

9 Cheap Ways To Naturally Attract Pollinators



Pollinators are important to your garden. If you want a sustainable garden, then you'll want to find ways to naturally attract pollinators. And if you want a frugal garden, then you'll need to figure out how to do so cheaply. Luckily, there are a lot of options for you to do so.

What Are Pollinators?

I confess that I always think of bees when I think of pollinators. They're the quintessential ones. However, there are actually quite a few different pollinators. So, what does this term even mean?

Pollinators are any animal that helps to transfer pollen from the stamens to the stigma of plants. In other words, they facilitate plant mating. This leads to seeds and fruits. Bees

are pollinators. However, so are birds, butterflies, moths, flies, and beetles. There are even some mammals like mice and bats that can help pollinate.

Why Do You Want to Naturally Attract Pollinators To Your Garden?

Pollinators are a good thing. Without proper pollination, many plants would not be able to produce viable seeds or fruits. Therefore, you want to [bring them to your garden](#). Benefits when you naturally attract pollinators to your garden include:

Increased And Improved Yields

With more efficient pollination, your garden's crop yields are likely to increase. They promote more uniform and abundant harvests. Pollinators can even improve fruit quality! Whether you're growing fruits, vegetables, or seeds, the presence of pollinators can lead to higher productivity and better overall yields.

Biodiversity

Pollinators contribute to the overall biodiversity and ecological balance of your garden. They facilitate cross-pollination among different plant species, This aids in genetic diversity and the survival of various plant populations. By attracting pollinators, you promote a diverse range of flowering plants, which in turn supports a broader array of wildlife and beneficial insects in your garden. It's a beautiful cycle.

Ecosystem Services

Pollinators provide invaluable ecosystem services beyond pollination. They contribute to the broader ecological functioning of ecosystems, including habitat creation, food

web support, and nutrient recycling. By attracting pollinators, you enhance the ecological resilience and health of your garden, creating a more balanced and self-sustaining ecosystem.

Conservation

Attracting pollinators to your garden contributes to the conservation and protection of these vital species. Many pollinators, including certain bee species, face population declines due to habitat loss, pesticide exposure, and other factors. By providing a welcoming environment with a variety of nectar-rich flowers and suitable nesting habitats, you can support pollinator populations and contribute to their conservation. This is a great thing for the world.

Did you know that you can [certify your habitat to help wildlife](#)?!

Garden Beauty and Joy

Pollinators, such as butterflies and hummingbirds, add a vibrant and colorful element to your garden. Their presence enhances the aesthetic appeal of your outdoor space. This creates a visually appealing and more dynamic environment. Watching pollinators in action can be a delightful and educational experience, bringing joy and wonder to both adults and children. In other words, it is simply fun to naturally attract pollinators to your garden.

Cheap Ways To Naturally Attract Pollinators

Now that you're sold on the idea of attracting pollinators to your garden, how can you do it? Here are some of the best cheap ways to naturally attract pollinators:

Plant Native Wildflowers

Native wildflowers are already well-adapted to the local ecosystem. Plus, they provide abundant nectar and pollen resources. Therefore, they attract a wide range of pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, with their diverse colors, shapes, and scents. Native plants also support local biodiversity and help maintain the ecological balance of your region. This is one of the best cheap ways to naturally attract pollinators while adding beauty to your garden.

Create Habitat Diversity

Provide a variety of habitats and shelter options to attract different pollinator species. Incorporate elements like flowering shrubs, trees, grasses, and nesting sites such as log piles or rock crevices. These habitats offer nesting opportunities, resting places, and protection from predators. Therefore, they are key to making your garden more inviting to pollinators.

Provide Water Sources

Place shallow dishes or bowls filled with water in your garden to provide a water source for pollinators. Adding pebbles or stones to the container allows insects to perch safely while drinking. Water sources are particularly crucial in hot and dry climates.

