** 15 to 40 inches

**Bloom:** Large, white, yellow centers; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, infertile, well-drained soil. Deer-resistant.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, honeybees, and butterflies.

**heartleaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2

**Size:** 8 to 12 inches

**Bloom:** Yellow; May—August

**Growing tips:** Full to part shade; moist soil.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts butterflies, native bees and bumblebees.

**columbine (*Aquilegia spp.*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-8

**Size:** 6 to 40 inches

**Bloom:** White, yellow, blue, red; spring/summer

**Growing tips:** Sun to part shade; keep soil moist in spring, dry in summer.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts hummingbirds.

**butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-9

**Size:** 18 to 24 inches

**Bloom:** Flat-topped, bright orange; May—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; well-drained soil; drought-tolerant.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts bumblebees, honeybees and hummingbirds. Larval host for gray hairstreak, monarch and queen butterflies. Supports natural enemies of insect pests.

**milkvetch (*Astragalus* spp.)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-7

**Size:** Up to 12 inches

**Bloom:** Purple, pink, white, butterfly-like; spring/summer

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, well-drained, gravelly soil. Do not overwater.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**arrowleaf balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-7

**Size:** 6 to 32 inches

**Bloom:** Yellow, sunflower-like; May—July

**Growing tips:** Full sun; deep, sandy or gravelly soil. Do not overwater after bloom. Best results with direct-seeding.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**purple poppymallow (*Callirhoe involucrata*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-8

**Size:** 8 to 12 inches, sprawling to 3 feet

**Bloom:** White, pink, purple; March—June

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; well-drained rocky or sandy soil. Can be used in hanging baskets.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees; larval host for the gray hairstreak butterfly.

**Lavenderleaf sundrops (*Calylophus lavandulifolius*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 5-9

**Size:** Up to 8 inches, mounding

**Bloom:** Yellow; May—September in flushes every four to five weeks

**Growing tips:** Full sun; gravelly, well-drained soil. Drought-tolerant.

**Pollinator benefits:** Pollinated by moths and native bees.

**western white clematis (*Clematis ligusticifolia*)**

PERENNIAL VINE, zone 3-7

**Size:** 12 to 18 feet

**Bloom:** White, prolific; April—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; rich, well-drained soil. Provide afternoon shade in hot areas. Prune back to 1 foot every three to five years to rejuvenate.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and hummingbirds.

**Blue Mountain prairie clover**  
**(*Dalea ornata*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-7

**Size:** 12 to 24 inches, upright

**Bloom:** Purple, woolly looking spikes; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, rocky or sandy soil. Do not overwater. Cut back in early spring to encourage new growth.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and honeybees.

**hummingbird trumpet (*Epilobium canum*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 5-9

**Size:** 12 to 18 inches

**Bloom:** Red, orange-red; September—October

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, rocky, well-drained soil. Divide in spring when plant outgrows its space.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and hummingbirds.

**showy fleabane (*Erigeron speciosus*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2-8

**Size:** 6 to 30 inches

**Bloom:** White, pink, blue; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; amend soil with organic matter. Drought-tolerant. Forms colonies; divide as needed.

**Pollinator benefits:** Supports natural enemies of insect pests.

**sulfur-flower buckwheat**  
**(*Eriogonum umbellatum*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-8

**Size:** 1 to 2 feet

**Bloom:** Variable, cream, yellow, orange, red; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; well-drained loamy to gravelly soil. May be grown from seed. Cold-stratification improves germination; may self-seed in the garden.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies. Larval host for the lupine blue butterfly. Supports natural enemies of insect pests.

**blanketflower (*Gaillardia aristata*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2-8

**Size:** 1 to 3 feet

**Bloom:** Red, yellow, brownish centers; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun, shade-intolerant; well-drained, infertile soil. Divide clumps every two to three years. Leave flower heads after bloom for winter interest and for the birds.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies.



**sticky purple geranium**  
**(*Geranium viscosissimum*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-10

**Size:** 1 to 2 feet

**Bloom:** Pink, purple; May—August

**Growing tips:** Part shade; loamy soil. Give extra moisture in spring; cut back in summer. May sprawl in full shade. Leaves turn red in fall.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies.

**old man's whiskers (*Geum triflorum*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2-5

**Size:** 6 to 18 inches

**Bloom:** Pink, red, nodding, bell-shaped; become erect as flowers give way to plume-like seedheads; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; tolerates loamy, clayey or sandy soil; forms dense mats. May be used as a ground cover. Leaves turn deep red in fall.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**Utah sweetvetch (*Hedysarum boreale*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3

**Size:** 8 to 24 inches

**Bloom:** Magenta pink; April—July

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, sandy or rocky, infertile soil. Takes three years from seed to bloom.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**showy goldeneye (*Heliomeris multiflora*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-10

**Size:** 5 to 20 inches

**Bloom:** Yellow, daisy-like; July—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, well-drained soil. Will bloom in its first year. Will reseed; attractive in a meadow garden.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies.

**Rocky Mountain iris (*Iris missouriensis*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-8

**Size:** 1 to 2 feet

**Bloom:** Purple, lavender; May—July

**Growing tips:** Full sun; needs moisture until flowering. Plant seeds or rhizomes. Divide every three years to prevent spreading.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

**Lewis flax (*Linum lewisii*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-9

**Size:** 6 to 30 inches

**Bloom:** Blue, purple; May—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry, well-drained sandy soil. Will self-seed; may cut back after bloom.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, honeybees and butterflies.



