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**Siqon - March 2022**

Clarissa Sabattis – Tribal Chief  
Susan Young - Editor



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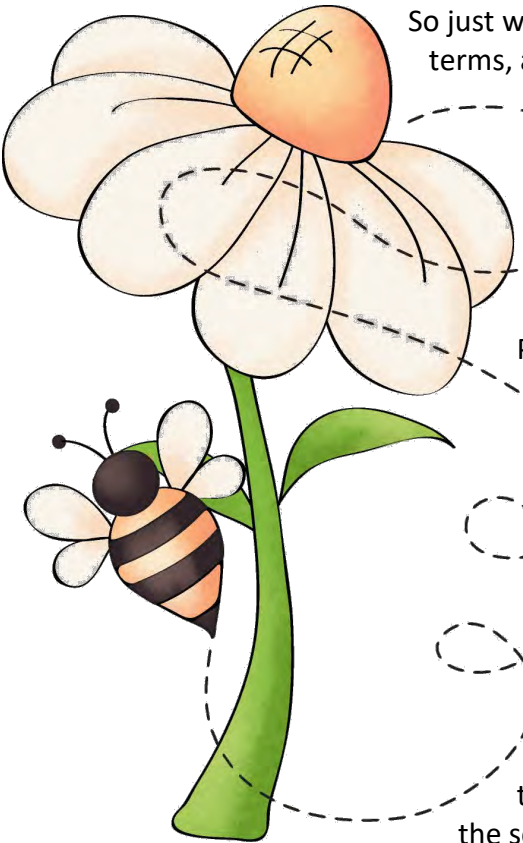
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**Planting for Pollinators**

After a cold and weary winter, everyone is ready to see some bright, beautiful flowers filing our yards, window boxes and planters. Local retailers and garden centers are counting on you to buy the biggest, prettiest flowers available. If you're planting flowers for the local pollinators these plants may not be what you're looking for.

Yes they are pretty, but many of the flowers you see at the large big box stores, have been bred with customers, not pollinators in mind. In addition to not providing vital nutrients, many of these big bloomers have been treated with a variety of chemicals including fungicides, herbicides and insecticides. You may have heard a lot about neonicotinoids – a systemic agricultural insecticide chemically related to nicotine and has been linked to the decline of bee populations worldwide.



So just what is a pollinator garden? In simple terms, a pollinator garden is one that attracts bees, butterflies, moths, birds, hummingbirds, bats or other beneficial creatures that transfer pollen from one flower to another, or in some cases within the same flower.

Planting pollinator gardens, no matter how big or small, can make a big difference. Pollinators have been heavily impacted by loss of habitat, over use of chemicals and impacts from invasive plants and animals. Many pollinator species have disappeared and many are now endangered.

Native plants are always the best when establishing gardens for pollinators and wildlife, and have evolved with the soils and climate of your area.



**Puzzle Answers**

S	Z	X	C	A	B	N	M	P	L	O	O	K	I	W
I	U	P	N	H	A	B	E	S	A	O	W	G	T	S
A	F	S	R	C	D	E	X	S	M	Z	V	D	P	H
T	O	V	D	L	A	T	R	E	T	L	A	B	B	E
K	I	M	R	A	S	H	V	H	K	U	K	H	U	X
S	D	R	B	H	W	I	U	N	H	H	N	A	V	
A	B	G	B	S	M	U	M	V	L	L	B	W		
O	S	A	O	F	A	R	L	C	A	D	O	M	O	V
T	E	N	S	E	S	P	S	T	W	U	I	X		
U	T	S	I	M	N	S	Z	D	S	V	F	S	W	O
U	W	W	N	O	B	S	A	S	C	M	O	X		
O	B	Z	W	T	K	N	K	I	H	O	V	K	G	
S	B	F	U	D	B	V	S	K	V	P	O	W	H	I
O	B	U	H	A	L	S	O	N	E	B	A	L		
W	R	N	S	S	O	C	E	B	K	H	A	L		
U	T	A	C	U	N	V	W	H	M	K	O			

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## Planting for Pollinators (cont'd)

Local Cooperative Extension Offices are a great resource for finding plants suitable to your area.

There are many options to choose from with a variety of shapes and colors such as: Bee Balm, Columbine, Goldenrod, Penstemon, Sunflowers, Chokecherry, Black-eyed Susan, Coneflower, Borage, Liatris, Asters, Thistle and many more.

