



100 Plants to FEED THE BEES: Provide a Healthy Habitat to Help Pollinators Thrive – The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

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While this book is a handbook of plants insects need, it is an important book for every gardener. The book begins with a very interesting short version of the multi-million year history of how plants and insects evolved into essential partnerships. For those who have ignored environmental problems, bees have been disappearing, and bees and humans also have an essential partnership. The DNR claims bees pollinate approximately roughly 75% of the vegetables, fruits, and nuts we eat. Personally, I love those plant products and want to keep bees around to do what they do best. Unfortunately, I've also noticed a distinct decline in the number of honeybees visiting my plants.

100 PLANTS TO FEED THE BEES offers an extensive list of plants whose flowers provide nectar and pollen for bees, and not only honey bees but native bees and other pollinators such as moths, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Each plant section contains a photo of the plant, the plant's botanical name, and some basic information on the plant, plus a map of where it grows. Interesting information and sometimes warnings about the plant are also included. An example of a warning is mustard, which is considered a noxious weed in some locations, and illegal to grow.

Included in the 100 plants are native wildflowers and non-native or introduced wildflowers (weeds), garden plants, herbs, trees and shrubs, and even pasture plants. I was glad to see many of the plants I've recognized growing in my area, and my garden holds many other recommended selections. I was surprised to see *Tilia Americana* or the common basswood tree, until I remembered standing under my trees when in bloom and hearing myriad bees busy in the tree's unseen upper stories. I appreciated the list of insects each plant attracts far beyond bees,

too. I looked over an online version of the book, and then pre-order a volume. I recommend all gardeners purchase a copy of 100 PLANTS TO FEED THE BEES, and a big thanks to Xerces Society authors Eric Lee-Mäder, Jarrod Fowler, Jillian Vento, and Jennifer Hopwood for this work.