

Native Plants for Summer and Fall Honey Bee Forage

Honey bees in Maryland often have a shortage of nectar sources in summer and into fall. Many native plants are excellent nectar sources at this time of year, but are often not very abundant. This nectar dearth can lead to aggressive bees and weak colonies going into winter. Planting bee forage can reduce supplemental sugar feeding, improve bee health and potentially allow for surplus honey production. The following native plants provide abundant nectar and/or pollen during the summer and fall and are adaptable and easy to grow. These species are also very beneficial to native pollinators. Planting in full sun is recommended for the best growth and bloom.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Bloom Time	Height (ft)	Light Needs	Soil Moisture	Deer Browse	Notes
*Inkberry	<i>Ilex glabra</i>	May-June	5-8	full-partial	mesic-wet	some	evergreen, spreads by roots
*Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	May-June	3-12	full-partial	mesic-wet	some	deciduous, spreads by roots/layering
Foxglove Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	May-June	2-5	full-partial	dry-mesic	some	seeds well
Hairy Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon hirsutus</i>	June-July	2-3	full-partial	dry-mesic	some	thrive on poor soil
*Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	June-July	3-8	full-partial	moist-wet	yes	will grow in flooded soil
*Butterfly milkweed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	July-Aug	1-2	full	dry-mesic	some	prefer dry soil
*Common milkweed	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	July-Aug	3-5	full-partial	dry-moist	some	can run aggressively
*Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	July-Aug	2-4	full-partial	mesic-wet	some	tolerant of moderately dry soil
*Purple Giant Hyssop	<i>Agastache scrophulariifolia</i>	July-Aug	3-6	full-partial	mesic-moist	no	long bloom season
Yellow Giant Hyssop	<i>Agastache nepetoides</i>	July-Aug	3-8	full-partial	mesic-moist	no	long bloom season
Giant Blue Hyssop	<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>	July-Aug	2-4	full-partial	dry-mesic	no	drought resistant
*Spotted Beebalm	<i>Monarda punctata</i>	July-Aug	1-3	full	dry-mesic	no	dislikes wet soil, long bloom season
*False Sunflower	<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	July-Aug	3-5	full-partial	dry-moist	yes	Spreads well by seed
*Narrowleaf Mountainmint	<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>	July-Sept	1-3	full	dry-mesic	no	spreader, long bloom season
Whorled Mountainmint	<i>Pycnanthemum verticillatum</i>	July-Sept	2-4	full-partial	dry-mesic	no	spreader, long bloom season
Virginia Mountainmint	<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	July-Sept	1-3	full-partial	dry-mesic	no	spreader, long bloom season
Hoary Mountainmint	<i>Pycnanthemum incanum</i>	July-Sept	3-4	full-partial	dry-mesic	no	spreader, very long bloom season
Clustered Mountainmint	<i>Pycnanthemum muticum</i>	July Oct	2-3	full-partial	dry-moist	no	spreader, very long bloom season
Paleleaf Woodland Sunflower	<i>Helianthus strumosus</i>	July-Sept	2-5	full-partial	dry-mesic	yes	aggressive spreader, long bloom season
*Flat-top Goldentop	<i>Euthamia graminifolia</i>	Aug-Sept	3-6	full-partial	mesic-wet	yes	aggressive spreader
Stiff Goldenrod	<i>Oligoneuron rigidum</i>	Aug-Sept	2-5	full	dry-moist	yes	other goldenrods are also excellent
Showy Goldenrod	<i>Solidago speciosa</i>	Aug-Oct	2-5	full-partial	dry-mesic	some	Tolerates poor dry soil
Sawtooth Sunflower	<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	Aug-Oct	3-5	full-partial	mesic-moist	yes	lone plants up to 12', aggressive spreader
Wingstem	<i>Verbesina alternifolia</i>	Aug-Oct	3-8	full-partial	mesic-moist	yes	prefers moist fertile soil
*Aromatic Aster	<i>Symphotrichum oblongifolium</i>	Sept-Nov	1-2	full	dry-mesic	some	other asters are also excellent