

Planting for Bees and other beneficial pollinators

Bees need to forage for nectar and pollen from a range of different flowering plants, depending on the tongue length of the various types of bee: honeybees; bumble bees and solitary bees. Other beneficial insects such as wasps, butterflies and hoverflies as well as bees also forage from different plants, which fall into three main flowering groups for forage opportunities:

- Single petal flowers: roses, daisies, cosmos, helenium, rudbeckia, sunflowers, geranium, erysimums, (perennial wallflower 'Boule's Mauve') etc
- Bell shaped, or tubular flowers: ajuga, buddlea, comfrey, borage, campanula, circium, digitalis, echinops, eryngium, lavender, lupins, lamium, linaria, mints, nepeta, lamium, crocus, hellebores, verbena bonariensis, penstemons, scabious,
- Umbellifers: achillea, carrot, parsnip
- Herbs and vegetable flowers provide flowers for pollinators: alliums, marjoram, raspberry, currants, fennel, peas and beans, artichokes, courgettes, tomatoes, borage, squash, rosemary, thyme, oregano, chives, marjoram, mints
- Provide forage from early in the season – hellebores, pulmonaria, crocus, (dandelions!) throughout the flowering season to late autumn, sedums, rudbeckia, helenium etc – ivy particularly valuable
- Brambles provide a rich source of forage as well as providing shelter and egg laying for a range of butterflies.
- Flowering and fruiting trees and shrubs offer bees and other pollinators the best forage opportunities, providing more forage than wildflower meadows.
- Plant in drifts of same flowers to provide maximum forage opportunities – easier for forage access than 'popping' amongst different flower varieties – energy saving!

Additional Sources of Information:

[Gardening for bees | British Beekeepers Association](https://www.bbka.org.uk/gardening-for-bees)

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/gardening-for-bees>

[Plants for Pollinators advice and downloadable lists / RHS Gardening](https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/.../plants-for-pollinators)

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/.../plants-for-pollinators>

[25 Plants For Bees In Your Garden | Bee Friendly](https://beefriendly.ca/25-plants-for-bees-in-your-garden/)

<https://beefriendly.ca/25-plants-for-bees-in-your-garden/>

[Planting for Honeybees – Bermondsey street bees](https://www.bermondseystreetbees.co.uk/bermondsey-street-bees/planting-for-bees)

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For information on how and what to plant, Sarah Wyndham Lewis of Bermondsey Street Bees new book *Planting for Honeybees – The Grower's Guide to ..*

[Allotments best for bees | Buglife](https://www.buglife.org.uk/news-and-events/news/allotments-best-for-bees)

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/news-and-events/news/allotments-best-for-bees>

[Bee-friendly plants for every season | Friends of the Earth](https://friendsoftheearth.uk/bees/beefriendly-plants-every-season)

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