**NATIVE PERENNIAL FLOWERS FOR POLLINATOR GARDENS**

Beate Popkin

A. *Most pollinating insects forage in the sun.* Therefore your pollinator garden should be in a location that is as sunny as possible. Three hours of direct sunlight is a minimum. All milkweeds need at least 6 hrs. (Shade gardens are often planted with perennials that flower in the spring, before the trees leaf out. These flowers attract early pollinators including mason bees. There are also some fall-flowering asters and goldenrods worth considering for a shade garden. Shade plants are not included in this list)

B. *If your garden is going to be a joy to you and your neighbors, you will have to maintain it,* which means above all to weed it. You have to water to get plants established and occasionally thereafter when it gets very dry. You will apply mulch initially to keep the weeds down and the moisture in the ground, and in later years as needed.

C. *The plant list is organized by plant height and within height* *category it is organized roughly in succession of bloom*. The rule is to put short plants in front of the garden bed and tall ones in back, medium ones in the middle. You can google these plants to see what they look like when flowering. Bloom time as follows: Sp=Spring through May, S=Summer, LS=Late summer (August to mid-September), F=Fall (after mid-September). An asterix (\*) means the flower stalk of that plant should be cut back by half in late May or early June to control its height. None of these plants need fertilizer, with the possible exception of garden phlox which will produce a second and third bloom with a fertilizer application in mid summer.

**1.)** **Plants below 1 ft. high for edges and along pavement**

Creeping phlox, Sp, drought tolerant

Creeping thyme, S, drought tolerant, not native

All oreganos and marjorams, S, drought tolerant, not native

**2.) Plants 1 – 2 ft. high**

Monarda bradburiana, Sp

Small’s beardtongue, Sp.

Hairy beardtongue, Sp to S

Eared coreopsis, Sp

Lanceleaf coreopsis, Sp to S, drought tolerant

Meadow phlox, Sp to S, needs moisture

Downy phlox, S, drought tolerant

Butterfly milkweed, S, drought tolerant, needs full sun

Threadleaf coreopsis, S, drought tolerant

Mistflower, LS, needs moisture, benefits from some shade

Sedum ‘Autumn Joy’, LS, drought tolerant, full sun, not native

**3.) Plants 2 ½ to 4 ft. high**

Arkansas bluestar, Sp, drought tolerant

Eastern bluestar, Sp, drought tolerant

Smooth beardtongue, Sp to S

Indian physic, Sp to S, drought tolerant

Swamp milkweed, S, needs full sun and moisture

Purple coneflower, S

Wild quinine, S

Slender mountain mint, S

Bergamot, S, drought tolerant

Garden phlox, S to LS, needs moisture

Short-toothed mountain mint, S to LS, tiny flowers but pretty plant, **great for pollinators**!

Elm-leaf goldenrod\*, LS

Scented goldenrod, LS

Erect goldenrod, F, drought tolerant

Aromatic aster\*, F

Calico aster, F, needs moisture

**4.) Plants 4 ½ to 6 ft. high (**these should all be in full sun)

Royal catchfly, S, drought tolerant, doesn’t like being crowded

Ox-eye sunflower, S

Tall liatris, S, drought tolerant

Giant Hyssop\*, S to LS, **great pollinator plant!**

New England aster\*, LS, needs moisture

**Note:** I left out the Rudbeckias, that is the black-eyed susan varieties. They don’t attract many pollinating insects, but the birds like the seeds (and will carry them everywhere). They are very showy and the common variety should be in every garden for August splendor.