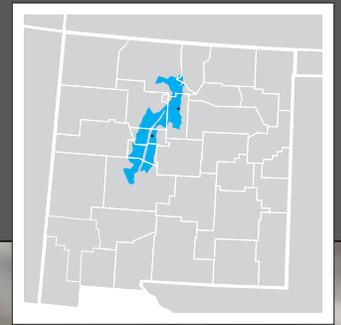


# Albuquerque and Santa Fe Region



*Firewheel, rubber rabbitbrush, and tree cholla*

Located in the arid Southwest at the junction of the Chihuahuan Desert, the Great Plains, the Rocky Mountains, and the Colorado Plateau, New Mexico supports an incredible diversity of native plants and pollinators. Of the 3,600 species of bees native to the United States and Canada, more than a quarter are found in New Mexico. Albuquerque and Santa Fe lie in the north central part of the state, where piñon-juniper woodlands, shrublands, and desert grasslands dominate. With less than 15" average rainfall per year and dramatic temperature swings between daily highs and lows, this region features a hardy, resilient native plant community.

This intersection of major floristic regions results in a unique pollinator community, with high bee species richness and where monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) from eastern and western populations may cross paths. Native bees in the Santa Fe/Albuquerque area are highly diverse, ranging from tiny fairy bees (*Perdita*) to large carpenter bees (*Xylocopa*), specialist cactus bees (*Diadasia*), and several at-risk bumble bee species. These pollinators maintain healthy, productive plant communities, provide food that sustains wildlife, and play an essential role in crop production.

Providing wildflower-rich habitat is the most significant action you can take to support pollinators. Adult bees, butterflies, and other pollinators require nectar as their primary food source. Female bees also collect pollen as food for their offspring. Native plants, which are adapted to local soils and climate cycles, are usually the best sources of nectar and pollen for native pollinators.

This list is recommended for the EPA Level IV ecoregions of the Albuquerque Basin and the North Central NM Valleys and Mesas and is best suited for elevations below 8000' and areas with dry soils. This guide features regional native plants that are highly attractive to pollinators and are well-suited for small-scale plantings in gardens, on business and school campuses, in urban greenspaces, and in farm field borders. In addition to supporting native bees and honey bees, many of these plants attract nectar-seeking butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds, and some are host plants for butterfly and moth caterpillars. With few exceptions, these species occur broadly across the region and can be purchased as seed or transplants. Please consult the Flora Neomexicana series, the SEINet data portal for the Arizona - New Mexico Chapter (<https://swbiodiversity.org>), or the USDA's PLANTS database (<http://plants.usda.gov>) for details on the distributions of plant species in your area.

Our **Bring Back the Pollinators** campaign is based on four principles:

1. **Grow** a variety of pollinator-friendly flowers;
2. **Protect and provide** bee nest sites and caterpillar host plants;
3. **Avoid** using pesticides, especially insecticides; and
4. **Spread** the word!

You can participate by taking the **Pollinator Protection Pledge** and registering your habitat on our nationwide map at:

[www.bringbackthepollinators.org](http://www.bringbackthepollinators.org).





This list of pollinator plants for Albuquerque and Santa Fe was produced by the Xerces® Society. For more information about pollinator conservation, please visit [www.xerces.org](http://www.xerces.org).