Bees, one of the more important pollinators, are able to see ultraviolet colors and tend to prefer flowers in shades of yellow, purple and blue. They are attracted to plants with a sweet fragrance. They also like dry, sunny, bare spots with well drained soil.

Butterflies tend to thrive in sunny, open spaces with access to fresh water and shelter from the wind. They are most attracted to white, pink, purple, yellow, orange and red blooms and less to greens and blues.

Hummingbirds, need open spaces that allow them to fly from one flower to another. They also need safe perches and shady spots to rest. They are attracted to nectar rich, unscented, tube-shaped flowers and are most attracted to pink orange and bright red flowers.

*If you choose to put out hummingbird feeders, you do not need to use the bright red hummingbird food for sale at many retailers. Actually, the food coloring used to color this food is harmful to hummingbirds. Instead make your own, using 1 part sugar to 4 parts hot or boiling water. Be sure to change the food every couple of days in hot weather to avoid spoilage.*

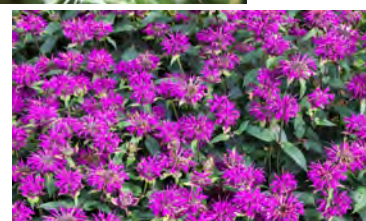
**Remember to be patient, it may take a while for the pollinators to arrive, but it will definitely be worth the wait.**



### Pollinator Favorites:

Clockwise from top above:

- Black-eyed Susan
- Thistle
- Bee Balm
- Sunflower
- Penstemon
- Columbine
- Echinacea
- Goldenrod
- Borage



### Celebrate pollinator week

June 20-26, 2022!

For more about pollinators check out:

Gardening Know How: Plants For Pollinators: Learn About Pollinator Friendly Plants <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/beneficial/pollinator-friendly-plants.htm>

Pollinator Partnership [www.pollinator.com](http://www.pollinator.com)

Xerces Society <http://www.xerces.org/>

Pollinator Partnership Canada  
[www.pollinatorpartnership.ca/en](http://www.pollinatorpartnership.ca/en)

