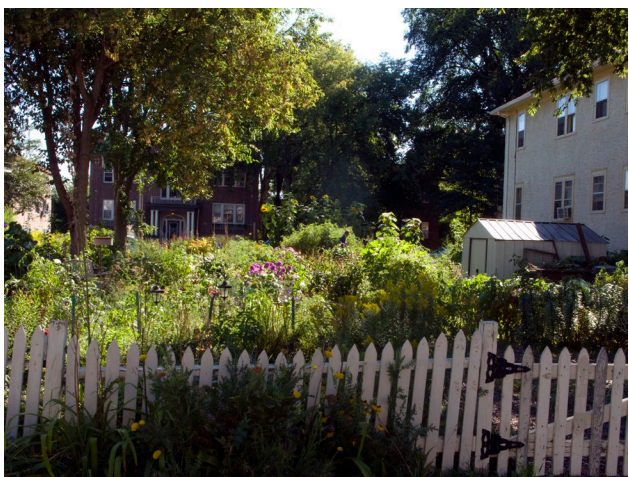


1. How can I create a Pollinator Garden? *Written by Ginger Lefurgy & Mary Ann West, Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs)*



Planting a pollinator garden is like planting any kind of flower garden, but the emphasis is on native plants and plants that provide forage or habitat for pollinators. Begin by assessing your site. Sketch or map the area, noting existing plants, proximity to a hose, and underground or overhead obstructions. Determine the sun's duration, as many plants thrive in full sun while others prefer partial shade or full shade. Mark areas that are especially dry or wet. You'll find a helpful list below of plants for different sites.

[Testing the texture and pH](#) of your soil aids in plant selection. Choose a variety of plant sizes, flower colors and shapes to support pollinators throughout the growing season and develop a watering plan, at least for the first year of establishment. Make a list of the plants you think will be best suited to your site. This structured approach streamlines nursery visits and prevents impulsive purchases. [We've created a helpful list](#) of native plants and their bloom times. And recommend this great resource for [assessing your site](#) thoroughly.

Photo credit: Backyard garden - bldodge – Flickr CC 2.0

2. How do I manage bees and wasps? *Written by Ginger Lefurgy & Mary Ann West, MGVs*



Native bees and wasps play crucial roles in our ecosystem as pollinators and predators of harmful insects. New York State boasts 426 wild bee species, mostly solitary and non-aggressive, although some social hornets and wasps-- like yellowjackets and paper wasps-- can be problematic, especially when their nests are close to people. [Properly identifying](#) the insect is key before considering a management strategy. While larger nests may require professional pest management, smaller ones can often be safely removed by homeowners. Visit the [NYS Integrated Pest Management website](#) for options to

prevent or remove bees and wasps when they are of concern.

Photo credit: Michael Nerrie, Flickr C BY-NC-SA 2.



Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

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3. Why should I care about pollinators? *Written by Mary Ann West, MGV*



Pollinators are indispensable! They form the foundation of our food chain by transferring pollen between plants, enabling fruit and seed production crucial for our ecosystem and economy. From blueberries to chocolate, roughly [one-third of our food](#) comes from the efforts of pollinating bees, butterflies, birds, and more. Sadly, native pollinators face threats from shrinking habitat, competition for resources, pesticide use, parasites and disease, and climate change. They urgently need our support!

Photo USDA, Public Domain

4. What is a Pollinator Pathway? *Written by Catherine Serreau-Thompson, Jill Eisenstein, Lynne Bernstein & Mary Ann West, MGVs*



A pollinator pathway is a pesticide-free corridor of contiguous spaces where native plants provide access to food and shelter for pollinators. Founded in 2007 as a grassroots movement in Seattle, the Pollinator Pathway has extended nationwide and beyond, through public and private properties, forging links between individuals and communities, promoting a diversity of plant species and making our landscape healthier and more beautiful. The Putnam Pollinator Pathway is an initiative of the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Putnam County. Members are encouraged to create pesticide-free pollinator habitat, rich with native plants. [Please consider joining.](#)

Image CCE Putnam

5. What is an Invasive Species? *Written by Jill Eisenstein, MGVS*



An “invasive species” is a species that is transported -- intentionally or unintentionally -- and becomes established in a new ecosystem. Its introduction causes or may cause significant harm to the environment, the economy, or human health. The harm or potential harm outweighs any benefits. The invasive may be a plant, animal, insect or microbe.

Invasive plants can out-compete native plants for air, water, and nutrient resources, and “push” the native plants out of their habitats.

In the new ecosystem, invasive species do not encounter the controls (insects, animals, pathogens) that would normally keep their spread in check. This impacts the entire food web in the new ecosystem, from insects on out, which depends on the native plants for sustenance and survival.

For further information on invasive plants in our area, see www.lhprism.org and for invasive plants, animals, pathogens and parasites affecting all of New York State, visit www.nyis.info

Kudzu vines: Once established in its habitat, kudzu can grow up to 60 feet in one season, averaging about one foot per day.

Photo credit: Robert Michalove – Flickr by CC

6. What are pesticides? *Written by Michael Helms, Pesticide Safety Education Program Leader at Cornell IPM*



A pesticide is a substance or mixture of substances used to control pests by killing, repelling, or protecting against them. Pesticides are designed for different target pests. For example, insecticides are a type of pesticide that controls insects. Other examples include herbicides, which control weeds, and fungicides, which control fungal pathogens. ^[1] Some pesticides pose minimal risk to pollinators while others pose a higher

risk. This depends on the type of pesticide and how it is used by the applicator. Pesticides may also cause sub-lethal effects, which in themselves do not kill the insect, but may harm them in some way. When combined with other stressors in the environment, sub-lethal effects could increase pollinator mortality.

Since our pollinator pathway seeks to create a haven for pollinators, we ask members to refrain from using pesticides to avoid unintended and sub-lethal effects to pollinators. Consider managing weeds manually, by hand pulling or cutting. And remember not all pests are what they seem: some weeds provide forage for pollinators, and some “pest” insects are part of the biodiversity we are seeking to promote. This means you may need to learn to identify pests and adjust your pest control accordingly. If the use of a pesticide is the best option for managing a pest, follow label and pollinator protection directions closely.

Learn more about [Integrated Pest Management](#) and review this [Pesticide Decision Making Guide for Landscapes, Ornamental and Turf](#).

A ruby-throated hummingbird (Archilochus colubris) feeds at a cardinal flower in the Native Flora Garden at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Photo Credit: Steven Severinghaus – Flickr by CC

^[1] Protecting Pollinators While Using Pesticides, Ohio State University, Ohionline, accessed Dec 20 2024