

Providing Habitat for Pollinators



Why are our Native pollinators so important?

- Ecologically – they were here first!
 - Uniquely designed for our climate and our plants
 - Our native bees know best!
- Agriculture
 - How do our native pollinators help us produce higher yields?
- Biodiversity
 - In Utah we have over 1,200 species of native bees
 - 20+ insect species are listed by the state as of 'significant concern'
 - 11 of them are important native pollinators

Quick Insect Facts

- Nationally, our native insects are in decline – over all, a 22% decrease in presence since 2000.
- Globally, it is estimated that around 40% of insects are ‘threatened’
- Across North America, the once common Monarch butterfly has seen a 95% decline in population
- Conservation efforts are important to stopping decline – but we should be thoughtful about our approach.
- Many reasons are contributing to decline, but the main points are climate change, fragmentation/habitat loss, and pesticide use.

Utah Pollinator Habitat Program



Origins of the Utah Pollinator Habitat Program

2021 Utah State Legislature passed H.B. 224 Pollinator Amendments (introduced by Rep. Ashley Matthews):

3-Year Pollinator Habitat Program as a **Pilot** Program

- Dept of Agriculture, Conservation Program
 - Public education and outreach
 - Distribute pollinator-friendly native plants and seeds
 - Grant program to show 25% of cost from state, 75% from awardees

2025 Utah State Legislature passed H.B. 251 Pollinator Program Amendments and was granted **permanent on-going funding** to continue the program!



Program Summary and Goals

- Statewide effort to improve pollinator outlook and boost pollinator populations
 - Commitment to establish and enhance quality habitat
- Increase public awareness on the importance of the relationships between native plants and native pollinators
 - Please watch our 2024 'Nature's Best Hope in Utah - Doug Tallamy webinar!
- Offer new incentives as the program gains momentum
 - 2026 offers the first Spring Plant Order for organizations!



How Does the Program Work?

Goal: Help support native pollinator populations by increasing **native** plants throughout the state.

- Open application period March 1 – April 15
- Anyone can apply (private, public, corporate, educational, tribal lands, conservation, government)
- One habitat kit consists of ~ 30 plants (300 sq ft)
 - Apply for a **minimum of 3 kits**, maximum of 10 kits per project (900 sq ft to 3,000 sq ft)
 - Wetland Kits for wet habitats, Upland Kits for dry habitats (designed for northern and southern UT)
- Awardees notified by June 3
- Plant pickup in fall (Sept/Oct) of application year
- Plants must be in ground within 10 days of pickup





What Will a Successful Application Look Like?

- **Detailed** and complete
- Thorough explanation of site preparation and layout
- Irrigation addressed
- Management strategy in place
 - Weed management, adaptability
- High potential for successful establishment
- **Patient** approach to planting with natives
 - Results may take years!*

What To Expect If Awarded

Awardees are expected to commit for ~ 3 years

- **Follow up on a yearly basis with reports and pictures (~ 3 years)**
- Adequately prepare your site
- Install or plan for irrigation until establishment
- Pickup plants on designated day/regional location
- Get plants in ground within 10 days of receiving
- Control for weed pressure to maintain habitat
- Promote as possible with public education & outreach

Believe... These plants have been around longer than we have!!



Next Steps: Navigating the Website

Please use this comprehensive resource!

<https://ag.utah.gov/pollinator-habitat-program/>

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Information on each plant species (pdfs)
- *Planting Guide and Maintenance Guide*
- *Plants for Pollinators Booklet*
- Site preparation
- Weed management
- Watering frequencies
- Additional resources (reading suggestions)



Email: UDAF-pollinatorhabitat@utah.gov



Native Plant Info Sheets

Plant fact sheets
(for plugs and seed mix species)

- Species info



- Wildlife supported
- Landscaping info and planting tips



Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia aristata*)



© Robert Sweeten



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Zone: 3-8

Color: Red, yellow

Bloom Time: July through September

Plant Type: Perennial herb

Mature Height: 24-36" high

Mature Spread: 12-24" wide

Water Use: Low to medium

Soil Type: Well-drained, infertile soil

Range and Native Habitat: The Blanket Flower occurs in from southern Canada to Utah, Colorado, and South Dakota. It prefers plains, prairie, woodland, and montane meadow habitat types.

Suggested Maintenance: Plant untreated seed in spring or fall. Root divisions can be made in early spring. Deadheading will encourage fresh blooms throughout the growing season.

Other: This perennial requires little care once established. It is heat tolerant and a profuse bloomer. The name "Blanket Flower" is derived from the manner in which the plant "blankets the habitat when in bloom. The plant was used for a variety of purposes by Native Americans such as for waterproofing raw-hide bags and treating illnesses.

Distribution Map



Wildlife Supported



Landscaping Information



Sun
Full sun



Water Needs
Low to medium



* Summer Irrigation
Max 1x / month once established



Soil Drainage
Fast



Propagation
By seed or root division

Before:



After:



Before:



After:



Additional Questions?

Feel free to reach out at anytime during the application process:
UDAF-pollinatorhabitat@utah.gov



Next Steps: Additional Resources

*Detailed List Available on Website

For your reading or research pleasure to help you plan effectively for pollinators:

1. [Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants](#) - Doug Tallamy
2. [Bees of the World: A guide to every family](#) - Laurence Packer
3. [The Bees in Your Backyard: A Guide to North America's Bees](#) - Joseph Wilson & Olivia Carril
4. [Kaufman Field Guide to Butterflies of North America](#) - Jim Brock, Kenn Kaufman
5. [The Last Butterflies: A Scientist's Quest to Save a Rare and Vanishing Creature](#) - Nick Haddad
6. [The Forgotten Pollinators](#) - Stephen Buchmann & Gary Nabhan
7. [Our Native Bees: North America's Endangered Pollinators and the Fight to Save Them](#) - Paige Embry
8. [Letters from the Hive: An intimate history of Bees, honey, and humankind](#) - Stephen Buchmann
9. [The Solitary Bees: Biology, evolution, and conservation](#) - Bryan Danforth, Robert Minckley, John Neff
10. [Attracting Native Pollinators: The Xerces Society Guide, Protecting North America's Bees & Butterflies](#) - The Xerces Society
11. [Gardening for Native Bees in Utah & Beyond](#) - James Cane (USU Extension)
12. [Bees Are The Best!](#) - Joseph Wilson (children's book)
13. [Bees in your Backyard](#) - Joseph Wilson
14. [Common Bees of Western North America](#) - Joseph Wilson and Olivia Messinger Carril