Plants for BC Bees & Gardeners of the Southern Interior

Did You Know?
BC has more than 450 species of native bees. These bees forage and nest in gardens, parks, farms, forests, grasslands, wetlands, and all sorts of other habitat throughout the province. We can all take actions to conserve and improve these habitats and the health of their ecosystems.

Plants for Bees and Gardeners
We have compiled a list of plants native to the Coast and Southern Interior that are important to our native bees. While many bees are generalists and can access pollen and nectar from a wide variety of flowers, some specialist bees only collect pollen from a narrow selection of plants. In addition, these plants can provide nesting material for native bees in the form of leaves, resins, stems and decaying wood.

We aimed to include plants with different bloom times to offer a continuous supply of pollen and nectar from spring to fall. We included plants of different size, shape, colour and growth form. The plants come from a variety of different habitats, from moist meadows to shady forests to dry grasslands and shrublands, so are suitable for different garden types. Use the list as a starting point for selecting plants for your particular garden.

Many of these plants are beneficial to a broad number of organisms, meaning they are critical for the ecosystem as a whole. Planting these shrubs and herbaceous plants together will create a synergy of lasting ecological benefits for bees, birds, butterflies and moths (adult and caterpillar stages), other invertebrates and foraging mammals.

Eco-specific Native Plants - Buy Local!
Plants that are sourced from the ecoregion where you live are more likely to be compatible with local bee populations, well-adapted to local soils and climate and more able to provide a connective bridge for pollinators to wild populations. These 'eco-typic' plants, however, have limited availability. If you are lucky enough to live near a native plant nursery, they can share a wealth of information about the specific plants that will thrive in your area. When purchasing plants, make sure plants are ethically sourced, properly identified, and never poached from the wild. It is a challenging, yet rewarding journey that requires patience and persistence. Start small, grow from there.

Be a Citizen Scientist!
If you enjoy taking photos of bees, join the **iNaturalist NBSBC Bee Tracker Project**. Familiarize yourself with the plants in your area and submit photos of bees on those plants to iNaturalist with the plant association. This will help build a database of bee–plant associations so that we can learn the critical floral resource for our native bee species.

To learn more, visit us at bcnativebees.org

Native Bee Society of British Columbia

IAF

BRITISH COLUMBIA

TREES		
Common Name	**Botanical Name**	**Family**
Douglas Maple	*Acer glabrum*	Sapindaceae

SHRUBS		
Common Name	**Botanical Name**	**Family**
Birch-leaved Spirea	*Spirea lucida*	Rosaceae
Black Twinberry	*Lonicera involucrata*	Caprifoliaceae
Chokecherry	*Prunus virginiana*	Rosaceae
Common Rabbitbrush	*Ericameria nauseosa*	Asteraceae
Common Snowberry	*Symphoricarpos albus*	Caprifoliaceae
Kinnikinnick	*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*	Ericaceae
Lewis' Mock Orange	*Philadelphus lewisii*	Hydrangeaceae
*Nootka Rose	*Rosa nutkana*	Rosaceae
Ocean Spray	*Holodiscus discolor*	Rosaceae
Red Osier Dogwood	*Cornus sericea*	Cornaceae
*Scouler's Willow	*Salix scouleriana*	Salicaceae
*Tall Oregon Grape	*Berberis aquifolium*	Berberidaceae
*Thimbleberry	*Rubus parviflorus*	Rosaceae
White Currant	*Ribes cereum*	Grossulariaceae

General Tips for Bee Gardens

1: Avoid pesticides, herbicides and fungicides.
2: Choose a selection of plants with flowers that vary in size, colour and shape and that provide continuous bloom from the first day of spring to early fall.
3: Grow in clumps at least one meter square of each type of plant.
4: Leave leaves, stems and rotting logs in your garden for bee nesting.
5: Most species of bees nest in the ground and require bare soil in some areas of your garden.
6: Bee houses and condos can be good learning tools if properly maintained, but they can be hazardous to bees if they are not looked after properly. A better choice is to grow plants with hollow or pithy stems (like rose and elderberry) that can provide nesting spaces for bees.
7: Add signage that celebrates the bees in your garden and helps connect you with

HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS		
Common Name	**Botanical Name**	**Family**
*American Asters	*Symphyotrichum spp.*	Asteraceae
Arrowleaf Balsamroot	*Balsamorhiza sagittata*	Asteraceae
Broad-leaved Stonecrop	*Sedum spathulifolium*	Crassulaceae
*Canada Goldenrod	*Solidago lepida*	Asteraceae
Checker Lily	*Fritillaria affinis*	Liliaceae
Common Gaillardia	*Gaillardia aristata*	Asteraceae
Common Harebell	*Campanula rotundifolia*	Campanulaceae
Curly-cup Gumweed	*Grindelia squarrosa*	Asteraceae
*Fireweed	*Chamaenerion angustifolium*	Onagraceae
Golden-aster	*Heterotheca villosa*	Asteraceae
Mountain Sneezeweed	*Helenium autumnale*	Asteraceae
Nodding Onion	*Allium cernuum*	Amaryllidaceae
Old Man's Whiskers	*Geum triflorum*	Rosaceae
Orange Arnica	*Arnica fulgens*	Asteraceae
Parsnip-flowered Buckwheat	*Eriogonum heracleoides*	Polygonaceae
Pearly Everlasting	*Anaphalis margaritacea*	Asteraceae
Round-leaved Alumroot	*Heuchera cylindrica*	Saxifragaceae
*Showy Daisy	*Erigeron speciosus*	Asteraceae
Showy Milkweed	*Asclepias speciosa*	Apocynaceae
*Shrubby Penstemon	*Penstemon fruticosus*	Plantaginaceae
*Silky Lupine	*Lupinus sericeus*	Fabaceae
*Silverleaf Phacelia	*Phacelia hastata*	Boraginaceae
**Sitka Columbine	*Aquilegia formosa*	Ranunculaceae
*Small-flowered Penstemon	*Penstemon procerus*	Plantaginaceae
Spreading Dogbane	*Apocynum androsaefolium*	Apocynaceae
Sticky Geranium	*Geranium viscosissimum*	Geraniaceae
*Swale Desert Parsley	*Lomatium ambiguum*	Apiaceae
*Thread-leaved Phacelia	*Phacelia linearis*	Boraginaceae
*Timber Milk-vetch	*Astragalus miser*	Fabaceae
Upland Larkspur	*Delphinium nuttallianum*	Ranunculaceae
Wild Bergamot	*Monarda fistulosa*	Lamiaceae
*Wild Strawberry	*Fragaria virginiana*	Rosaceae
*Worm-leaved Stonecrop	*Sedum stenopetalum*	Crassulaceae
Yarrow	*Achillea millefolium*	Asteraceae

* Choose a species native to your bioregion; note there may be more than one native species in your area

** Be aware that this species needs to be isolated from others in the same genus to avoid cross-pollination