



# PLANT A PATCH FOR POLLINATORS SEVEN PLANTS / SEVEN STEPS

## Native plants provide natural habitat for native pollinators.

They have evolved together in intricate, co-dependent relationships over eons of time. If you plant natives — **a tree, two large shrubs, a flowering vine, and three wildflowers or grasses** — in a space the size of a small living room, you'll make a home for a myriad of birds, colorful butterflies, bees, beneficial bugs and other pollinators.

Think of your yard as a patchwork quilt. Plant one patch now, and later, add others to create biodiverse areas of native plants for different conditions, sun, shade, dry or wet areas. Each patch would include plants that thrive naturally together under existing conditions.

**You will inspire and educate others in your community** — neighbors, churches, businesses and schools — to follow suit. Instead of lawns, imagine thousands and thousands of native plant patches for pollinators filled with bird song and fluttering wings.

## Seven Great Options for Your Pollinator Patch

### CHOOSE ONE TREE

<b>Pines</b> <i>Pinus spp.</i>	Evergreen. Host plant for 171 species of butterflies and moths. Turkey, bobwhite, woodpeckers and numerous other bird species eat seeds and insects attracted to bark and cones. Nesting sites for woodpeckers, eagles.
<b>Oaks</b> <i>Quercus spp.</i>	Semi-evergreen. Host plant for 395 species of butterflies and moths. Pollen source for Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Acorns eaten by numerous bird species.
<b>Eastern Red Cedar</b> <i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Evergreen. Host plant for 27 species of butterflies and moths. Cover and nesting sites. Fruit and seeds attract numerous bird species including Cedar Waxwings.

### CHOOSE TWO SHRUBS

<b>Beautyberry</b> <i>Callicarpa americana</i>	Deciduous shrub with berries that remain on branches over many months. Host plant for butterflies and moths. Fruits eaten by many species of birds.
<b>Florida Privet</b> <i>Forestiera segregata</i>	Evergreen. Small blossoms attract bees, flies, ants, small butterflies, migrating warblers and vireos. Fruit eaten by frugivorous bird species. Provides cover and nesting sites.
<b>Firebush</b> <i>Hamelia patens</i>	Evergreen. Nectar attracts Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Orioles, wasps, bees, flies, butterflies plus insectivorous and frugivorous bird species. Excellent cover.

### ONE VINE

<b>Coral Honeysuckle</b> <i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>	Evergreen. Host plant for 26 species of butterflies and moths. Nectar attracts Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Fall fruit eaten by numerous frugivorous bird species. Cover for nesting bird species.
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### CHOOSE THREE WILDFLOWERS AND GRASSES

<b>Golendrod</b> <i>Solidago spp.</i>	Some species bloom almost year-round. Attracts 82 species of butterflies and moths also beetles, butterflies, honeybees, warblers and sparrows.
<b>Tropical Sage</b> <i>Salvia coccinea</i>	Blooms almost year-round. Attracts Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, honeybees, bumble bees, butterflies, Painted Buntings, Cardinals, sparrows, orioles, and warblers.
<b>Spotted Beebalm</b> <i>Monarda punctata</i>	Bloom spring through fall. Attract butterflies, numerous bird species, and native bees.
<b>Fakahatchee Grass</b> <i>Tripsacum dactyloides</i>	Clump growing grass. Host plant for skippers and butterflies. Attracts seed-eating birds. Provides cover for ground-foraging birds and wildlife.
<b>Muhly Grass</b> <i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i>	Clump growing grass with showy pink color in the fall. Host plant for skippers and butterflies. Attracts seed eating birds and ladybugs. Provides cover for ground-foraging birds and wildlife.

# PLANT A PATCH FOR POLLINATORS

## Seven Simple Steps:

1

Choose a spot about 15 by 20 feet to provide ample space for growth. Plant the tree 15 feet from impervious surfaces and yard boundaries so it has ample space to root in all directions. Position the shrubs six feet from the tree and each other. Plant the vine at the base of a shrub for support. Wildflowers or grasses can be planted near the edge and they will spread over time.

2

Kill sod, weeds, and other non-native plants in the patch by covering the area with cardboard, layers of paper, black plastic, or unopened bags of commercial mulch. All plants should be crispy dead before removing the coverings. This takes about six weeks. Or, dig out sod and non-native plants by hand or use a sod cutter.

3

Buy your plants at a Florida native plants nursery (find your local nursery at [plantrealflorida.com](http://plantrealflorida.com).) Ask their knowledgeable staff what types of plant will thrive together for your patch. See the plant list (on the other side of this handout) that attract pollinators. Plant young plants and watch them grow. Larger specimens cost more and require more water early on, but will provide habitat sooner. Where frost is common, plant spring through early fall. Everywhere else, plant anytime. Plant any time of day.

4

Dig holes slightly wider than the plant in the pot but no deeper. It's beneficial to mix existing sandy soil with a little compost as you fill the holes.

5

Mulch will minimize weeds, cool the roots of the plants, and retain moisture. Cover the entire area with three to four inches of leaves, pine needles, or sustainable commercial mulch. Keep mulch about eight inches away from the base of the plants.

6

Water plants deeply to saturate their roots and then every day for several weeks, a little less if there are storms; then every other day, then every third day, etc. This will wean plants from nursery conditions. Plants are established when they respond to local conditions - rainfall, temperature, sunlight, soil conditions and not external inputs. Never use pesticides.

7

**Enjoy watching plants and pollinators thrive in each planted patch!**

## Suggested Plan:

Florida Native Plants Nursery & Landscaping  
730 Myakka Road, Sarasota, Florida 34240  
941-322-1915 [www.floridanativeplants.com](http://www.floridanativeplants.com)  
[info@floridanativeplants.com](mailto:info@floridanativeplants.com)

### Sources:

Home Grown National Park, Florida Native Plant Society,  
Florida Audubon, Florida Association of Native Nurseries

