



Garden Bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*) on *Nepeta* sp. © Claire Pumfrey

# Garden flowers for bumblebees

Suggested garden flowers for bumblebees include:

## SPRING

- White Deadnettle (*Lamium album*)\*
- Berberis
- Bulbs: English Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*)\*, Crocus, Grape Hyacinths (*Muscari*)
- Lungwort (*Pulmonaria* species)
- Snowberry Mahonia
- Snakeshead (*Fritillaria meleagris*)\*
- Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
- Cotoneaster (e.g. *horizontalis*)
- Ceanothus
- Winter Honeysuckle (*Lonicera x purpusii*)
- Flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*)
- Redcurrants, Blackcurrants, Gooseberries\*
- Pussy Willow (*Salix*)\*
- Thymes (*Thymus*)
- Perennial Cornflower (*Centaurea montana*)
- Winter Heather (*Erica carnea*)
- Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*)\*
- Rhododendron
- Pears, cherries or plums

**\* Plants marked with an asterisk are native British flowers**



Male Red-tailed Bumblebee (*Bombus lapidarius*) on Cornflower © Claire Pumfrey



## SUMMER

- Brassicas (cabbage etc) left to flower
- Pea (everlasting, sweet) and Beans (runner and broad)
- Foxgloves (*Digitalis purpurea*\* and other species)
- Catmint (*Nepeta*: many kinds)
- Hyssop (*Agastache*)
- Woundworts and Betony (*Stachys* species)\*
- Knapweeds (*Centaurea scabiosa*, *C. nigra*)\*
- Lupins (herbaceous and shrubby species)
- *Origanum vulgare*\* and other *Origanum* species
- *Calamintha* species\*
- Hebe or Speedwells: *Veronica*\* , *Veronicastrum*)
- Sea Hollies (*Eryngium* : all species)
- Globe Thistle (*Echinops*: all species)
- Other thistle-like plants (*Onopordum*\*, *Cirsium*, etc)
- Myrtle (*Myrtus communis*)
- Cranesbills (wild *Geraniums*\*)
- Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum*)
- Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- *Aquilegia vulgaris* (single flowered only)\*
- Larkspur (*Consolida*: single flowered only)
- Delphiniums (single flowered only)
- Viper's Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*)\*
- Scabiouses (*Knautia*\*, *Scabiosa*\*, *Cephalaria*)
- Honeywort (*Cerinthe*)
- *Iris pseudacorus*\* and *I. siberica*,
- Lavender (esp. the tall L. 'intermedia' forms)
- Sainfoin (*Onobrychis*)\*
- Purple Toadflax (*Linaria purpurea*)
- Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*)\*
- Chives\* and ornamental garlics (*Allium* species)
- Bellflowers or Campions (*Campanulas*\*; wild sp.)
- Comfrey (*Symphytum*)\*
- Borage (*Borago officinalis*)
- Escallonia
- Brambles\* (wild or cultivated)
- Raspberries and Blackberries\*



Brown-banded Carder Bumblebee  
(*Bombus humilis*) on Viper's bugloss ©  
Lucia Chmurova



Bumblebee on Devil's-bit Scabious ©  
Claire Pumfrey



## LATE SUMMER

- Aster Novi-angliae cultivars (hairy-leaved Michaelmas daisy), and Aster amellus and its cultivars; these two species are not invasive.
- Buddleja x weyeriana (orange Buddleia)
- Some Hardy Fuchsias (forms of F. magellanica )
- Cornish Heath (Erica vagans)\*
- Sedum 'Matrona'
- Culinary sage, Meadow Clary (Salvia pratensis)\* and other blue-flowered Salvias
- Succisa pratensis (Devil's Bit Scabious)\*
- Native Goldenrod (Solidago virgaurea\* only) – other kinds of Goldenrod are very invasive
- Marsh Woundwort (Stachys palustris)\*
- Single- flowered Dahlias
- Helianthus x "Lemon Queen"
- Strawberry Tree (Arbutus unedo)
- Mallow (Malva and Lavatera)

