

# Pollinator Garden FAQ

## **Why are pollinators so important?**

Many pollinators are under threat by human activity, in part due to habitat loss. Without pollinators, many of the plants that we depend on would not grow!

## **Why should we plant local and native flowers?**

Local plants can strengthen the local ecosystem and the other living things around it, whereas non-native plants can introduce invasive species that can cause many problems within the ecosystem.

## **Why aren't my wildflowers sprouting and/or blooming?**

Make sure to water your plants! Even though wildflowers can survive with very little water, if the plants are not sprouting or blooming, they likely need more water. If this is your first year after planting perennial wildflowers, they may be using most of their energy establishing their roots and may not bloom until the year following.

## **Should I remove weeds as they grow? Should I add herbicides, pesticides, or fertilizers?**

It may be hard to differentiate the weeds from your sprouting wildflowers. However, as your wildflowers grow, you may find some more noticeable weeds popping up. Many gardeners decide to allow the grasses and weeds to grow along side their planted wildflower. If you see weeds that are easy to remove, gently pull them out without harming any flower roots or use scissors to cut weeds back. This will allow more room and resources for your wildflowers to thrive. Herbicides, pesticides, or fertilizers are not suggested, however. Instead, adding in composted soil can provide some extra nutrients (like nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium) for the wildflowers.

## **Can I or should I cut back the flowers as they grow?**

As the season goes on, be sure to cut back on dead and dying flowers. This will help keep your flowers healthy, as it looks fresher but also will send a signal to the plant to put its energy into creating even more blooms. The newer flowers can also be cut for arrangements, as this will encourage the plant to create more blooms too.

## **What do I do with the wildflowers when they are done blooming, and how do I plan for next year?**

At the end of the season, flower stems should be cut to about 3" or 8" in height. Leave these clippings in place to break down and feed the soil during the off season. The wildflowers will be ready to come up green and new the next Spring. Perennials will return year after year, forming larger and more colorful plants each year.

## **Do I need to repot my wildflower plants?**

Many native plants can remain in a pot for at least 3 years. Afterwards, if the plant begins to yellow, growth appears to slow down, or the soil starts to dry up almost immediately, it may have outgrown its current gardening space. You will need to prepare a larger pot or plot of land, remove the plant from its current space, detangle some of its roots, separate it into smaller plants if needed, and rehome it.

## **Are these plants safe for my pets?**

There are many wildflower plants that can be harmful to pets if ingested. To be safe, keep pets away from your native gardens.

