



POLLINATOR HABITAT

Establishment and Management

MANAGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Understand that native plantings from seed do not look like a magazine cover photo for the first few years. The plants need time to grow their roots and establish before they start blooming. We like to use the phrase: “Sleep, Creep, Leap” to explain the process. The first year the plants will be “sleeping” staying green and likely little to no blooms while working on root systems. The second year, you will start to see the plot “creep” along towards establishment with a few species starting to bloom like partridge pea and coreopsis. The third year is when your plot will “leap” with lots of flowers starting to show out and bloom throughout the growing season. There will still be plants that won’t start blooming until after year 3 and will start popping up later as the planting matures, but those will be far fewer.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GROW

Contact your local PF&QF biologist to help with planning and long term management recommendations. **Scan this QR Code to find your local PF & QF Farm Bill Biologist.**



WHAT TO EXPECT

GROWING SEASON 1-3

The flowers listed below are examples. They may change based on your region.

1

FLUSH OF ANNUALS

- Plains Coreopsis
- Partridge Pea
- Black-eyed Susan

2

STARTING TO SEE PERENNIAL WILDFLOWERS AND GRASSES!

- Lanceleaf Coreopsis
- Wild Bergamot
- Yarrow

3

PERENNIAL WILDFLOWERS AND GRASSES ARE STARTING TO FILL IN THE SITE!

- Butterfly Milkweed
- Rattlesnake Master
- Blazing Stars (*Liatris* sp.)

Regular maintenance of the site is key! Well-timed prescribed fire and/or mowing is necessary to maintain floral diversity. You may also need to spot treat any non-native vegetation.

HOW TO ESTABLISH POLLINATOR HABITAT

SITE PREPARATION

- Plan an area to be planted (an ideal pollinator plot size is at least 1 acre).
- Determine what site preparation method(s) will work best for your site and preferences: herbicide, solarization, or hand-pulling.

Site preparation is the most important step! If you do not ensure that all invasive plants are eliminated before planting, you will have to deal with the headache of spot spraying or a failed planting afterwards.

PLANTING

- Use seed mix included to plant 1 acre area.
- Sow your seed mix directly onto the prepped soil surface (remember the importance of site preparation).
- Make sure to plant your native seed between December and February. The forbs in your mix need to go through cold stratification to germinate, which is why we do the dormant season seeding.
- Broadcast is the recommended method. Do NOT plant too deep. These seeds cannot be planted any deeper than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. You should see some seeds on top of ground when planting. Using a carrier (such as rice hulls) is an option to bulk up the seed mix to make it easier for kids to broadcast seed evenly.



Note the area that is planned to be planted is void of vegetation and bare soil is visible.



Depending on plot size and equipment availability, hand sowing may be a good option.

HOW TO MANAGE POLLINATOR HABITAT

Prescribed burning is the best option for long-term management, but we understand some sites will not be capable of burning. Haying or mowing are additional options for management. Whatever option you choose, we recommend letting the plants grow for 3 full growing seasons (summers) without any disturbance before starting management. Spot spraying may be necessary depending on what plants are present. This is where site prep was key. If you did good site prep, you shouldn't have to do much spot spraying.

Call your local biologist! Whatever method you use for site prep or long-term management, we recommend getting ahold of your local PF&QF biologist to help guide you through the process. They will be able to tell you about your site specifically and how to best manage it.