## SPECIALLY FOR POLLEN

- Single-flowered wild and shrub roses, e.g. Rosa moyesii, Rosa gallica officinalis, R. 'Complicata', R. virginiana, R. canina\*, R. pimpinellifolia\*, R. mollis\*, R. 'Frances E. Lester'; and many others.
- Single-flowered poppies (Papaver rhoeas\*, P.somniferum, Meconopsis cambrica\*)
- Yellow Broom\*, and broom-like plants (Genista, Cytisus, Dorycnium etc)

## GENERALLY NOT MUCH GOOD FOR BUMBLEBEES

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • Astilbe   | • Hemerocallis   |
| • Jasmine; Forsythia                                      | • Tulips   |
| • Lilies (Lilium), Arum Lilies (Zantedeschia), Gladiolus  | • Alstroemeria   |
| • Lilac (Syringa)   | • Sunflowers   |
| • Magnolia  | • Yuccas   |
| • Hydrangea   | • Pelargoniums   |
| • Viburnum  | • Pansies  |
| • Lobelia   | • Dianthus (pinks and Sweet Williams) Evening Primrose (Oenothera) |
| • Cannas  | • Ox-Eye Daisy and most other white daisies; H.T. roses            |
| • Crocosmias  | • Most bedding plants  |
| • Kniphophias   | • Buddleja Davidii,  |
| • Phormiums   | • Sedum 'Herbstfreude'   |
| • Most Penstemons   |  |
| • Most Umbellifers (Carrot Family: Fennel, Angelica etc,) |  |
| • Bearded Irises  |  |





Common Carder Bee (*Bombus pascuorum*) on Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) © Claire Pumfrey

# Food plants for bees in the countryside

## WILDFLOWERS

Plant	Species benefitting	Uses
Bird's-foot Trefoil	Bees	Long season, major food plant
Red Clover	Bumblebees	Long season
White Clover	Bumblebees	Long season
Bugle	Spring bumblebees	
Red Dead-nettle	Spring bumblebees	
White Dead-nettle	Spring bumblebees	
Ground Ivy	Spring bees	
Dandelion	Spring bees	
Rest-harrow	Summer bumblebees	



Plant	Species benefitting	Uses
Tufted Vetch	Summer bumblebees	
Bush Vetch	Summer bumblebees	
Common Vetch	Summer bumblebees	
White Melilot	Summer bumblebees	
Yellow Melilot	Summer bumblebees	
Comfrey	Summer bumblebees	
Woundworts	Summer bumblebees	
Marjoram	Summer bumblebees	
Musk and Marsh Mallow	Summer bumblebees	
Bittersweet	Summer bumblebees	
St John's Wort	Summer bumblebees	
Honeysuckle	Summer bumblebees	
Toadflax	Summer bumblebees	
Viper's Bugloss	Summer bumblebees	
Burdock	Summer bumblebees	
Greater Knapweed	Summer bumblebees	



Plant	Species benefitting	Uses
Thistles	Summer bumblebees	
Field Scabious	Summer bees	
Red Bartsia	Summer bees	
Black Horehound	Summer bees	
Thyme	Summer bees	
Cat's-ear	Summer bees	
Knapweed	Summer bees	
Hawk-bits	Summer bees	
Ragwort	Summer bees & hoverflies	Major food plant
Angelica	Summer bees & hoverflies	
Other summer umbels	Summer bees & hoverflies	
Hogweed	Bees & hoverflies	



Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) © Jon Mold



## SHRUBS AND TREES

Plant	Species benefitting	Uses
Sallow	Spring bees & hoverflies	Major food plant
Sloe	Spring bees & hoverflies	Major food plant
Guelder Rose	Spring bees & hoverflies	
Wild Cherry	Spring bees & hoverflies	
Hawthorn	Spring bees & hoverflies	Major food plant
Gorse	Spring bumblebees	
Blackthorn	Spring bumblebees	
Broom	Spring bumblebees	
Bramble	Summer bees & hoverflies	Useful food plant
Raspberry	Summer bees & hoverflies	Stem nesting bees
Ivy	Summer bumblebees	
Privet	Late bees & hoverflies	

This text has been adapted from Marc Carlton's bumblebee garden day workshop, held by Buglife. Visit Marc's website for more helpful information on gardening for wildlife [www.foxleas.com](http://www.foxleas.com).

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