

Your Garden

10 Ways To Help Bees And Butterflies Thrive

(NAPSA)—Here's news that's created a buzz. Three-quarters of the world's flowering plants and food crops rely on pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies to help them reproduce.

Unfortunately, bee populations are being threatened by a range of issues such as colony collapse disorder, pesticides, mites, disease and climate change. Butterfly populations are also at risk.

The good news is that gardeners can help restore balance by creating habitats that encourage pollinators to thrive.

Bees and butterflies need places to live and breed in, and food to eat. The plants that provide this food also need pollinators to help them reproduce, so planting gardens that are friendly to bees and butterflies is a win-win situation.

Pollination occurs naturally as small creatures forage for food, carrying pollen from plant to plant as they go. That is why it's important to offer them a "buffet" of attractive flowers throughout the seasons, and to have sufficient natural habitats so that they don't have to travel far to find what they need.

Here are 10 easy ways to help:

1) BEE friendly to bees! Honeybees are not aggressive; they sting only as a defense mechanism.

2) Plant trees, shrubs and flowering plants to increase food and shelter for bees and butterflies.

3) Create a seasonal buffet for pollinators by planting perennial flowers with a mix of colors, shapes and scents in containers, window boxes and plant beds.

4) Choose perennials with simple, single rather than double flowers to make nectar and pollen more accessible to bees and butterflies.

5) Cut and use garden flowers for bouquets to encourage re-



You can help bees and butterflies thrive by creating natural habitats.

blooming and to prolong the foraging window for pollinators.

6) Use beautiful native plants such as echinacea, coreopsis, sunflowers and butterfly milkweed for at least 75 percent of your garden.

7) Water, weed and fertilize soil appropriately to create a healthy garden that minimizes pests and diseases.

8) Provide clean water for insects in shallow bowls, birdbaths and ponds, or let fresh water drip over stones.

9) Imperfection is OK! Bees and butterflies may damage leaves and flowers while breeding and feeding. Create areas of natural habitat with old stumps, fallen branches and tall grass for nesting.

10) Help convert small parcels of land into community gardens and green spaces to create closely linked areas for bees and butterflies to visit.

Burpee offers a wide range of seeds and plants that are attractive to bees and butterflies. All of Burpee's seeds are Non-GMO.

To learn more about protecting pollinators, visit the website www.burpee.com/pollinators or call Burpee at (800) 888-1447.