Bloom Period	Common Name	Scientific Name	Life Cycle*	Flower Color	Max. Height†	Water Needs	Notes
	<b>Forbs</b>				(Feet)	L: low; M: medium; H: high	*Life Cycle abbreviations: A: annual; P: perennial; B: biennial. †Max. Height is an average, individual plants may vary.
Early	1 Spectacle pod	<i>Dimorphocarpa wizlizeni</i>	A, B	white	3	L	Pale pink and green plant with fragrant white flowers and seed pods shaped like eyeglasses; important early bloomer for pollinators.
	2 Rocky Mountain penstemon	<i>Penstemon strictus</i>	P	purple	2	L	Spikes of vivid purple-blue tubular flowers; a preferred nectar plant for bumble bees and host plant for checkerspot butterflies.
Early–Mid	3 Pale evening primrose	<i>Oenothera pallida</i>	P	white/pink	1	L	Fragrant white flowers open in the evening, attracting bees, moths, and butterflies. Will often bloom again after monsoon season.
	4 Upright prairie coneflower	<i>Ratibida columnifera</i>	P	yellow/red	1.5	L	Clump-forming perennial with flowers ranging from yellow to brown-red; blooms from early summer to fall. Attracts sweat bees.
Mid	5 Horsetail milkweed	<i>Asclepias subverticillata</i>	P	white	3	L	Star-like white-green flowers and narrow, whorled leaves; attracts many beneficial insects. Host plant for monarch butterflies.
	6 Globe mallows	<i>Sphaeralcea</i> spp.	P	orange	1	L	Rugged, drought-tolerant plants with bright orange-red flowers. Readily re-seeds. Attracts a variety of bees and butterflies.
	7 Greenthread	<i>Thelesperma megapotamicum</i>	P	yellow	3	L	Yellow flowerheads and slender green, threadlike leaves. Widely used by indigenous Southwest peoples in medicinal teas.
	8 Purple prairie clover	<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	P	purple	2	L	Nitrogen-fixing legume; along with <i>D. candida</i> (white prairie clover), attracts many different pollinators and beneficial insects.
	9 Hairy false goldenaster	<i>Heterotheca villosa</i>	P	yellow	1	L	Widespread, easy to establish perennial with bright yellow flowers. Blooms early to late; readily re-seeds.
	10 Bee balm	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	P	purple	2	M	Purple-pink tubular flowers attract bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and hawk moths. Needs partial shade at lower elevations.
	11 Chocolate flower	<i>Berlandiera lyrata</i>	P	yellow	1.5	L	Yellow chocolate-scented flowers open at night and close in the midday heat. Long bloom period; attracts many beneficial insects.
Mid–Late	12 Gayfeather	<i>Liatris punctata</i>	P	purple	1.5	L	Showy spikes of purple flowers are butterfly and bee magnets from summer through fall. Birds feed on seeds in the fall/winter.
	13 Common sunflower	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	A	yellow	10	L	Tall, easy to establish annual. Sunflowers are a favorite source of pollen and nectar for many bee species. Birds feed on seeds.
	14 Rocky Mountain bee plant	<i>Cleome serrulata</i>	A	pink	3	L	Long-blooming annual with spiky pink flowers; drought tolerant and reseeds readily. Host plant for several butterfly species.
	15 Firewheel	<i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>	A, P	red/orange	2	L-M	Bright red-yellow flowers attract bees and butterflies. Both short-lived perennial and annual varieties; easy to grow from seed.
Late	16 Threadleaf groundsel	<i>Senecio flaccidus</i>	P	yellow	2	L	Yellow daisy-like flowers on a semi-woody plant with grey-green foliage. May bloom earlier in the season with sufficient rainfall.
	17 Tahoka daisy	<i>Machaeranthera tanacetifolia</i>	A	purple	3	L	Low, spreading annual features purple daisy-like flowers with bright yellow centers. Easy to grow; drought-tolerant.
<b>Shrubs and Trees</b>							
Early	18 Fremont's mahonia	<i>Berberis fremontii</i>	P	yellow	8	L	Evergreen with holly-like leaves; very attractive to bees. Birds feed on berries; shrub provides overwintering shelter to wildlife.
	19 Threelobed sumac	<i>Rhus trilobata</i>	P	white	5	L	Dense shrub with inconspicuous flowers that attract many bee species; foliage turns brilliant orange to red in fall.
Early–Mid	20 Apache plume	<i>Fallugia paradoxa</i>	P	white	4	L	Seed heads form pink, silvery soft plumes. Blooms early to late; attracts many native bees and some butterflies.
	21 Tree cholla	<i>Cylindropuntia imbricata</i>	P	pink	6	L	Many-branched cactus with magenta blossoms; primarily pollinated by native cactus bees ( <i>Diadasia</i> and <i>Lithurgus</i> spp.)
Mid–Late	22 Desert willow	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	P	pink	25	L	Large, pink tubular flowers are attractive to bumble bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds; slender trunks with willow-like leaves.
	23 Crispleaf buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum corymbosum</i>	P	white	4	L	Short shrub with yellow to cream-colored flowers. Important host plant for butterflies; very drought tolerant.
Late	24 Chamisa; Rubber rabbitbrush	<i>Ericameria nauseosa</i>	P	yellow	5	L	Very important late-flowering shrub for butterflies and bees with silvery grey-green foliage; can spread through rhizomes.