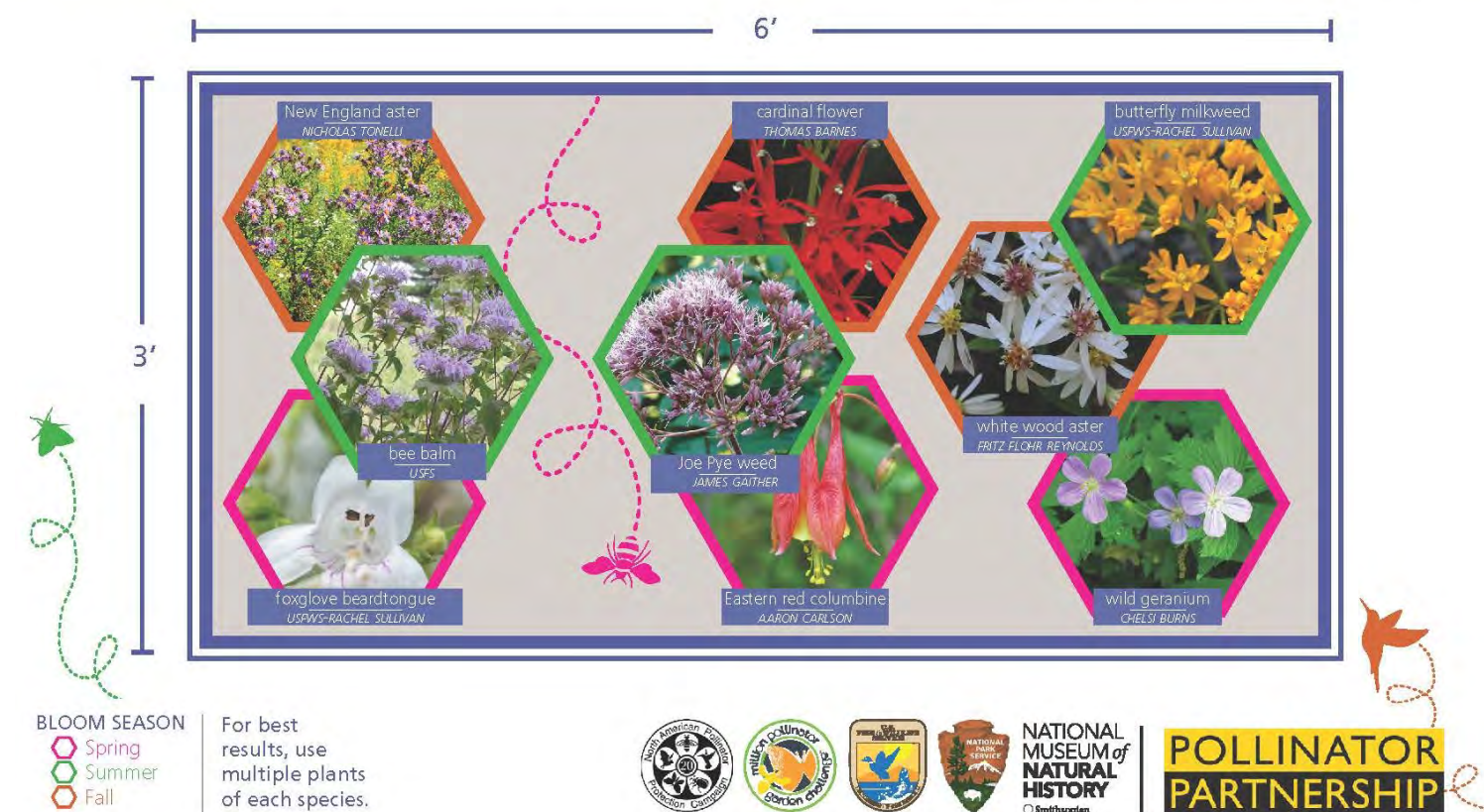


## Planting Guide for your native pollinator garden

Use the arrangement below to have a continuous garden - spring, summer, & fall

## NORTHEAST REGION

CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV



## Follow these steps to create your beautiful native pollinator garden

### 1 Identify your garden spot:

- ✓ Find a 3' x 6' plot that gets 6+ hours of sun.
- ✓ Have a larger area? Include more choices and clump the same species together.
- ✓ Remove or smother existing lawn or vegetation.
- ✓ Enhance hard-packed soil with organic compost.

### 2 Buy plants at a local native plant nursery, if possible.

### 3 Plant!

- ✓ Arrange plants with different seasonal blooms in your plot.
- ✓ Dig holes twice as large as each plant's pot.
- ✓ Remove the plant from the pot, loosen the roots, place it in the hole, backfill, tamp soil, and water.
- ✓ Mulch plot to depth < 1 inch, keeping mulch away from stems and avoid using hardwood chips and shreds.

### 4 Maintain your garden:

- ✓ Water to keep moist throughout the first two weeks, then as needed or when plants droop.
- ✓ Weed as needed.
- ✓ Avoid using insecticides, herbicides, or fungicides.
- ✓ Be patient - your garden may take a few years to fully establish and fill in!

Add your garden: [www.millionpollinatorgardens.org](http://www.millionpollinatorgardens.org)

## NORTHEAST REGION

CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV

### BLOOM SEASON | NATIVE PLANT OPTIONS

Your state's native plant society can recommend additional locally appropriate native species. See **North American Pollinator Protection Campaign Ecoregional Planting Guides** for additional information: [www.pollinator.org/guides](http://www.pollinator.org/guides)

SEASON	FIRST OPTION	SECOND OPTION
Spring	Eastern red columbine <i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	squirrel corn <i>Dicentra canadensis</i>
	wild geranium <i>Geranium maculatum</i>	wild lupine <i>Lupinus perennis</i>
	foxglove beardtongue <i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	golden ragwort <i>Packera aurea</i>
Summer	common milkweed <i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	butterfly milkweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
	beebalm <i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	woodland sunflower <i>Helianthus divaricatus</i>
	Joe Pye weed <i>Eutrochium fistulosum</i>	narrowleaf mountain mint <i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>
Fall	white wood aster <i>Eurybia divaricata</i>	cardinal flower <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>
	gray goldenrod <i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	wrinkleleaf goldenrod <i>Solidago rugosa</i>
	New England aster <i>Symphyotrichum novae-angliae</i>	white turtlehead <i>Chelone glabra</i>

color dots above indicate bloom color.  
All three images in this table are NPS photos.



## International Fish Flag Contest for World Fish Migration Day!

From [www.worldfishmigrationday.com/fishflags](http://www.worldfishmigrationday.com/fishflags)

Do you have a young artist in your life? We have some exciting news: this year's fish art contest is now OPEN, and it's bigger and better than ever.

