

***Buzzin Around with the Hillsborough Garden Club***  
***You Can Be the Garden Hostess with the Mostest***  
*by Dolly Hunnell*

Nearly 40% of insect species in the US are declining rapidly and 1/3 are on the endangered list. We need pollinators like bees, butterflies, beetles, flies and other invertebrates to pollinate 2/3 of our food crops. Here's where "The Hostess with the Mostest" comes to the rescue!!!

You can make your yard bee, butterfly, and bird friendly by:

1. Planting ONLY native host plants, shrubs, and trees. A host plant is defined by Merriam-Webster as a plant upon which organisms lodge and take sustenance. This includes bees, butterflies, other insects, and even bats. They are essential to the pollination of our flowers, vegetables, and trees. As bees land on flowers their entire bodies are covered with pollen. Butterflies aren't as efficient but carry pollen longer distances. Even hummingbirds carry pollen as they obtain nectar.
2. Plants native to the region are naturally pest-resistant to bugs in our area. Make your yard bee and butterfly friendly by planting ONLY native host plants. Always ask your garden shop which flowering plants are native to North Carolina. You can also look online to find if your choices are native. Central NC is in Zone 7. Black-Eyed Susans, Bee Balm, Sunflowers, Asters, Purple Cone Flowers, Beauty Berry, Milkweed, Black-Eyed Susans, Lavender as well as White Oak are familiar suggestions. If you are a vegetable

gardener include plants like beans, peas, squashes, and eggplant whose flowers attract bee and butterfly pollinators.

3. A large part of pollinator decline is attributed to loss of habitat due to urbanization. This can be solved in your own yard by greatly reducing the area which is planted in grass. Grass provides no food value for bees and butterflies. Grass takes weekly maintenance to keep it looking “perfect”. This usually includes using herbicides and other chemicals to kill unwanted weeds. Collateral damage is the destruction of bees, butterflies and other small but important creatures. Fill your yard with flowering plants instead.
4. Do not use pesticides to eliminate unwanted pests. There are bee-and-butterfly-friendly alternatives with simple at-home solutions. One method is Salt Spray to eliminate spider mites. Mix 2 TBS Himalayan Crystal Salt with 1 gallon of warm water for spraying. Mineral Oil Spray is a good method for dehydrating insects and their eggs. Onion and Garlic Spray is made by mincing 1 garlic clove and 1 medium onion. Add to 1 quart of water. Wait 1 hour. Add 1 tsp of cayenne pepper and 1 TBS of liquid soap. This spray will hold its potency for 1 week if stored in the refrigerator.

Be a good hostess and don't harm your pollinator guests. Try these methods for a beautiful, healthy, and happy garden.

HILLSBOROUGH WILL OBSERVE POLLINATOR WEEK MAY  
31- JUNE 6, 2020  
CELEBRATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF POLLINATORS TO  
OUR WORLD

Hillsborough is the 35<sup>th</sup> Bee City USA. That means that our town takes a leadership role in making our community safer for pollinator insects: bees, birds, bats and other pollinator creatures by using sustainable management practices and encouraging residents to do likewise.

In observance of Pollinator Week 2020, the Hillsborough Garden Club will provide some fun virtual opportunities to learn about pollinators and explore nature all around us. Visit our website [www.hillsboroughgardenclubnc.org](http://www.hillsboroughgardenclubnc.org) for resources on pollinator gardening, what grows well our area and pose your gardening questions to our *Ask Us* feature. Also download a Bee Coloring Page that can be decorated by younger members of your household and displayed in your window for others to find on a neighborhood “Bee Hunt” (like going on a Bear Hunt). Using our worksheets, younger folks can explore the amazing creatures in their own yards or at a nearby park, create and upload a pollinator picture or a pollinator photo to our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Hillsborough-Garden-Club-2223954717864584/> or download coloring and activity pages. Each day of Pollinator Week, we will post links to fun activities suitable for all ages. The Hillsborough Garden Club, founded in 1925, is a 501c3 organization, dedicated to serving our community. For more information, [info@hillsboroughgardenclubnc.org](mailto:info@hillsboroughgardenclubnc.org).