**Cynthia & Alan’s Top Tens of Bee Friendly Plants for Scottish Gardens**



Heather

-

a

durable perennial

Bee-friendly gardening is quite straight forward and requires nothing more than putting a little thought into what and where to plant.

Bees need two things from flowers – Nectar & Pollen

**Nectar** is loaded with sugars and is the bee's main source of energy

**Pollen** provides proteins for building & repairing body tissue & is essential to the bees for feeding their larvae



Flowering currant

–

an early bite for the

bees

**Old Varieties** The common “old fashioned” versions of flowers tend to be better yielders of pollen & nectar than some of the more specialised cultivars – check with your supplier that the plant being bought is a “yielder”.

**Flowering** The plants which flower early in the year (Feb thru’ April) are particularly valuable, as the bees desperately need pollen at that time of year in order to get the brood nest established. Similarly plants yielding nectar in midsummer are valuable to get the bees through the

“June gap” – a period when most of the spring flowers have finished flowering and the late summer flowers have not yet started.

**Friend or Foe** Gardeners may be reluctant to include some of these top tens e.g. Dandelions or Gorse in their gardens, however they are valuable to bees and other insects and knowing that, bee friendly gardeners may regard them with slightly less vehemence & at least leave them till they’re past the flowering stage.



Dandelion

–

an even

more durable

perennial

**Pollen Colours** These may vary with different species within a genus and may be different on the bees pollen basket from the flower anther, due to her adding nectar to moisten for patting down and packing.

Perennials, annuals, shrubs, trees and herbs............

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| **TOP TEN PERENNIAL FLOWERS** | |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Flowering time** | **Name** | **Genus** | **Species** | **Nectar** | **Pollen** | **Pollen Colour** |
| Feb | Snowdrop | *Galanthus* | *nivalis* | slight |  | brown |
| Jan-Mar | Winter Aconite | *Eranthis* | *hyemalis* |  |  | yellow |
| Jan-Mar | Corsican Hellibore | *Helleborus* | *argutifolius* |  |  | yellow |
| Feb/Mar | Crocus | *Crocus* | *spp.* | slight |  | reddish yellow |
| Mar/Apr | Dandelion | *Taraxacum* | *officinalis* |  |  | orange |
| May | Bluebell (British) | *Endymion* | *non-*  *scriptus* |  |  | blue |
| Jun-Aug | Meadow  Cranesbill | *Geranium* | *pratense* |  |  | green |
| Jul-Sep | Michaelmas daisy | *Aster* | *novi-belgii* | slight |  | yellow |
| Aug | Ling  Heather | *Calluna* | *vulgaris* |  |  | grey |
| Oct-Dec | Ivy | *Hedera* | *helix* |  |  | yellow |

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| **TOP TEN ANNUAL / BIENNIAL FLOWERS** | | | |  |  |  |
| **Flowering time** | **Name** | **Genus** | **species** | **Nectar** | **Pollen** | **Pollen colour** |
| May-Aug | Phacelia | *Phacelia* | *tanacetifolia* |  |  | blue |
| Jun-Jul | Candytuft | *Iberis* | *umbellate* |  |  | yellow |
| Jun-Jul | Vipers Bugloss | *Echium* | *vulgare* |  |  | greyblue |
| Jun | Stonecrop (Sedum) | *Sedum* | *spurium + acre ++* |  |  | brown |
| Jun-Aug | Corn Poppy | *Pavaver* | *rhoeas* |  |  | greyblack |
| Jun-Sep | Cornflower | *Centaurea* | *cyanus* |  |  | lt.  brown |
| Jun-Sep | Poached Egg plant | *Limnanthes* | *douglasii* |  |  | brown |
| July-Aug | Sunflowers | *Helianthus* | *annuus* |  |  | goldenbrown |
| Jun-Sep | Field scabious | *Knautia* | *arvensis* |  |  | orange |
| Jul-Sep | Mexican  Aster  (Cosmos) | *Cosmos* | *bipinnatus* |  |  | yellow |

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| **TOP TEN SHRUBS** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Flowering time** | **Name** | **Genus** | **species** | **Nectar** | **Pollen** | **Pollen colour** |
| Mar-Apr + | Gorse | *Ulex* | *europaeus* | slight |  | brown |
| March-Apr | Flowering Currant | *Ribes* | *sanguineum* |  |  | yellow |
| Apr-May | Berberis | *Berberis* | *darwinii* |  |  | green |
| Apr-May | Burkwood Osmanthus | *Osmanthus* | *burkwoodii* |  |  | greyish ? |
| May-Jun | Cotoneaster | *Cotoneaster* | *horizontalis* |  |  | brown |
| May-Jun | Honeysuckle | *Lonicera* | *Xylosteum & standishii* |  |  | orange |
| May-Jun | Broom | *Cytisus* | *scoparius* | slight |  | orange |
| May-Jun | California Lilac | *Ceanothus* | *thyrsiflorus* |  |  | yellow to  brown |
| Jun-Jul | Pyracantha( Firethorn) | *Pyracantha* | *coccinea + others* |  |  | dk. green |
| June-Sep | Escallonia | *Escallonia* | *virgata* |  |  | orange |

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| **TOP TEN TREES** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Flowering time** | **Name** | **Genus** | **species** | **Nectar** | **Pollen** | **Pollen colour** |
| Mar-Apr | Willow | *Salix* | *caprea* |  |  | yellow |
| Feb-Mar | Yew | *Taxus* | *baccata* |  |  | yellow |
| Apr-May | Cherry | *Prunus* | *cerasus* |  |  | brown |
| Apr-May | Horse  Chestnut | *Aesculus* | *hippocastanum* |  |  | red |
| Apr | Plum | *Prunus* | *domestica* |  |  | greyishyellow |
| Apr | Pear | *Pyrus* | *communis* |  |  | yellow |
| May | Apple | *Malus* | *domestica* |  |  | reddishyellow |
| May | Sycamore | *Acer* | *pseudoplatanus* |  |  | grey |
| May | Holly | *Ilex* | *aquifolium* |  |  | green |
| July | Lime | *Tilia* | *vulgaris* |  |  | yellow |

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| **TOP TEN HERBS** | | | | | | |
| **Flowering time** | **Name** | **Genus** | **species** | **Nectar** | **Pollen** | **Pollen colour** |
| May-Jun | Rosemary | *Rosmarinus* | *officinalis* |  |  | whitish |
| May-Aug | Borage | *Borago* | *officianalis* |  |  | blue-grey |
| Jun-Sep | Basil | *Ocimum* | *basilicum* |  |  | pinkishorange |
| Jun-Jul | Thyme | *Thymus* | *vulgaris* |  |  | brown |
| July-Aug | Chives | *Allium* | *Schoenoprasum* |  |  | greenish |
| Jul-Sep | Lemon Balm | *Melissa* | *officianalis* |  |  |  |
| Jun-Sep | Lavender | *Lavendula* | *angustifolia* |  |  | orange |
| Jun-Sep | Coriander | *Coriandrum* | *sativum* |  |  | pink? |
| Aug -Sep | Sage  (Salvia) | *Salvia* | *officinalis* |  |  | brown orange |
| Aug-Sep | Marjoram | *Origanum* | *vulgare* |  |  | browngrey |

Compiled by Cynthia & Alan Riach, May 2012