World Fish Migration Day is on May 21, 2022, and we could not be more excited. One of the many ways we are celebrating this year is through the first ever **Fish Flag Contest!**

In our third year of cooperating with Wildlife Forever on a special migratory fish art award, we decided to do something different. Instead of a typical fish painting like in past years, participants will submit a fish flag! This will be a loud, proud, and engaging way to spread the message about migratory fish, free-flowing rivers, and World Fish Migration Day! We hope to see submissions from thousands of young artists around the world this year, and encourage them to fly their fish flags on World Fish Migration Day!

The contest is free to enter, and is open to children aged 5-18 from anywhere in the world. It will culminate in a live event on World Fish Migration Day, broadcast from Portugal, The Netherlands, and the USA, where we will announce the winning fish flags.



### Contest Rules:

- **Create a flag depicting a migratory fish of your choice.** It could be a salmon, an eel, a sturgeon, etc. or any of a number of well known migratory fish species which migrate in rivers around the world. Make sure it is a migratory fish that lives in rivers at some point in its life! For more resources, [www.worldfishmigrationday.com](http://www.worldfishmigrationday.com)

- **Any and all materials are accepted for this contest.** Fish flags can be made out of cloth, paper, trash from your local river, or a combination of materials. The options are endless!
- **Submissions will be judged in two age categories:** 5-12, and 13-18. Each category will have a first, second and third place winner. Make sure to mark the correct age category on the submission form!
- **Submit two photos of your flag:** The first should be a picture showing the flag lying on a flat surface, and the second should show your flag in action or waving in the wind! Make sure that we can clearly see your fish flag.
- **Recommended:** Go beyond the flag! Help others learn about the importance of fish and rivers using your art. We encourage you to do something special with your flag on World Fish Migration Day. Host an event, hang your flag by a river or your school and take a picture, teach your friends how to make the flags and hang them outside, pick up trash... the ideas are endless! For more information and ideas go to [www.worldfishmigrationday.com](http://www.worldfishmigrationday.com) and share your flags on social media with the hashtags [#worldfishmigrationday](https://twitter.com/worldfishmigrationday) [#fishflags](https://twitter.com/fishflags). For even more ideas of how to get involved on WFMD, check out the Participants Guide.
- **Submissions Close: April 14, 2022**
- **Winners Announced: May 21, 2022** World Fish Migration Day

1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners will receive a **Happy Fish Statue** from the World Fish Migration Foundation.



## Phenology in the Garden - Planting by Nature's Signs

Use natural clues to grow your garden from the *Farmer's Almanac*

For centuries, gardeners took their cues for planting times from nature - a field of knowledge called phenology. For instance, "Plant potatoes when the first dandelion blooms." Learn more about planting by nature's signs - and see more examples.

Most of us may not be familiar with the term, "phenology," even though it's been part of *The Old Farmer's Almanac* culture for centuries. Look up almost any weather or farming adage, and you'll find it based in phenology.

What is it though? Phenology is the study of cyclical natural phenomena and events—from bud burst to bird migration—and then letting nature's timing help you understand when to plant and harvest. Native and ornamental plants act as nature's "alarm clock" by signaling that temperatures and precipitation are optimal for planting.

Since average frost dates are just an estimate, observing the plant and animal activity can be very helpful. While not totally foolproof, following nature's clock helps us tune in to the rhythm of life around us.

### Examples of Phenology

Nature's "signs" are different in every region; however, you should still relate to these examples:

- Blooming crocus are your cue to plant radishes, parsnips and spinach
- When the forsythia is in bloom, it is safe to plant peas, onion sets and lettuce
- Half-hardy vegetables, including beets, carrots and chard can be planted when the daffodils blossom
- Look for dandelions to bloom before planting potatoes
- **Perennial flowers** can be planted when the maple trees begin to leaf out.
- When quince is blossoming transplant cabbage and broccoli
- Wait for apple trees to bloom before planting bush beans
- When the apple blossoms fall plant pole beans and cucumbers



- By the time lilacs are in full bloom, it will be safe to plant tender annuals and squashes
- Transfer tomato transplants to the garden when lily-of-the-valley is in full flower
- Full sized maple leaves signal time to plant morning glory seeds
- Peppers and eggplant can be transplanted when the bearded iris are blooming
- When peonies blossom, it is safe to plant heat-loving melons such as canteloupe

### How to Observe Nature's Clues

What are the seasonal clues where you live?

Observe the connection between "firsts" and what's happening in the yard and garden.

