What's the Buzz About Pollinator Gardens?

By: Samantha Fletcher, Emilie Gitter, and Mary McTeague

Tips for Starting Your Pollinator Garden!

1. Sunlight
   - Most pollinator-friendly plants prefer sun for most of the day, so choose a location exposed to direct sunlight

2. Start small
   - Choose a plot size that you are comfortable with and that won’t overwhelm you
   - You can always expand later

3. Check your soil
   - Plants grow best in nutrient-rich, well-drained, weedied, and loosened soil
   - Enrich soil with organic matter such as compost, leaves, straw, and hay

4. Plant diversity
   - Choose a variety of plants with overlapping and sequential bloom periods to provide food for pollinators throughout the season
   - Plant mostly natives with select exotics that extend the flowering period

5. Garden blueprint
   - Clump the same flower species together to attract more pollinators

Why are Pollinators Important?

- USDA estimates that pollination is worth $10 billion in the U.S.
- Animal pollination is required for 80% of crop plants
- Why are pollinators in decline?
- Intensive agricultural practices
- Habitat Fragmentation and Degradation
- Some bee species are endangered

What flowers can I plant?

Native flowers in Iowa except for the Zinnia, an exotic flower that extends the flowering period

Golden Alexander
Pale purple coneflower
Rattlesnake master
Smooth blue aster
Zinnia

Garden Checklist:
- Do your plant research!
- Plant a diversity of flowering plants
- Plant mostly natives
- Consider selecting exotic flowers that may extend the flowering period
- Avoid using pesticides

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Evidence Cited
- U.S. Forest Service. Why is pollination important? United States Department of Agriculture.