Avoid Pesticides

Minimize or eliminate the use of pesticides in your garden. Pesticides can be harmful to pollinators, disrupting their behavior, health, and reproduction. Embracing organic gardening practices helps create a safe and welcoming environment for pollinators, allowing them to thrive and carry out their important pollination role.

Plant a Succession of Blooming Plants

Select a diverse array of flowering plants that bloom at different times throughout the growing season. This ensures a continuous food supply for pollinators from spring to fall. By providing a succession of blooms, you support pollinators throughout their lifecycle, from early-season emergence to late-season preparations for winter.

Provide Host Plants for Caterpillars

Many pollinators, such as butterflies, require specific host plants for their caterpillars to feed on. Research and include host plants in your garden that cater to the needs of particular pollinator species. By supporting caterpillar development, you encourage the presence of adult butterflies and contribute to their life cycle.

Minimize Garden Disturbances

Limit excessive garden clean-up and leave some areas undisturbed. Some pollinators, such as ground-nesting bees, require bare soil or leaf litter for nesting. Allow natural debris and leave patches of bare ground. In this way, you provide nesting sites and overwintering habitat for these beneficial insects.

Use Group Plantings

Plant flowers in clusters or groups rather than single plants scattered across the garden. Groupings provide a concentrated and easily recognizable food source for pollinators, increasing the efficiency of their foraging. This way, they can visit multiple flowers in one area, maximizing their access to nectar and pollen resources.

Be The Bee

In other words, ask yourself if you would come to this garden if you were bee. What would need to be different in order to bring you to buzz and pollinate there? Use your intuition to help guide you to enhancing your garden so that it naturally attracts pollinators.

Read More:

- [Top 9 Common Plant Pests and How to Control Them](#)
 - [Upcycling in the Garden: Everyday Items That Can Be Functional Garden Decorations](#)
 - [Natural Ways to Control Fungus in Plants](#)
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Could I Make Money With Worm Farming?



I was chatting with a friend the other day and she asked me if I'd ever heard about worm farming. I said, "sure, like to compost in your apartment, right?" And she said, "sure, but did you know that you can actually make money with worm farms?" Huh. I did not know that.

My Friend's Worm Farming Story

She had been out and about running her daily errands. In a parking lot, she saw someone pull up to a woman's car that was beside her and call out, "hey do you have any worms?" How could you not be curious about such an interaction! So, she got to talking to the woman. She found out that she's a worm farmer for a living. The woman raises about 8000-10000 worms. She sells them to gardeners and farmers and even to the city.

Occasionally, she faces battles you would never think about if you weren't a worm farmer. For example, her worms got taken over by centipedes and she lost most of her farm. She had to start over. How do you write off that loss on your taxes at the end of the year? The whole thing is so fascinating. And it

got me wondering what's really involved in becoming a worm farmer.

Worms Are Good For Gardens

There are, of course, many different types of worms. Not all are ones you would want in your garden. But there are lot of benefits to worms in garden, particularly [earthworms](#). And actually, most worms are earthworms. If you see worms in your garden, then it's often a sign that your garden is healthy. And if you want a healthier garden, you might choose to add worms to your garden.

Worms help gardens by:

- Processing your soil and compost and turning it into nutrients. They essentially compost for you in a super effective way. As a result, they make your soil healthier and improve garden growth.
- They also move the earth around. They create tunnels in the soil that improve air and water movement as well as growth opportunities for the roots of plants.

So, I see two main benefits to worm farming:

1. The worms help your own garden to grow.
2. You can sell the worms to other people who want their gardens to grow.

You Can Make Money Worm Farming

In our conversation, my friend mention a pilot in Sonoma who made his money worm farming. So, I did my research and learned about [Jack Chambers](#). The story goes that he put some worms into his compost, left for five days, and came home shocked to discover rich soil where the worms were living. He fell in

love with worm farming (called vermiculture, by the way) and turned it into a business. He's raised millions for his company, which sells the worms to farmers. In Sonoma, that means a lot of vineyards, too.