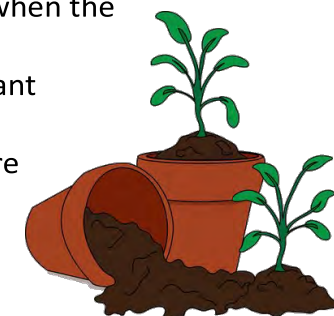
- First bud (of various plants)
- First bloom of various plants
- First animal migration
- First appearance of different insects
- First emergence of hibernating animals
- First amphibian (like spring peepers)

Other natural phenomena, such as bird migrations and the emergence of insects and amphibians, also signify the coming of Spring. It only makes sense to use these events as indicators of when the weather is right for planting. Observations made over many years have led to some fairly reliable conclusions.

For many gardeners and farmers, nature is more predictable than historic frost dates. However, it's always a good idea to check planting dates by frost dates as well to find the best time to plant seeds.

For more info

[www.farmersalmanac.com](http://www.farmersalmanac.com)





No Mow May

This spring, kick back, relax and put away your lawn mowers and weed whackers and participate in **No Mow May**. This conservation initiative encourages people to stop mowing for the month of May in order to create habitat and provide resources for bees and other pollinators.

A lush, green, weed-free lawn has historically been center stage in American landscaping. It tells the whole neighborhood that you are a competent, hard-working, contributing member of society. Dandelions and an overgrown lawn are a sign of neglect, incompetence, and laziness-or so our culture would have you believe.

Americans have a love affair with lawns - maintaining roughly 40 million acres, or 2% of land in the US, making them the single largest irrigated crop we grow. Lawns require frequent mowing, raking, fertilizing, weeding, chemical treatment, and watering - sucking up time, money, and other resources. Not only are lawns burdensome for the people maintaining them, but they also provide little positive benefit to wildlife, and in fact are often harmful. The traditional monoculture lawn lacks floral resources or nesting sites for bees and is often treated with large amounts of pesticides that harm bees and other invertebrates. When we think of habitat loss, we tend to imagine bulldozers and rutted dirt, but acres of manicured lawn are as much a loss of habitat as any development site.

Re-thinking the American lawn can take a variety of forms from reducing mowing frequency or area mown to permanently converting lawn to a more diverse and natural landscape.

Mowing your lawn less creates habitat and can increase the abundance and diversity of wildlife including bees and other pollinators. One way to reduce mowing is by participating in Now Mow May. No Mow May is a conservation initiative first popularized by Plantlife, an organization based in the United Kingdom, which is gaining traction across North America. The goal of No Mow May is to allow grass to grow unmown for the month of May, creating habitat and forage for early season pollinators. This is particularly important in urban areas where floral resources are often limited.



The efficacy of reducing mowing may be expanded upon by altering the composition of your lawn to include more flowering species. A “bee lawn” may include Dutch clover (which captures nitrogen and helps feed the lawn) as well as other low-growing flowering plants such as creeping thyme (*Thymus spp.*), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), and others. Some plants, such as native violets (*Viola spp.*) may already be present and should be encouraged as they are valuable host plants for fritillary butterflies.

In addition to benefiting pollinators, reducing mowing frequency will save water, help your lawn become more resilient to drought, and reduce emissions from gas-powered lawn equipment that often lacks the emission reduction equipment found on larger engines.

Lawn certainly has its place. It provides a perfect platform for kicking a ball around, provides “accommodation” for the needs of pets, and can be used to define space in landscape design. But how much lawn do you really need, and to what standard must it be maintained? Do your kids need a perfect, weed-free lawn to play on? Do you really need to measure your lawn in acres rather than feet? In addition to reducing the amount you mow - think about reducing the amount of lawn that needs mowing. In place of that lawn, consider planting a rain garden, pollinator garden, or wildflower meadow - or replacing your turf grass lawn with native lawn alternatives.

For more information about No Mow May  
Check out:  
<https://beecityusa.org/no-mow-may/>  
<https://beecityusa.org/no-mow-may-qa/>  
<https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/no-mow-may>

Skitkomiq - Culture & Science Camp



It won't be long before it's camp time! Tribal youth in grades for 5 through 8 are encouraged to sign up for this year's camp. We're in the early phases of planning and would love to hear from you - tell us what interests you. So far we are

considering sessions around fishing, water, wildlife, medicinal plants, traditional crafts, stories, canoe outings, trips to Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument - and more.

Reach out to us by phone, email or Facebook

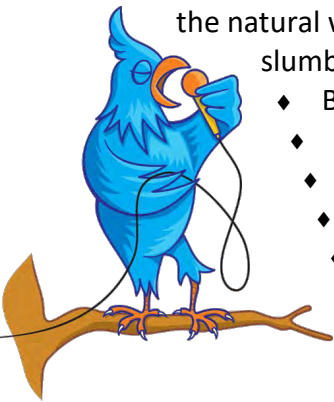
We're also looking for parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles to come learn alongside our tribal youth.

