

Creating a Pollinator Garden at Your School in Saskatoon

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In association with Pollinator Paradise YXE and One School One Farm Shelterbelt Project

1. Consult with your administration, custodial staff, and the facilities department on the best place to have a perennial pollinator garden.
Suggestions for site selection:
 - Look for a site that receives plenty of light
 - Plan access to water for establishing the plantings
 - Be certain that students do not already actively use the area
 - Ensure the area is close enough to the school for students to feel comfortable exploring
 - Be sure the area is not too close to busy traffic.
 - If the garden is beside a lawn, ensure some kind of border is maintained to keep the introduced lawn grass out of the garden.
2. Create a maintenance plan. The first year will require plenty of weeding and watering. If the area is well cared for, following years will require less maintenance. Teachers, students, parents can all be part of caring for the space as long as one person coordinates and knows how to identify the plants (or at least the weeds).
3. Incorporate curriculum into the planning, design, planting, and life of the pollinator garden. Then start planning:
 - Study the soil at your site. Is it sandy? Clay? Is it really dry? Or does it hold moisture?
 - Research and select species based on materials available from local organizations and experts (Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan, The Butterflyway Project, Pollinator Paradise YXE)
 - Choose plants of different colours that bloom at different times through the growing season
 - Include grasses (preferably bunch grasses such as June Grass and Little Bluestem).
 - Research pollinator nesting materials (sometimes as simple as a few bunch grasses with bare soil between)
 - Research solitary bees to reduce any fears. (Most solitary bees don't sting)
 - Be aware of plant growth habits and the space available –many plants grow from their root systems, spread readily and may take up more space than anticipated (i.e., chokecherries, wild roses).
4. Create your design. It is highly suggested that you plant most species as plugs (1 – 3-year-old seedlings), as prairie species start off very small and many grow very slowly. You can grow the seeds as classroom projects in your school, starting them by mid-March. Or you can purchase plants from native plant nurseries (not usually found at garden centers).
5. Plan for succession – for both the human and plant communities. The plants will move around based on where they grow best. Expect to see changes. Teachers will also move around, so the person who inspired the project should look ahead to whom they can mentor to one day take over responsibility for the garden's care.

Resources:

Saskatoon is in the Moist Mixed Grass Prairie Eco Region. The following documents will help you select your species:

<https://wildaboutsaskatoon.org/growing-with-native-plants/>

<https://wildaboutsaskatoon.org/pollinator-paradise-yxe/>

https://www.pollinator.org/pollinator.org/assets/generalFiles/MoistMixGrass_157.2017.ver3.pdf

Finding wildflower and grass seed Indigenous to our region:

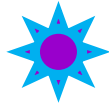
<https://www.npss.sk.ca/native-plant-sources>

Design Template: 4' x 4' (1.25 m x 1.25 m)

Full Sun - Dry to Medium

The prairies are home to hundreds of species of flowering plants, so we have lots of choice! The plants shown in bold are especially versatile and are likely to flourish in most conditions.

Flowers Blue to Purple:



Early Season: Crocus *Anemone patens*, Ground Plum *Astragalus crassicaarpus*, Missouri milkvetch *Astragalus missouriensis*, Smooth Blue Beardtongue *Penstemon nitidus*

Mid Season: Blue Eyed Grass *Sisyrinchium montanum*, **Harebell** *Campanula rotundifolia*, Philadelphia Fleabane *Erigeron philadelphicus*, Purple Prairie Clover *Dalea purpurea*, Showy oxytropis *splendens*, **Wild Bergamot** *Monarda fistulosa*, **Wild Blue Flax** *Linium lewisii*

Late Season: **Giant Hyssop** *Agastache foeniculum*, Dotted Blazingstar *Liatris punctate*, Showy Aster *Eurybia conspicua*, **Smooth Aster** *laevis*.

Flowers Cream to Pink:



Early Season: Bearberry *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*. **Mid Season:** **Prairie Rose** *Rosa arkansana*, Smooth Fleabane *Erigeron glabellus*, Pink Onion *Allium stellatum*, Butte Primrose *Oenothera caespitosa*, Dwarf Milkweed *Asclepias ovalifolia*, Alumroot *Heuchera richardsonii*.

Flowers White:



Early Season: Cut-leaved Fleabane *Erigeron compositus*, Prairie Onion *Allium textile*, Small Leaved Pussytoes *Antennaria parvifolia*, **Wild Strawberry** *Fragaria virginiana*. **Mid Season:** Cut-leaved Anemone *multifida*, Field/Common Pussytoes *Antennaria neglecta*, Field Chickweed *Cerastium arvense*, Long-fruited Anemone *cylindrica*, Many Flowered Yarrow *Achillea alpina*, **Northern Bedstraw** *Galium boreale*, Tufted Fleabane *Erigeron caespitosus*, White Prairie Clover *Dalea candida*. **Late Season:** Pasture Sage *Artemisia frigida*, **Prairie Sage** *Artemisia ludoviciana*, **Yarrow** *Achillea millifolium*.

Flowers Yellow:



Early Season: Early yellow locoweed *Oxytropis sericea*, Golden bean *Thermopsis rhombifolia*. **Mid Season:** **Black Eyed Susan** *Rudbeckia hirta*, Hairy Golden Aster *Heterotheca villosa*, Heartleaf Alexander *Zizia aptera*, **Prairie Coneflower** *Ratibida columnifera*. **Late Season:** Broomweed *Gutierrezia sarothrae*, Gumweed *Grindelia squarrosa*, Late Yellow *Oxytropis monticola*, **Prairie Goldenrod** *Solidago missouriensis*, **Showy Goldenrod** *Solidago nemoralis*, **Yellow Evening Primrose** *Oenothera biennis*

Flowers Orange to Red



Early Season: Three Flowered Avens /Prairie Smoke *Geum triflorum*. **Mid Season:** **Gaillardia/Blanket** Flower *Gaillardia aristate*, Prairie Lily *Lilium philadelphicum*, Scarlet Paintbrush *Castilleja miniata* (Host plants required - Composites, grasses and legumes are the most common).

Short to medium prairie grasses:



Cool Season Grasses: June Grass *Koeleria Macrantha*.

Warm Season Grasses: Blue Grama Grass *Bouteloua gracilis*, Little Bluestem *Schizachyrium scoparium*, Prairie Dropseed *Sporobolus heterolepus*.

Tall Prairie Grasses:



Cool Season Grasses: Awned Wheatgrass *Agropyron subsecundum*, Canada Wild Rye *Elymus Canadensis*, Indigenous Rice Grass *Achnatherum hymenoides*

Warm Season Grasses: Switchgrass *Panicum virgatum*, Indigenous Grass *Sorghastrum nutans*.

Tallest in the North



Shortest in the South