

Spring

Violets - host* to Fritillary Butterflies

Canada Violet, *Viola canadensis*, prefers morning sun to shade.

Early Blue Violet, *Viola adunca*, will grow in full sun.

Willows - an important very early source of food for the early bees.

There are many different species of willows, *Salix* spp., some more suitable for gardens than others.

Buffalo Bean - common host and forage* plant for Silvery Blue butterflies.

Also known as Golden Bean, *Thermopsis rhombifolia*, prefers full sun.

Wild, Prairie or Woodland Roses - attract a variety of nectar and/or pollen collecting bees and other insects.

Roses, *Rosa* spp., prefer sun. Some native species will spread, and possibly not suitable for small urban yards.

Saskatoons - attract various bees in search of nectar and/or pollen. Numerous birds eat the berries.

Saskatoons, *Amelanchier alnifolia*, will grow in sun or part shade.

Beardtongues - attract various native bees, honey bees and Sphinx Moths.

Smooth Blue Beardtongue, *Penstemon procerus*, (top) will grow in sun or shade.

Lilac-flowered Penstemon, *Penstemon gracilis*, (bottom) will grow in full sun.

(Dandelions, *Taraxacum officinale*, although non-native, are also extremely important as a very early source of food for early bees. Do let some bloom in your garden!)

Summer

Fleabanes - attracts various bees, butterflies and other insects.

Smooth Fleabane, *Erigeron glabellus*, grows in sun.

Philadelphia Fleabane, *Erigeron philadelphicus*, grows in sun and prefers moist soil.

Giant Hyssop - attracts various bees and butterflies.

Giant Hyssop, *Agastache foeniculum*, grows in full sun and may self-seed.

Wild Bergamot - attracts bumblebees, small black sweat bees, and is a host*/nectar plant for a Sphinx Moth species.

Wild Bergamot, also called Beebalm, *Monarda fistulosa*, will grow in sun or part shade.

Joe Pye Weed - attracts butterflies, solitary bees, bumblebees, and other pollinating insects.

Joe Pye, *Eutrochium maculatum*, grows in sun or part shade.

Low Milkweed - attracts butterflies, bees, wasps, and flies; is a host/forage* plant for the Monarch Butterfly and Milkweed Tussock Moth.

Low Milkweed, *Asclepias ovalifolia*, grows in sun.

Meadow Blazingstar - provide nectar for bees, many different butterflies; and is a host/forage* plant for a moth species.

Meadow Blazingstar, *Liatris ligulistylis*, grow in sun.

Fireweed - attracts various bees for pollen and nectar; leaves are also used by leaf-cutter bees.

Fireweed, *Chamerion angustifolium*, will grow in sun to part shade.

Gaillardia - is a nectar source for butterflies; attracts various bees and other pollinating insects. Goldfinch eat seeds.

Gaillardia, or Blanketflower, *Gaillardia aristata*, grows in sun.

Goldenrods - nectar provision for winter; bees use pollen; also attracts solitary wasps and beetles; warblers like seeds.

Goldenrods, *Solidago* spp., grow in sun or part shade. Stiff Goldenrod, *Solidago rigida*, is a good choice for a garden.

Stinging Nettle - the host* plant of choice for Milbert's Tortoiseshell butterflies.

A small patch of Stinging Nettle, *Urtica dioica*, can be controlled by surrounding with plastic lawn edging buried 15cm deep. Will grow in sun or part shade.

Late summer to fall

Asters - help bees that are active in the fall, including bumblebee queens building up reserves for winter dormancy; other bees and late butterflies.

Tufted White Prairie Aster, *Symphyotrichum ericoides*, and Smooth Aster, *Symphyotrichum laeve*, will grow in sun or part shade.

***Host and/or forage** plants are used by butterflies and moths to lay eggs on, the leaves of which will later provide food for the larvae (caterpillars).

Nectar plants are a food source as bees, butterflies, and moths drink the nectar from these flowers.

Pollen is actually eaten by some insect as food; some sticks to them and they consequently also pollinate as they move from flower to flower.

For more information:

Attracting Native Pollinators: Protecting North America's Bees and Butterflies by the Xerxes Society

Go Wild! With Easy to Grow Prairie Wildflowers and Grasses by Cherry Dodd and the Edmonton Naturalization Group

Native Plants for Prairie Gardens by June Flanagan

(all are available through the Edmonton Public Library).