



How to Make Your Yard as Bee-Friendly as Possible

If you care about the environment, pollination, food production, and plant life, then you care about bees. Bees are one of man's best friends, as they are responsible for pollinating hundreds of agricultural crops and thousands of plant species. Many environmental advocates who know this also know that the global bee population is on the decline, and this troubles them. If this sounds like you, it's important that you do your small part and make your yard as bee-friendly as possible. Here are some tips.

Know what kind of flowers to put in your garden

When it comes to helping bees, not all flowers are created equal. It's important that your garden is full of flowers that bees love. Single flowers, for instance, are much better for bees than double flowers.

"Single flowers — those with one ring of petals — provide more nectar and pollen than double flowers, in which extra petals have replaced pollen-laden anthers. Double flowers also make it more difficult for bees to reach the inner flower parts," [says](#) Gardeners.com. Blue, yellow, and purple flowers are the most attractive to bees.

It's also important to go native when planting your [garden](#). The bees in your area prefer the native plants in your area - especially wildflowers. You can find plenty of information online about the plants native to your area that bees will go wild for.

[Here](#) is a good list of flowers that bees love.

Don't forget the bee bath

If you think that your bird bath can double as a bee bath, think again. Bees often have trouble landing in bird baths, as they are heavy and require some form of steady ground within the water. The David Suzuki Foundation [offers](#) these steps to build a great bee bath:

Line a shallow bowl or plate with rocks; Add water, but leave the rocks as dry islands to serve as landing pads; Place the bath at the ground level in your garden. (Put it near "problem plants" — those that get aphids, for example — and the beneficial insects that come to drink will look after them); Refresh the water daily, adding just enough to evaporate by day's end.

Lay off the insecticides

You may think that you can build a more robust yard and garden by deploying insecticides to kill unwanted insects that may damage your plants and crops. Unfortunately, these insecticides can wreak havoc on local bee populations.

"There are several ways honeybees can be killed by insecticides. One is direct contact of the insecticide on the bee while it is foraging in the field ... The second more deadly way is when the bee comes in contact with an insecticide and transports it back to the colony, either as contaminated pollen or nectar or on its body," [says](#) The University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

A natural yard is a safe yard for bees. Do your part by making sure that you are not poisoning your local populations.

Through a combination of climate change, habitat loss, and widespread pesticide use, we are seeing the collapse of bee colonies around the globe. If you consume food, which it's pretty likely that you do, the decline of the bee population should greatly concern you. Not only will making your yard bee-friendly help the world in a small but meaningful way, but it will also improve the overall health of your plants, vegetables, and those of your neighbors. Don't let a childhood bee sting cloud your judgment - bees are our friends and we need them to flourish, in abundance, wherever they can.

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