

Predatory Insectary Strips

by Carol Ann Harlos

Insectary strips consist of flowering plants that support many species of insects. They provide pollen, nectar, and protein for many insect species.

Predator insectary strips are useful not only for commercial growers, but for backyard gardeners as well. They give food and nesting areas for many insect pollinators including butterflies, moths, native and non-native bee species plus they offer places for parasitizing insects that kill unwanted species. They become insect havens!

Insectary strips can be annual, seasonal, or permanent.

Annual insectary strips include native and annual species. Examples are cosmos, borage, dill, Phacelia, marigolds, runner bean, and tulsi.

Self-seeding annuals make this easily acceptable to gardeners and farmers alike.

Permanent insectary strips usually grow native wildflowers, grasses, and herbaceous perennials. They take more planning but can continue growing and contributing for many years.

The advantage of permanent native species are both economic and beneficial to specialist species such as certain butterflies and moths. Beebalm (Monarda), elderberry, goldenrod, lobelia, and mint species are often used.

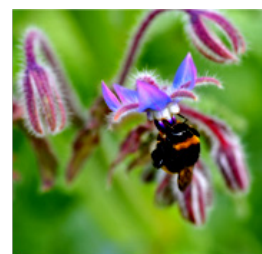
You may have noted that these species represent several different plant families. This is a wonderful contributor to both diversity of plants and to a diversity of species that use them as food or nectar sources.



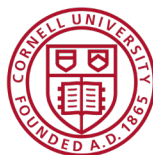
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Sweet Alyssum (*Labularia maritima*)
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Borage (*Borago officinalis*)
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