

Plan Bee



Town of Barnstable Agricultural Commission

6 Ways Everyone Can Help the Honeybees

Did you know that honeybees are responsible for 1 out of every 3 bites of food you eat? Even if you don't keep bees, you can help them out in your own yard. These steps can make a huge difference in these tiny workers' lives. In fact, six simple ideas can help your gardens and yard thrive by allowing beneficial bugs, butterflies, and other pollinators to safely live in their natural environments.



Lawns

Over the years, we have removed natural fields and weeds, choosing to replace them with lush, green, weed-free lawns. In doing so, we have removed vast amounts of land where honeybees once thrived. If possible, allow the meadows to return. Clover flowers are a honeybee favorite and patches readily grow in the healthiest of lawns. Consider letting your lawn grow patches of clover and let them bloom. Dandelions are also a spring time favorite of honeybees. Did you know that dandelions are often the first blooms upon which honeybees feed after a long winter contained in their hives?

Chemicals

Whether using herbicides, pesticides, or fungicides you should start reading the labels. Specifically seek out information whether or not the chemicals you are using are harmful to bees. This information is often hidden in the fine print but is required to be there by law. Research alternative methods to battle the bugs and weeds including white vinegar, cayenne pepper, and insecticidal soaps. Also, just because a product is organic it does not mean that it cannot harm honeybees and other pollinators.

Hours and Timing of Application

Apply gardening products to plants when they are not in bloom if possible. Honeybees do not spend time on plants without blooms. When using and applying products, do so during the very early morning hours or at dusk. During these times honeybees are more likely to be working in their hives verses working in the garden.

Purple Power

Honeybees find purple blooms most attractive. They love Russian Sage, Lavender, purple Butterfly bushes, Coneflowers and Liatris to name a few.

Keep Bees

In the winter of 2012-2013, the United States lost approximately 30% of its honeybee hives. This set a new devastating record. Losses from the 2013-2014 winter are also expected to be large. The honey bees are in trouble. Consider allowing a beekeeper to place a hive or two on your property or consider becoming a beekeeper yourself. For more information, reach out to the Barnstable County Beekeeper's Association or your local beekeeper's association.



Be Active

Follow the current honeybee legislature at the local, state, and federal levels. Stay up on current bee news and research from around the globe. Get involved. The bees can't speak for themselves but you certainly can!

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