**silvery lupine (*Lupinus argenteus*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2

**Size:** 1 to 2 feet

**Bloom:** Purple, lavender; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; dry, rocky soil.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and bumblebees; important nectar source for butterflies.

**smoothstem blazingstar**

**(*Mentzelia laevicaulis*)**

BIENNIAL, 3-7

**Size:** 1 to 3 feet

**Bloom:** Yellow; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun; sandy or gravelly soil. Grow from seed.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**oblongleaf bluebells**

**(*Mertensia oblongifolia*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4

**Size:** 4 to 16 inches

**Bloom:** Blue, bell-shaped; May—July

**Growing tips:** Full sun to shade; coarse, well-drained soil; slow to establish but moderate lifespan.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**Colorado four o'clock**

**(*Mirabilis multiflora*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-8

**Size:** 12 to 30 inches

**Bloom:** Pink, purple; June—October

**Growing tips:** Full sun; blooms its first year; re-seeds. Useful as a ground cover and for erosion control. Can be mowed to the ground in October.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts butterflies and hummingbirds.

**wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-9

**Size:** 1 to 3 feet

**Bloom:** Lavender, pink, white; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; adaptable to soil type; easy to grow from seed. Deadhead flowers to prolong bloom.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

**mountain monardella**

**(*Monardella odoratissima*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-10

**Size:** 3 to 18 inches

**Bloom:** Purple, light pink; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; sandy to rocky, well-drained soil; blooms its first year.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**tufted evening-primrose**  
**(*Oenothera caespitosa*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-9

**Size:** 8 to 16 inches

**Bloom:** White; April—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun; dry clayey or sandy soils. Do not overwater in summer.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees.

**penstemon (*Penstemon* spp.)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4

**Size:** 1 to 5 feet

**Bloom:** Blue, purple, red, pink, white; spring/summer

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; excellent drainage required. Do not overwater. Will bloom in its second year. May be short-lived.

**Pollinator benefit:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and hummingbirds.

**silky phacelia (*Phacelia sericea*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-7

**Size:** 4 to 20 inches

**Bloom:** Purple, blue; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; gravelly, well-drained soil; minimal care, but does not transplant easily.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, honeybees and butterflies.

**longleaf phlox (*Phlox longifolia*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-8

**Size:** 2 to 6 inches

**Bloom:** Pink, white; April—July

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; coarse, well-drained, infertile soil. Blooms its second year from seed; long-lived.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, bumblebees and butterflies.

**slender cinquefoil (*Potentilla gracilis*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2

**Size:** 1 to 2 feet

**Bloom:** Yellow; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun; adaptable to soil type; difficult to transplant; extremely cold-hardy.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies.

**western coneflower**  
**(*Rudbeckia occidentalis*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-9

**Size:** 3 to 6 feet

**Bloom:** Purple-brown, showy, distinctive; July—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun; prefers loamy soil with consistent moisture. Will bloom its first year from seed. Deadhead flowers to prolong bloom.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees.

**purple sage (*Salvia dorrii*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-6

**Size:** 1 to 2 feet

**Bloom:** Blue and purple, two-toned; May—June

**Growing tips:** Full sun; well-drained, infertile soil. Lightly prune after flowering.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies.

**spearleaf stonecrop (*Sedum lanceolatum*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-9

**Size:** 2 to 10 inches

**Bloom:** Yellow; June—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; dry, gravelly, well-drained soil. Useful as a ground cover.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees, butterflies and syrphid flies (aphid predators).

**Oregon checkerbloom (*Sidalcea oregana*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 2

**Size:** 16 to 50 inches

**Bloom:** Pink, purple; May—August

**Growing tips:** Full sun; prefers moist, well-drained soil. Deadhead spent flowers to prolong bloom. Prune back to the basal rosette of leaves in fall.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies.

**Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 3-9

**Size:** 2 to 4 feet

**Bloom:** Yellow; July—October

**Growing tips:** Full sun to part shade; adaptable to soil type. Forms colonies. May divide to check growth.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies; supports natural enemies of insect pests.

**scarlet globemallow**

**(*Sphaeralcea coccinea*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-9

**Size:** 2 to 16 inches

**Bloom:** Scarlet orange; May—July

**Growing tips:** Full sun; coarse, well-drained soil; extremely drought-tolerant. Do not overwater. Spreads by rhizomes but is not aggressive.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees.

**desert princesplume (*Stanleya pinnata*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4-9

**Size:** 1 to 4 feet

**Bloom:** Yellow; June—September

**Growing tips:** Full sun; sandy or rocky, well-drained, infertile soil. Grow from seeds or transplants.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts native bees and butterflies.



## **hookedspur violet (*Viola adunca*)**

PERENNIAL, zone 4

**Size:** 6 to 10 inches

**Bloom:** Purple, lavender; March—August

**Growing tips:** Shade; sandy, well-drained soil; easy to establish.

**Pollinator benefits:** Attracts bumblebees and butterflies; larval host for a variety of fritillary butterflies.

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