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Pollinators Need Spring-flowering Bulbs Now Is the Perfect Time to Plant!

KENNETT SQUARE, PA (September 2020) - Pollinator gardens are all the buzz these days and with good reason. Up to 90 percent of bees around the world have disappeared, according to recent studies. Most people don't know the importance of including spring-flowering bulbs in their gardens as an early pollen and nectar source.

By early spring, honey bees have used up most of the nectar and pollen in their hives, and their stores are at the lowest point of the year. As temperatures rise in early spring queens begin to lay eggs, and pollen and nectar must be gathered to feed them. Solitary bees, like bumblebees, don't have the energy to fly far when they emerge and need to forage as early as possible. Successful nesting depends on it.

Flower bulbs such as snowdrops, winter aconites, and Glory-of-the-snow all begin blooming in late winter. They provide an essential, early food source for bees. Very few other plants bloom at that time, making these spring bulbs critically important.

Many other spring bloomers are perfect for pollinators and also for naturalizing. Crocus, grape hyacinths, and Siberian squill all make great candidates. These bulbs will multiply rapidly and bloom early enough to be planted in lawns. Large groups of bulbs make foraging easier for beneficial insects. The larger the group of flowers, the easier they are for pollinators to find. Bees see color differently than we do, but scientists agree that their favorite colors are purple, blue, and white.

As the temperatures warm up and more spring-blooming bulbs emerge, butterflies and other beneficial insects will begin to forage on tulips and others. Late spring and early summer bloomers like allium are pollinator magnets.

When choosing bulbs for pollinators, pick those with a simple, single flower. For instance, double flowers may make it difficult or impossible for insects to reach the nectar inside.

By planting a variety of bulbs that bloom from very early spring to very late fall, you'll extend the season of color in your garden by as much as two months and provide critical nutrition to benefit wildlife and our environment.

Flowerbulbs.com is a promotional agency for the flower bulb sector. Their goal is to educate and inspire new and experienced gardeners. They do not sell flower bulbs; they encourage consumers to visit their local independent garden centers. High-resolution images are available royalty-free when citing FlowerBulbs.com as the source.

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