

Syringa spp & hybrids Lilacs. Spring NP
Wide range of medium & large shrubs, mostly
spring flowering, all strongly scented.

Tamarix spp May-late summer NP
Feathery foliage, profuse masses of
tiny, pink flowers. Varying flowering times
from May to late summer.

Ulex europaeus, U. minor Gorse. N? P
Long flowering periods.

Viburnum spp Wide range of evergreen & deciduous
shrubs. Good species include:
V. bodnatense, V. fragrans Winter NP
Deciduous, winter flowering, scented.
V. burkwoodii Evergreen, scented. Apr NP
V. carlesii Scented. Apr NP
V. juddii Scented. Apr-May NP
V. opulus Guelder rose. Jun-Jul NP
V. tinus, V. laurustinus Evergreen. Oct-Mar P

Weigela florida & hybrids May-Jun NP?
Pink, red or white flowers.

Wisteria spp Climbers.
W. floribunda & W. sinensis Apr-May (N)P

To find out more about specific plants and their cultural requirements most garden centres and libraries have a reference section with encyclopaedias of garden plants.

Bush Fruits

Most bush fruits are valuable bee plants, some producing copious nectar (marked §). Flowering time varies with the variety.

§Bilberry Whortle berry Black, red & white currants

§Blackberries Wild & cultivated



Blueberries



Gooseberries

Hybrid berries: Boysenberry, Worcester berry, Jostaberry

§Raspberry & Loganberry

This leaflet is provided for general interest and information only. No liability is accepted for any injury or loss arising out of the contents of this leaflet.



Shrubs useful to Bees

This leaflet lists a number of shrubs (defined as a perennial plant not growing normally on an single trunk) useful for providing pollen and/or nectar for bees and other pollinating insects.

The list includes a wide range of plants suitable for a range of habitats, including small and large gardens and some may also be found in the wild. Brief details are given of the less common species.

All will normally flower in the UK, although some will need a good summer to flower well. In most cases pollen production is relatively reliable, but nectar production is not, being more affected by the soil and weather. There is an increasing number of species now being grown in the UK which originate from hotter countries and these may be especially variable in flowering and nectar production. Many of these are not reliably hardy in colder parts of the country but with warmer summers and milder winters some of these plants can be grown far more widely, and may produce more nectar in good weather.

Key to list:

** tender. * not reliably hardy. Spp = species.
(N) = nectar produced when weather good enough.
N = nectar collected. P = pollen collected.

****Abutilon vitifolium** May–Jul NP
Soft grey/green vine shaped downy leaves,
large saucer-shaped flowers, various colours.



Berberis spp Apr–Jul NP
Wide range of species, all attractive to bees.

Buddleia alternifolia Long lilac spikes. Jun NP
B. globosa Globular orange flowers. May NP
B. x weyeriana Orange panicles. Jun–Oct NP

***Ceanothus** spp NP
Wide range of species, all attractive to bees.
Range from spring to late summer flowering.

Chaenomeles spp Ornamental quinces. Feb–Apr NP

Cistus spp Rock roses. May–Jul NP
Evergreen. Range of colours.

***Choisya ternata** 'Mexican Orange Blossom' Apr–Jun P
Evergreen.

Clematis spp
Climbers. Most large flowered hybrids only
produce pollen.

C. armandii Evergreen, strongly scented. Apr–May (N)P
C. cirrhosa Evergreen, small bell-like flowers. Dec–Feb (N)P
C. montana Apr–May NP
C. vitalba Traveller's Joy, wild clematis. Jun–Jul NP

Clethra alnifolia Acid soils. Aug–Oct P

Cotoneaster spp Jun NP
Wide range of good garden plants.

Cytisus spp Brooms. NP
Wide range of species & hybrids, mostly
early flowering.

Deutzia spp Summer P
Very pretty free flowering shrubs.

***Escallonia** spp & hybrids NP
Wide range of good garden plants. Evergreen.

Eschscholtzia spp Late summer–autumn N
Unusual lovely shrubs, mint-scented leaves,
flowers various colours. Good nectar producer.

***Fuchsia magellanica** Late summer N
Naturalised in S & W. Free-flowering.

Genista spp Gorses. Early NP
Wide range of garden varieties.

***Hebe** spp NP
Wide range of sizes from dwarf to large, evergreen,
flowering periods vary from early summer to late.
Some very tender species.

Helianthemum spp & hybrids Sun roses. P
Evergreen dwarf shrubs, many colours.

Hydrangea
Only those varieties with fertile florets are used
by bees, not the showy sterile ones (Hortensia).

H. petiolaris Climber. Jun NP
H. paniculata and **H. villosa** Late summer NP



Hedera helix Ivy. NP
Climber, evergreen. Good source of late nectar.

Kalmia spp Calico Bush Jun NP
Evergreen, acid soils.
K. angustifolia, **K. latifolia**

Kolkwitzia amabilis May–Jun NP
Uncommon shrub, easy to grow, beautiful drooping
bell-shaped flowers.

Lonicera spp Honeysuckles. NP
Shrubby honeysuckles have smaller more open
flowers, with more available nectar than the
climbing varieties. Some flower late winter.
L. angustifolia, **L. standishii**, **L. purpusii**

Mahonia spp Winter/spring P
Evergreen shrubs with yellow flowers.
Valuable pollen source early in the year.
M. aquifolium, **M. bealei**, **M. japonica**, ***M. lomariifolia**

***Myrtus communis** Late summer (N)P
Evergreen, fragrant flowers.

Olearia spp Daisy bushes.
O. haastii White flowers. Jul–Aug NP
O. macrodonta Jun NP

Parthenocissus quinquefolia Virginia creeper. Aug NP

Perovskia atriplicifolia Aug–Sep NP
Aromatic grey foliage & purple/blue
flowers. Excellent bee plant.

Philadelphus spp Mock Orange. Jun–Jul NP
Large number of species and varieties, most
strongly scented.

Potentilla fruticosa NP
Many varieties & hybrids. Small shrubs, white
or yellow flowers. Long flowering period.

Prunus laurocerasus Cherry laurel. Apr NP
Evergreen. Also has extrafloral nectaries,
very attractive to bees in summer.

Prunus lusitanica Portugal laurel. Jun NP
Evergreen.

Pyracantha Firethorn. May–Jun NP
P. angustifolia, **P. coccinea**

Rhododendron spp NP
Small varieties of rhododendron & azaleas
can be worked by honey bees.
R. ponticum can produce poisonous honey occasionally.

Ribes spp
R. sanguineum Flowering Currant. Apr NP
Pink, red or white flowers.
R. odoratum Buffalo Currant, yellow flowers. Apr NP
R. speciosum Red flowers. Apr–May NP

Rosa spp N? P
Only single flowered types.
Wild roses & **R. rugosa**.

Rosmarinus officinalis Rosemary. Apr–May NP
Evergreen, aromatic.

Salix spp Willows. Early spring NP
Numerous small shrubby willows. Good
species include:
S. apoda, **S. boydii**, **S. hastata**, **S. lanata**,
S. melanostachys, **S. uva-ursi**

Symphoricarpos spp Snowberries. Jun–Aug NP
Most produce copious amounts of nectar.
S. alba, **S. occidentalis**, **S. orbiculatus**, **S. rivularis**