It seems like you could start this kind of business with relatively little investment. The [Savvy Smallholder](#) says that it can be a part-time or full-time job. Seems like something you could start small and see if you like it. At the very least, you will probably improve your own garden's soil in the process. They explain that if you aren't ready to raise worms to sell, then you can start with vermicomposting: "worm farming for recycling waste."

Apparently you can sell worm castings, various worm products, and the worms themselves. Worm castings are basically earthworm-created manure or fertilizer. As for the worms themselves, in addition to selling them to farms, you can sell them for bait. It's a business to think about!

How Much Do Garden Worms Cost?

I've never bought worms. Therefore, I was a little surprised to learn that you can buy them on Amazon for your garden. One pound of red wigglers, which seems to be about 1000 worms, sells for between \$40 and \$100 there. That said, there are lots of options at various price points. I would imagine that if you sell directly to small gardeners, and perhaps you use organic gardening techniques, then that would change your price. Likewise, if you have a huge worm farm and sell in bulk to big farms, that would change the price. So, I can't tell what kind of profit you could make. But you don't seem to pay anything for worm upkeep since they're doing their thing in the compost and soil, so most of it must be profit.

What do you think about giving worm farming a try?

Read More:

- [How to Get Free Worms For Your Garden](#)
 - [DIY Compost Using a 5 Gallon Bucket](#)
 - [5 Reasons to Use Fish Amino Acids on Your Plants](#)
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Ladybugs Versus Asian Lady Beetles



LADYBUGS
VERSUS

Asian Lady Beetles

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Gardeners—especially those new to the hobby—may find it tough to distinguish between bad bugs and [beneficial insects](#). It can take some time to get a hang of which bugs to leave alone and

which to squish dead. Unfortunately, some good garden bugs have evil lookalikes. Case in point: ladybugs versus Asian lady beetles.

How can you tell the two apart? And which one do you want to keep around while you kick the other to the curb?

Ladybugs versus Asian Lady Beetles

Many gardeners are happy to find ladybugs hanging around their plots. While they don't pollinate plants like bees and butterflies, they hungrily snatch up a variety of garden pests, including [aphids](#).

The Asian lady beetle, on the other hand, is considered a pest. They leave behind a smelly yellow residue and because they aren't native to North America, they've quickly overtaken resources destined for native ladybugs. They also bite and tend to gather in large groups—yuck!

While lady beetles look quite similar to ladybugs, they aren't even the same species! Confused yet? Not to worry, here's a breakdown of the differences between the two:

Ladybugs

- do not bite
- are beneficial garden insects
- eat pests like mites, aphids, and whiteflies
- are bright red and have black spots
- are very round (or oval-shaped)
- have nearly all-black heads with two distinct white markings
- overwinter outdoors

Ladybeetles

- are biters
- eat some garden pests

- gather in groups and often turn into household pests during the colder months
- leave behind yellow goop with a nasty smell, it's not dangerous but it can stain surfaces
- are bigger than ladybugs
- have a coloring that varies from red to orange
- have a pointier shape
- always have a white M or W-shaped marking on their head

What do you do if you have lady beetles around or inside your home? Vacuum them up and immediately dispose of them. You can also buy store-bought traps to catch them. [Orkin](#) pest control recommends making sure all cracks and gaps in your home's exterior are filled. Additionally, if you're struggling to control the issue, don't wait before calling in the help of experts.

Another Nasty Beetle

Another Asian beetle that wreaks havoc on gardens is the Japanese beetle. It's actually more destructive than the Asian lady beetle, but a lot easier to tell apart. Instead of red-coloring, Japanese beetles have iridescent reddish-green carapaces that shimmer in the sunlight.

They would be lovely to look at if they didn't eat everything in their path! Thankfully, they tend to attack gardens in cycles. One year, you might have a swarm of Japanese beetles descending on your beans and flowers, and the next they might be gone altogether.

Need some help with identification? Check out this helpful YouTube video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SyPD_qn_ZU