## Planting for Success

### Sun Exposure

Most pollinator-friendly plants prefer sites that receive full sun throughout most of the day and are mostly open, with few large trees; however, some may do better in partial shade in hot, dry locations.

### Plant Diversity

Choosing a variety of plants with overlapping and sequential bloom periods will provide food for pollinators throughout the seasons.

### Habitat Size and Shape

Habitat patches that are bigger and closer to other patches are generally better than those that are smaller and more isolated from one another. However, even a small container garden can attract and support pollinators!

### Planting Layout

Flowers clustered into clumps of one species will attract more pollinators than individual plants scattered through a habitat patch. Where space allows, plant clumps of the same species within a few feet of one another.

### Seeds or Transplants

It is usually cheaper to establish large habitat areas from seed; however, seeding native wildflowers on a large-scale is an art unto itself. For step-by-step instructions, see *Establishing Pollinator Meadows from Seed* and the Pollinator Habitat Installation Guides listed in the Additional Resources section. For smaller areas like gardens, transplants are usually easier to use and will bloom faster than plants started from seed.

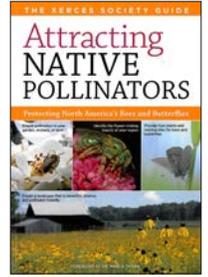
## Protect Pollinators from Insecticides

Although dependent on timing, rate, and method of application, all insecticides have the potential to poison or kill pollinators. Systemic insecticides in particular have received significant attention for their potential role in pollinator declines (imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin, and thiamethoxam are examples of systemic insecticides now found in various farm and garden products). Because plants absorb systemic insecticides as they grow, the chemicals become distributed throughout plant tissues and are sometimes present in pollen and nectar. You can help protect pollinators by avoiding the use of these and other insecticides. Before purchasing plants from nurseries and garden centers, be sure to ask whether they have been treated with insecticides. To read more about threats to pollinators from pesticides, please visit: [www.xerces.org/pesticides](http://www.xerces.org/pesticides).

## Additional Resources

### Attracting Native Pollinators

Our best-selling book highlights the role of native pollinators in natural ecosystems, gardens, and farms. This comprehensive guide includes information about pollinator ecology, detailed profiles of over 30 common bee genera, and habitat designs for multiple landscapes with over 50 pages of fully illustrated regional plant lists. Available in bookstores everywhere, and through [www.xerces.org/books](http://www.xerces.org/books).



### The Xerces Pollinator Conservation Resource Center

Our Pollinator Conservation Resource Center includes regional information on pollinator plants, habitat conservation guides, nest management instructions, bee identification and monitoring resources, and directories of native pollinator plant nurseries. [www.xerces.org/pollinator-resource-center](http://www.xerces.org/pollinator-resource-center)

### Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

The Xerces Society has collaborated with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to create lists of plants that are attractive to native bees, bumble bees, honey bees, and other beneficial insects, as well as plant lists with value as nesting materials for native bees. These lists can be narrowed down with additional criteria such as state, soil moisture, bloom time, and sunlight requirements. The Center's website also features image galleries, how-to articles on native plant gardening, and more. [www.wildflower.org/conservation\\_pollinators](http://www.wildflower.org/conservation_pollinators)

### Establishing Pollinator Meadows from Seed

These guidelines provide step-by-step instructions for establishing pollinator meadows from seed in areas that range in size from a small backyard garden up to an acre. Topics include: site selection, site preparation, plant selection, planting techniques, and ongoing management. [www.xerces.org/establishing-pollinator-meadows-from-seed](http://www.xerces.org/establishing-pollinator-meadows-from-seed)

### Pollinator Habitat Installation Guides

These regional guidelines, developed in collaboration with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, provide in-depth practical guidance on how to install nectar and pollen habitat for bees in the form of wildflower meadow plantings or linear rows of native flowering shrubs. Region-specific seed mixes and plant recommendations are included in the appendices of each guide. [www.xerces.org/pollinator-habitat-installation-guides](http://www.xerces.org/pollinator-habitat-installation-guides)

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