If any of this interests you - let us know!

Sounds of Spring

The approach of Spring is full of clues for the changing of the seasons. Depending on where you are you may notice the light comes earlier and sticks around later in the day, snow begins to recede, ice begins to melt on lakes, ponds and rivers, buds on trees and shrubs begin to swell, crocus and other spring bulbs begin to emerge, songbirds begin to return, groundhogs and other mammals appear. . .

Now that Spring is on the horizon (on the calendar at least) if you listen closely, you will start to hear the natural world awoken from it's winter slumber.



- ♦ Birds singing in the mornings
- ♦ Peepers!
- ♦ Frogs and toads
- ♦ Brooks and rivers flowing free
- ♦ Ducks and geese returning
- ♦ And more

What sounds make you smile when you think of Spring?



Find the  
Maliseet & English  
Pollinators in the  
puzzle

MALISEET	ENGLISH
Alamossit	Hummingbird
Amakehs	Butterfly
Amucalu	Fly
Amuwes	Bee
Cossu	Mosquitoes
Eniqs	Ants
Ktahkomiqey	Wasp
Kuhkukhahs	Moth
Mawsuwin	Human
Motekoniyeys	Bat
Sikusq	Beetles
Sipsis	Birds
Tuhkis	Mouse

Pollinator Word Search Puzzle

Q	K	W	H	U	M	A	N	A	M	U	C	A	L	U
L	T	U	H	K	I	S	E	C	O	S	S	U	R	M
T	A	B	E	E	N	I	Q	S	T	Y	H	U	B	O
I	H	M	O	P	A	K	S	A	E	D	U	F	E	S
G	K	A	O	H	J	U	K	N	K	L	M	Z	E	Q
X	O	W	C	S	V	S	B	T	O	N	M	M	T	U
Q	M	S	F	A	S	Q	Z	S	N	W	I	S	L	I
X	I	U	M	L	S	I	P	S	I	S	N	E	E	T
A	Q	W	O	D	Y	C	T	R	Y	F	G	V	S	O
M	E	I	T	T	A	M	U	W	E	S	B	G	B	Y
A	Y	N	H	H	N	U	J	M	H	B	I	R	D	S
K	U	H	K	U	K	H	A	H	S	A	R	W	I	K
E	B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y	T	D	A	O	L
H	P	Q	A	Z	W	S	X	E	D	C	R	S	F	V
S	T	G	M	O	U	S	E	B	Y	H	N	P	U	J
M	I	K	O	O	L	P	M	N	B	V	C	X	Z	S



Don't Rush Into Spring Cleanup (cont'd)

Have I paid my taxes?

In northern states mid-late April should be the earliest you consider cutting back perennials and clearing garden debris. Keep in mind that some bees don't emerge until late May, so the longer you can tolerate your "messy" garden the better.

Would I plant tomatoes now?

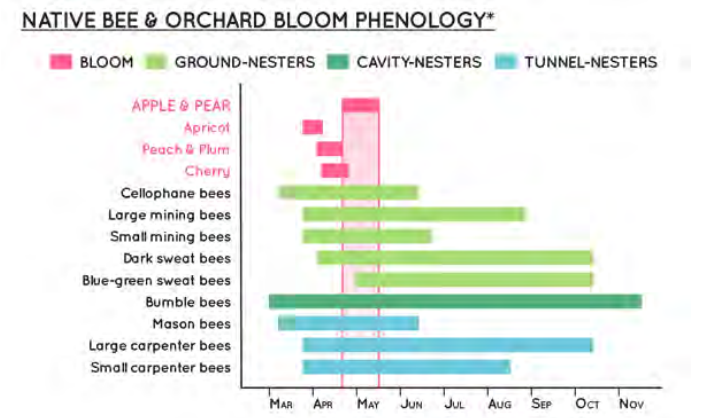
Any gardener will tell you it's not a good idea to plant your tomatoes outdoors until evening temperatures are reliably in the 50s. The tender tomato will shut down and suspend growth and fruiting if subjected to temperatures below 50 degrees or above 90 degrees. If it's time to plant tomatoes in your area, chances are conditions are neither too hot nor too cold for pollinators to be out and about.

Is it time to mow?

