



The Home Garden Seed Association promotes gardening from seed – an easy, economical, and rewarding way to garden. All HGSA content is provided for the free use of garden professionals. When reproducing information from this or other articles, please credit [ezfromseed.org](http://ezfromseed.org) as the source.



***Pollin******NATION***: Home Garden Seed Association is proud to be a member of the National Pollinator Garden Network, a partnership of 25 organizations that has launched a nationwide call to action.



### ***The Million Pollinator Garden Challenge***

#### **Who can participate?**

Anyone with a garden, large or small. Even a container garden can serve pollinators.

#### **How can a gardener participate?**

First, plant a garden that provides pollen and nectar sources. Then, register your garden through the Pollinator Partnership at [millionpollinatorgardens.org](http://millionpollinatorgardens.org).

#### **What do you need to know and do to succeed at pollinator gardening?**

1. Use plants that provide pollen and nectar.
2. Provide a water source, such as a small water garden or bird bath.
3. Situate your pollinator garden in a sunny site with a wind break.
4. Have plants that bloom continuously throughout the season.
5. Do not use pesticides near your pollinator plants.

#### **How can I find out what to plant?**

Go to [www.pollinator.org/guides.htm](http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm) and click on “planting guides.” When you enter your 5-digit zipcode, you will be able to access a planting guide for your location

The focus of the National Pollinator Garden Network is to “inspire individuals and community groups, institutions and the garden industry to create more pollinator habitat through sustainable gardening practices and habitat conservation and to provide these groups with the tools to be successful.”

### Ten Great Pollinator Plants You Can Grow From Seed

- 1. Coneflower, *Echinacea* spp.**, perennial: Bumblebees are frequent visitors to coneflowers, and you’ll see plenty of other pollinators, including honeybees, butterflies, moths, beetles, and flies. Plant coneflowers in full sun. Birds love the seeds.
- 2. Milkweed, *Asclepias* spp.**, perennial and annual: Milkweed is both a nectar source for the monarch butterfly, and a food source for its larvae. It attracts other pollinators as well, including buckeyes, bumblebees, fritillaries, and swallowtails. It prefers moist soils.
- 3. Zinnia, *Zinnia* spp.**, annual: Plant zinnias and you will have bumblebees. You will also have swallowtails, monarchs, painted ladies, and many other butterflies. Among the easiest flowers to grow from seed, zinnias make colorful bouquets.
- 4. Bee balm, *Monarda* spp.**, perennial: Bee balm’s nectar-rich flowers are pollinated by bumblebees, honeybees, and butterflies. They also attract hummingbirds to the garden, plus you can use the leaves to make bergamot tea.
- 5. Oregano, *Origanum* spp.**, perennial: Oregano is representative of mint family plants in that it is both edible and ecologically beneficial. Honeybees and bee-mimicking flies are attracted to its blooms, if you allow it to flower.
- 6. Black-eyed Susan, *Rudbeckia* spp.**, perennial and annual: Black-eyed Susans are beautiful in the meadow or in the garden. Give them full sun and well-drained soil, and they’ll attract pollinators galore to your garden. They’re beautiful in the vase as well.
- 7. Cilantro, *Coriandrum sativum***, annual: Honeybees, syrphid flies, parasitic wasps, and tachinid flies are frequent visitors to cilantro’s lacy white umbels. In hot summer regions, plant a second crop in summer to provide late-season nectar for pollinators.
- 8. Sunflower, *Helianthus* spp.**, annual and perennial: The sunflower head is the party place of the garden, often occupied by multiple species of bees, wasps, beetles, and flies. Plant annual sunflowers in a new spot every year to keep them healthy and full of life.
- 9. Cosmos, *Cosmos* spp.**, annual: This pollinator-friendly flower is one of the easiest to grow from seed, sprinkled directly in the garden. Plant it alongside vegetables, where it will attract beneficial insects such as lacewings and pirate bugs.
- 10. Sweet Alyssum, *Lobularia maritima***, annual: Sweet alyssum is known for attracting syrphid flies, whose larvae consume aphids. Other tiny flies, wasps, and many types of bees are attracted to the low-growing, scented flowers as well.

