



NMBKA

New Mexico Beekeepers Association

nmbeekeepers.org

Plants For Bees

A wonderful way to help support honeybees and pollinators, is to grow a variety of flowers that bloom throughout the growing season. Both nectar (carbohydrates) and pollen (protein) from plants provide essential food for bees.

The following listing is an attempt to capture current information on bee plants in New Mexico. Bees will seek out different plants under different conditions and we do not yet understand these relationships. Be aware that bees may use some plants in one year and others in another year.

New Mexico landscape and climate varies greatly, so some plants will not do well where you are. Use local nurseries, master gardeners, regional native plant lists, and fellow beekeepers as resources to discover which are most suited to your area.

Keep in mind seasonal bloom time of your choices. Plants that bloom very early, and those flowering during the driest summer days are most important as a food bridge to bees between the most intense bloom periods in spring and late summer/fall. Native plants and a few introduced plants will more

likely provide what bees need at these times. Some very popular native plant hybrids are available that are not useful to bees (Desert Willow is a good example.) Take care to choose the non-hybridized native you are more likely to find in small local nurseries.

As with humans, a buffet of choices supports good nutrition and immune system health, so go with a variety of plants, not just one. For small plants, use groupings of at least three of the same, as bees are efficient in their foraging and will bypass one zinnia for a large patch of Russian sage.

Perhaps the best action anyone can take to help bees is to restrict, or better, eliminate the use of pesticides and herbicides in the lawn and garden.

This listing of plants for honeybees (and other pollinators) will no doubt miss some plants. If you observe bees on additional plants please share the information (and a plant photo, if possible info@nmbeekeepers.org. Help us build an even better resource.

N = native

Annuals/Biennials

(Annuals live only one year. Biennials bloom and die in the second year.)

Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*)
 Baby Blue Eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) N
 Bluehead Gilia (*Gilia capitata*) N
 Bristly Nama (*Nama hispida*) N
 Buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*)
 Clavel de Muerto (*Tithonia rotundifolia*)
 Cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus*)
 Desert Marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*) N
 Firewheel (*Gaillardia pulchella*) N
 Golden Crownbeard (*Verbesina encelioides*) N
 Gordon's Bladderpod (*Lesquerella gordonii*) N
 Gypsum Phacelia (*Phacelia integrifolia*) N
 Lemon Beebalm (*Monarda citriodora*) N
 Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)
 Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum* sp.)
 Prairie Sunflower (*Helianthus petiolaris*) N
 Purple Aster (*Aster bigelovii*) N
 Rocky Mtn. Bee Plant (*Cleome serrulata*)
 Spectacle Pod (*Dimorphocarpa wislizeni*) N
 Sunflowers (*Helianthus annuus*)
 Tansyleaf Tansyaster (*Machaeranthera tanacetifolia*) N
 Vegetables: Squash, Pumpkin, Cucumber, Kale, Collard, Broccoli
 Zabrina/French Hollyhock (*Malva sylvestris*)
 Zinnia (*Zinnia* sp.)

Herbs

Basil
 Bee Balm
 Borage
 Catnip
 Cilantro
 Dill
 Fennel
 Kitchen Sage
 Lemon Balm
 Lavender
 Marjoram
 Mints
 Oregano
 Rosemary
 Thymes