Cool-season lawns begin growing when soil temps reach 50 degrees. In all but the warmest climates, if it's time to regularly mow your lawn, it's probably a safe bet that most pollinators have emerged.

Are apples and pears finished blooming?

Apricot, peach, plum, and cherry trees are the earliest to bloom, coinciding with the emergence of many ground-nesting bees. According to the guide Wild Pollinators of Eastern Apple Orchards, apple and pear trees bloom between mid-April and mid-May. If you can manage to wait until apple trees are no longer in bloom – you should be safely in the clear from disturbing pollinators and interrupting their important work.



Source: Wild Pollinators of Eastern Apple Orchards, 2nd Ed.

We get it, it's tough to turn a blind eye to the "messy" garden, especially when gardening magazines, catalogs, and TV ads provide temptation daily. Each spring we beg gardeners and homeowners to press pause and find other ways to occupy their weekends. Instead of disturbing critical habitat read a book, do a jigsaw puzzle, do your taxes, tidy up the garage, or clean the gutters. While you may be eager to get outside and play in the garden - there will be time enough to toil in the soil before you know it!



Photo: Penn State Cooperative Extension

For more on delaying spring cleanup:  
<https://xerces.org/blog/dont-spring-into-garden-cleanup-too-soon>

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/info/when-to-start-spring-garden-cleaning>.

<https://extension.psu.edu/delay-garden-cleanup-to-benefit-overwintering-insects>



Fishing season starts April 1

Don't Rush Into Spring Cleanup by Justin Wheeler, Xerces Contributor

Spring is here. A time when warmer weather naturally turns a winter-weary homeowner's thoughts towards tackling outdoor chores. The first warm weather of the season may coax us out into the yard, but pollinators in your garden aren't ready to take a chance on the first warm day. Chrysalides, the hard shelled pupa of a moth or butterfly, still cling to last season's dried standing plant material. While you may begin to see bumble bees and ground-nesting bees emerge as flowering trees and shrubs burst into bloom, they still need cover during chilly nights and when "April brings the sweet spring showers, on and on for hours and hours." While mining bees, mason bees, carpenter bees, and bumble bees may be out and about by early April, other species such as sweat bees are still hiding out, waiting for the warmer days that arrive in May. Meanwhile, last year's leaf litter is still providing protection for both plants and invertebrates against late-season frosts.

So when is the right time to unleash your itchy green thumbs and reach for the rake? Unfortunately there isn't a hard and fast answer to this question, and the exact date will vary based upon where you

are in the country. To offer some guidance, consider the following:

Have I put away the snow shovel, mittens, and winter coats?

These don't come out to play...



...until these go away!

If you haven't tempted fate yet by relegating the snow shovel to the back of the garage, and if you're still wearing wool socks and long underwear – it's too early. Go make some hot chocolate and keep knitting that scarf you've been working on all winter.

Continued page 8

Apps That Will Turn You Into a Nature Expert (cont'd)



Natures Notebook is a project of the National Phenology Network. This app is perfect for those of us who make note of changes in the natural world around us. It's really not as complicated as it sounds. Do you keep track of when ice goes out of your favorite fishing spot for Spring fishing? Do you notice when the buds on the trees and shrubs start swelling, or when the robins or other birds return? If you answered yes then this is the app for you. Not only will you help document these, and other signs of our changing environment, you will become part of an ever growing citizen science network.

There are literally thousands of apps to choose from in addition to those listed above, to fit your needs and budget. The apps here are free and

available for both Android and iOS. Some others you might like include:

- PictureThis
- LeafSnap
- PlantSnap
- WWF Together
- Flora Incognita
- PlantNet
- What's Invasive
- iBird
- Peterson's Birds
- TreeBook
- Care for Our World
- MyNature Animal Tracks
- Audubon Birds . . .



And many more, so head to your favorite App store, grab your phone, tablet or favorite device and **get outside!**



## PROVIDING NEST MATERIAL FOR BIRDS: DOS & DON'TS

Most birds build some kind of structure to contain their eggs and nestlings. A bird's nest may be as simple as a nighthawk's or killdeer's depression on the ground, a hole in a tree excavated by a woodpecker, or an elaborate pouchlike nest woven by an oriole. The most familiar nest type is a cup made of vegetation and sometimes mud. Often, the outer layers are of coarse material, and the inside is lined with softer or finer material. Depending on the species, cup-nesters may hide their nests in trees or shrubs, build them on the ground, or place them in nest boxes or tree cavities.

If your yard has safe nest sites and adequate construction material, it will be more attractive to birds, including those that don't visit feeders.

