

GET MORE AND GIVE MORE WITH YOUR PLANTINGS!

By Erin Mills

Cockrell Butterfly Center

We all love to attract butterflies with sweet nectar-producing plants. Spying these delightful flutterers brings joy and a sense of purpose and accomplishment to our gardens. Plenty of other pollinators enjoy our efforts as well, such as hummingbirds and honeybees. These are the pageant-winners of the pollinator world. Native bees are the sometimes-forgotten, true keepers of the Texas landscape and beneficial insects such as assassin bugs, syrphid flies, ladybugs, and lacewings protect our plants from attackers. Why not use plants that check as many boxes as possible and deliver much more ecological bang for our buck!

While many tropical plants make a wonderful addition to your pollinator garden, native pollinators are best adapted to native plants! Here are some native jewels that look amazing, AND really deliver for our most important garden allies.



Winecup or Purple Poppy Mallow (*Callirhoe involucrata*)
Perennial herb that blooms March-June. This native magenta wildflower spreads up to 3 feet and can be planted in beds or hanging baskets. It attracts butterflies and has special value to native bees. It is the hostplant for the Gray hairstreak (*Strymon melinus*). Can be complemented by the summer-fall blooming Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*).



Lanceleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolate*)

Perennial herb that blooms April-June. Most common coreopsis which is easy to grow. The showy golden blooms are attractive to butterflies, valuable to native bees, and support biological control, meaning they attract beneficial insects to control pests! Pairs well with Blue Wild Indigo (*Baptisia australis*)

Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)

Perennial twining vine with beautiful red, tubular flowers. Blooms March-June. Good climber, not aggressive like Japanese honeysuckle! Especially valuable to butterflies, hummingbirds, and bumble bees. Berries attract birds. Host plant for Snowberry clearwing (*Henaris diffinis*), delightful little hummingbird moth!



Partridge Pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*)

Annual herb, blooms June-October. Showy yellow flowers attractive to bees & butterflies. Nectar is found in extra-floral nectaries at leaf base. Special value to native bees, bumble bees, and supports biological control organisms. Song birds and game birds are attracted to seed pods. Host plant for Cloudless Sulpur (*Phoebis sennae*), Orange Sulphur (*Colias eurytheme*), & Sleepy Orange butterflies (*Abaeis*)

nicippe). Plant microorganisms produce nitrogen in abundance and enriches and stabilizes the soil. What a plant!



Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)

Underutilized perennial herb, blooms June-October. Rose pink flower clusters attract butterflies, bees & hummingbirds. Milkweeds are host plant for Monarchs and Queens, but are also extremely valuable to native bees, honey bees, bumble bees, and support an enormous amount of pests, predators, and parasites, giving rise to the term "milkweed village." Several other species of native milkweeds as well as tropical milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*) are equally beneficial. A must have for any pollinator garden!