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Perennials

Aromatic Aster (*Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*) N
Basin Fleabane (*Erigeron pulcherrimus*) N
Berries (raspberries, blackberries, strawberries)
Blue Flax (*Linum perenne*)
Blue Grama Grass (*Bouteloua gracilis*) N
Blue Sage (*Salvia azurea*)
Caliche Globemallow (*Sphaeralcea laxa*) N
California Figwort (*Scrophularia californica*) N
Catmint (*Nepeta faassenii*)
Cholla (*Cylindropuntia* sp.) N
Common Firewheel (*Gaillardia aristata*) N
Common Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*) N
Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) N
Compassplant (*Silphium laciniatum*) N
Crocus (*Crocus* sp.)
Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) N
Dead Nettle (*Lamium* sp.)
Desert Globemallow (*Sphaeralcea ambigua*) N
Downy Ragged Goldenrod (*Solidago petiolaris*) N
Firecracker Penstemon (*Penstemon eatonii*) N
Firewheel (*Gaillardia pulchella*) N
Fiveneedle (*Thymophylla pentachaeta*) N
Geyer's Aster (*Symphyotrichum leave* var. *geyeri*) N
Gray Goldenrod (*Solidago nemoralis*) N
Greenthread (*Thelesperma filifolium*) N
Hoary Verbena (*Verbena stricta*) N
Hollyhocks (*Alcea rosea*)
Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)
Lacy Tansyaster (*Machaeranthera pinnatifida*) N
Lamb's Ears (*Stachys byzantina*)
Lanceleaf Figwort (*Scrophularia lanceolata*) N
Lanceleaf Tickseed (*Coreopsis lanceolata*) N
Lemonyellow False Goldenaster (*Heterotheca camporum*) N
MacDougal Verbena (*Verbena macdougalii*) N
Maximilian Sunflower (*Helianthus maximiliani*) N
Meadow Zizia (*Zizia aptera*) N
Mountain Bluebells (*Mertensia ciliata*) N
Mountain Giant Hyssop (*Agastache pallidiflora* ssp. *neomexicana*) N
Navajo Tea (*Thelesperma subnudum*) N
Newberry's Twinpod (*Physaria newberryi*) N
Pale Evening Primrose (*Oenothera pallida* var. *pallida*) N
Plains Blackfoot Daisy (*Melampodium leucanthum*) N
Prairie Coneflower/Mexican Hat (*Ratibida columnifera*) N
Prickly Pear (*Opuntia* sp.) N
Prickly Poppy (*Argemone pleiacantha*) N
Purple Cone Flower (*Echinacea*) N
Red Dome Blanketflower (*Gaillardia pinnatifida*) N
Purple Prairie Clover (*Dalea purpurea*) N
Rocky Mountain Penstemon (*Penstemon strictus*) N
Scabiosa (*Scabiosa atropurpurea*)
Scarlet Globemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*) N
Sedum (*Sedum* sp.)
Showy Goldeneye (*Heliomeris multiflora* var. *multiflora*) N
Showy Goldenrod (*Solidago speciosa*) N
Silver Buffaloberry (*Shepherdia argentea*) N
Stiff Goldenrod (*Oligoneuron rigidum*) N
Sweetclover (*Mellilotus officinalis*)
Tall Thoroughwort (*Eupatorium altissimum*) N

Threadleaf Giant Hyssop (*Agastache rupestris*) N
Threadleaf Ragwort (*Senecio flaccidus*) N
Utah Sweetvetch (*Hedysarum boreale*) N
White Heath Aster (*Symphyotrichum ericoides*) N
White Prairie Clover (*Dalea candida*) N
Whitestem Paperflower (*Psilostrophe cooperi*) N
Wholeleaf Rosinweed (*Silphium integrifolium*) N
Whorled Mountainmint (*Pycnanthemum verticillatum* var. *pilosum*) N
Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*) N

Woody Shrubs and Small Trees

Algerita (*Mahonia trifoliolata*) N
American Plum (*Prunus americana*) N
Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*) N
Arborvitae (*Thuja* sp.)
Arroyo Willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) N
Barberry (*Mahonia haematocarpa*) N
Blue Mist Spirea (*Caryopteris*)
Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) N
Crispleaf Buckwheat (*Eriogonum corymbosum*) N
Deweystem Willow (*Salix irrorata*) N
Emory's Baccharis (*Baccharis emoryi*) N
Fern bush (*Chamaebatiaria millifolium*) N
Frosted Mint (*Poliomintha incana*) N
Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*) N
Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*)
Leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*) N
Mariola (*Parthenium incanum*) N
New Mexico Olive/Privet (*Forestiera neomexicana*) N
Ninebark (*Physocarpis monogynus*) N
Oregon Grape (*Mahonia*)
Potentilla (*Potentilla* sp.) N
Rabbitbrush/Chamisa (*Ericameria nauseosa*) N
Russian Sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*)
Silver Prairie Clover (*Dalea bicolor* var. *argyrea*) N
Skunkbush Sumac (*Rhus trilobata*) N
Stansbury Cliffrose (*Purshia stansburiana*) N
Torrey Wolfberry (*Lycium torreyi*) N
Western Sandcherry (*Prunus pumila* var. *besseyi*) N
Wood's Rose (*Rosa woodsii*) N

Trees

(A single tree can provide thousands of blossoms for bees.)

Ash (*Fraxinus* sp.)
Bee Bee Tree (*Tetradium daniellii*)
Catalpa (*Catalpa* sp.)
Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*) N
Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) N
Fruit Trees (Apple, Pear, Peach, Plum, Apricot, Crabapple, Cherry, etc.)
Honey Mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) N
Japanese Pagoda Tree (*Sophora japonica*)
Linden (*Tilia* sp.)
Locust (*Robinia neomexicana*) N
Tatarian Maple (*Acer tataricum*)
Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
Willow (*Salix* sp.)