Fallen leaves and twigs left unraked make excellent nest materials for many birds. Providing nooks in your backyard where this untidy debris can collect provides a variety of material for the birds to check out when they are building nests. They may even pick through your compost pile looking for suitable nest material.

You can also put out concentrated stashes of nest material.

**Do provide** any combination of the following:

- Dead twigs
- Dead leaves
- Dry grass (make sure the grass hadn't been treated with pesticides)
- Feathers
- Plant fluff or down (e.g. cattail fluff, cottonwood down)
- Moss
- Bark strips
- Pine needles

**Don't provide:**

- plastic strips
- tinsel
- cellophane
- aluminum foil
- dryer lint

Among the materials birds occasionally use in their nests are snakeskin (especially favored by Great Crested Flycatchers), and spider silk (especially used by small birds, including hummingbirds). The latter holds the other nesting materials together while making a



Rufous Hummingbird by [Penny Hall](#) via [Birdshare](#).

tiny nest stretchy enough to accommodate growing nestlings. Providing a safe environment for spiders will enhance nesting opportunities for these birds.

Barn and Cliff Swallows, phoebes, and robins use mud to construct their nests. You might consider creating or keeping a muddy puddle in your garden for them.

Birds may also use plastic strips, cellophane, and aluminum foil, but we don't recommend that you offer these materials. Also, don't offer dryer lint. It may seem nice and fluffy, but becomes crumbly after it's rained on and dries.

**Do provide** nesting material in any of the following ways:

- in piles on the ground (works well for leaves and twigs)
- in clean wire-mesh suet cages, or in mesh bags hung on tree trunks, fence posts, or railings
- pushed into tree crevices
- draped over vegetation
- in open-topped berry baskets, spiral wire hangers made especially for putting out nest material (one type looks like an oversized honey-dipper)

**For more information - visit**



<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/providing-nest-material-for-birds-dos-donts/>

## Apps That Will Turn You Into a Nature Expert

Do you wonder which species of bird it is that you keep seeing in your backyard? Are you curious about what butterflies are visiting your garden? Would you like to know more about the mammals that call your yard or local park home?

Gone are the days of carrying multiple nature guides - all you need is the spiffy little computer you carry with you everyday - also known as your smart phone. These tiny computers have opened up the world of nature with thousands of free apps that will help you identify what you see when out and about in nature. Thankfully there are plenty of smartphone apps that help you quickly and easily identify flora and fauna, record your findings and learn more about them. Not only that, but a few will even turn you into a citizen scientist!

Many of these apps, once downloaded, let you identify what you see whether or not you have a cell phone signal or internet connection. This is a real plus if you're exploring someplace like Baxter State Park or Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument where signals are limited.

Many of these apps are extremely easy to use, simply take a photo and the app does the rest. Once the identification is made, you can add it to your list or private library and share it with others, support citizen science and more.

To help you navigate the world of apps - we've listed a few of our free favorites. Head to your favorite app store and check these out.



**iNaturalist.org:** Is a versatile app created and supported by the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society. It is good for beginners and veteran naturalists alike. It requires an online account and enables you to connect with others.



**Merlin Bird ID App:** Created by the Cornell lab of Ornithology, this app strips down searching to about as fast and simple as it can possibly

get. You just answer five quick questions and the app comes up with a list of possible species - and with a good deal of accuracy. It uses more than 70 million observations recorded in the **eBird** citizen science project to make its educated guesses. It also provides bird sound recordings and tips for identifying species. This app is great for those new to birding.



**eBird** Also from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, eBird is for the more experienced birder and provides a

wealth of information on thousands of species from around the world and allows you to track your "life-list".



**Audubon Bird Guide App:** From the trusted authority on birds this app features 800 bird species from North America.



**Leps by Fieldguide:** If butterflies and moths interest you, check this one out. This app is a crowd-sourced field guide

to moths and butterflies. Scroll through the photographs to identify species, record observations, and display your collections.



**Seek by iNaturalist:** Another offering from the California Academy of Science and National Geographic that does not require an online account and may be more suitable for young children.



**Park Wildlife:** Our national parks are some of the best places to watch wildlife. This field guide will help you identify birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians commonly encountered in 100 national parks across the country. Not only that, but it points

out native endangered species as well as native poisonous or dangerous species to keep an eye out for in each of the parks included. As an extra bonus, it also gives information on park directions, hours, fees, phone numbers and other important info for getting out and identifying critters.

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