

## Planting Your Pollinator Garden

**Please visit the Demonstration Garden planted in front of the main entrance to Borough Hall by horticulturist Mrs. Elaine Silverstein.**

**Planting a pollinator garden composed of carefully selected native plants is one of the most important steps you can take to help our local environment.** The garden will attract pollinating insects, including butterflies, and the creatures that eat them: birds. It will be beautiful throughout the growing season and serve as a natural bird feeder all winter. Compared with lawn, a garden of native perennials and grasses will do a better job of slowing storm water runoff.

**How to plant:** The plants you receive will be small but strong and healthy. Allow approximately 1 square foot of space per plant, and choose a spot that receives at least 6 hours of full sun per day. Because the plants are so small, make sure they will not be shaded by nearby plants as the season progresses.

Small plants are easier to transplant and do better after transplanting than large plants. But they need time to grow roots. Some of the plants you receive will not bloom this year. Some, especially the milkweed, will remain quite small this year. But they are growing large root systems. As long as they remain green, they are doing fine. Next year they will grow much larger and reach blooming size.

To plant, dig a small hole (no larger than the plant's root system). Gently remove the plant from the pot by pushing up from the bottom or by placing your hand over the soil and overturning the pot. Do not pull on the stem! If the roots are overgrown and matted, loosen them gently or make a few shallow knife cuts. This encourages the plant to grow new roots. Place the root ball in the soil at the same level it was growing in the pot: do not bury the stem deeper or allow roots to show above the soil. Gently press down with your thumbs all around the plant to eliminate large air holes.

You can plant all in one place or scatter the plants around your property, as long as you plant everything in the sun. However, the coreopsis and asters are favorite foods of rabbits and deer, while all the other species don't get eaten, so planting everything together will defend against critters to some extent.

**After planting, water very thoroughly** to eliminate air holes and help the roots stretch out into their new environment.

***The most important principle of ecological gardening is to avoid the use of pesticides. Do not use pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides in your garden! Pesticides kill all insects, including ladybugs, fireflies, and butterflies. Herbicides kill all broadleaf plants, including butterfly host plants like violets.***







These plants should thrive in any type of soil. Over time they will develop very large, strong root systems. Do not fertilize the plants ever, and do not enrich the soil before planting. ***During the first growing season, water thoroughly at least once during each week in which we receive no or little rainfall.*** After the first growing season, the plants should not need watering.

These plants are perennials: they will go dormant in fall and regrow from their roots each spring. Do not remove dead plant material in fall; rather, wait until new growth begins in spring. Many butterflies and beneficial insects spend the winter inside the stems of native plants—don't remove their winter shelter! Also, once your plants begin to bloom, they will produce seed that birds will eat throughout the winter.

To discourage weed growth while the plants are small, spread a thin layer of mulch. Once the plants fill in, mulch will no longer be necessary.

**Pollinator Garden Plants** (selection from horticulturist Mrs. Elaine Silverstein, Glen Rock)

All plants require at least 6 hours of sun per day. All are extremely easy to grow and will thrive in poor soil.

Plant Name	Photo	Height	Flower color	Bloom time
* <i>Asclepias incarnata</i> (red milkweed)		3-4'	pink	late May-July
# <i>Aster novae-angliae</i> (New England aster)		Up to 4' (pinch plants in early summer to keep them shorter)	purple, lavender	August-October
# <i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i> (lanceleaf coreopsis)		1-2'	yellow	June-September
*# <i>Monarda fistulosa</i> (bee balm, bergamot)		3'	pink, lavender	late May-July
* <i>Penstemon digitalis</i> (penstemon)		2-3' tall	white	late May-July
* <i>Schizachrium scoparium</i> (little bluestem)		Up to 3'	golden	August-September

\*Deer- and rabbit-resistant plants

#Likely to bloom the first season