

# Native Plants for Pollinators



Grow these favourite pollinator plants to attract butterflies, moths and bees

Planting pollinator-friendly plants is a great way to help the environment and add some vibrant colour to your landscape.

Sweat Bee on Black-eyed Susan

# Pollination

Pollination is an essential process of plant life. Pollen from the stamen (male part of the flower) is transferred to the pistol (female part of the flower) allowing a plant to produce seeds that become the next generation. The transfer of pollen almost always requires an outside influence, such as wind or animals. Animals that help pollinate flowers are known as pollinators.

All flowering plant species produce pollen, a source of protein for many insects. Many flowers also produce nectar, a sugar-based high energy food. Both pollen and nectar attract pollinators to flowers. They move from flower-to-flower, feeding and collecting food, unintentionally transferring pollen from one plant to another. This is called cross-pollination and it ensures genetic diversity and resilience.

# Pollinators

Bees, butterflies and moths are the most familiar pollinators. Flies, beetles, ants, wasps, hummingbirds, and in some regions, bats, are important pollinators as well. This guide focuses on plants for bees, butterflies and moths, but the benefits extend to all types of pollinators.

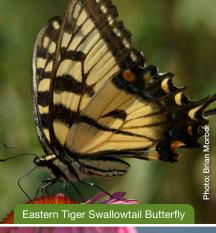
Recent years have seen a sharp decline in pollinator populations due to climate change, habitat loss (including the loss of native plants) and pesticide overexposure. This could eventually lead to a decline in plant species, impacting ecosystems and our own food security. Pollinators are responsible for pollinating over 30 per cent of the food we eat. By planting some of the plants in this guide, you can help support these important pollinators while adding colour and interest to your landscape.

#### **Native Pollinators Love Native Plants**

Native pollinators in the Credit River watershed co-evolved with the native plants in the region. They are best suited to successfully pollinate native flowering plants and get pollen or nectar from them. These are some common native pollinators that you can attract to your property:

- Eastern Tiger
  Swallowtail Butterfly
- Clouded Sulphur Butterfly
- Northern Azure Butterfly
- Monarch Butterfly
- Red Admiral Butterfly
- Little Wood-satyr Butterfly
- iy Common Eastern
- fly Bumble Bee
  - Tricolored Bumble Bee
- Frigid Leaf Cutter Bee
- Bicolored Sweat Bee
- Hummingbird Clearwing Moth
- Virginia Ctenucha Moth









tittle Wood-satyr Butterfly

Cover Photo: Monarchs on Slender Blazing Star. Credit Jon Clayton



# **Butterflies and Moths**

Butterflies come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colours. The Eastern Tailed Blue can be as small as a penny and the Giant Swallowtail can be as big as a grapefruit. Butterflies and moths are closely related, but butterflies are generally active during the day and are often showier than moths which are more active at night. There are exceptions, like the Hummingbird Clearwing Moth which flies during the day, or the stunning Luna Moth and the drab Northern Cloudywing Butterfly.

Butterflies and moths both begin life as an egg that hatches into a small caterpillar. Caterpillars are picky eaters and need certain plants to

survive. Monarch\* caterpillars, for example, need milkweed in order to grow. If a caterpillar has the right food source, it will grow and transform into a chrysalis (for butterflies) or cocoon (for moths). Eventually an adult butterfly or moth emerges and is ready to start pollinating.

To attract butterflies and moths to your property, provide both nectar-producing flowers for the adults and host plants for the caterpillars. Most butterflies and moths only lay a few eggs on each plant so you don't have to worry about caterpillars doing too much damage to the plants. Most of the plants listed in this guide produce both nectar and pollen, and are used as host plants by a variety of butterflies and moths.

\* To learn more about the status of Monarchs visit ontario.ca/page/monarch.









Northern Amber Bumble Bee on Goldenrod

#### What do Bees Need?

Throughout the summer and fall, some cavity nesting bees use hollow or pithy stems to lay their eggs. Leave these plants standing tall throughout the winter or cut down to no shorter than 20 cm.

#### Hollow-stemmed Plants:

- Cup Plant
- Sunflowers
  Swamp Milkweed
- Goldenrod
  Wild Bergamot

• Spotted Joe Pye Weed

• Echinacea

# Bees

Ontario is home to approximately 400 different species of native bees, which account for nearly 70 per cent of pollination activity. They add a little buzz of life to your property and can help increase yields in your vegetable garden.

Some native bees, like many species of Bumble Bees and Sweat Bees, nest in colonies in the ground. Other native bees are known as solitary bees because they nest on their own. Some nest in the ground, like certain Mining Bees, and others, like many Leafcutter Bees, nest in hollow tubes or cavities. Our native bees do not produce the tasty honey we associate with Honey Bees. Nesting bees collect pollen to bring back to the nest and then create a pollen loaf using saliva, which they leave with each egg. Once the egg hatches, the larva feeds on the pollen and goes through several stages of growth, emerging, after one final transformation, as an adult bee.

#### Pithy-stemmed Plants:

- Elderberry
- Raspberry
- Rose
- Sumac



# **Creating Pollinator Habitat**

The plants listed in this guide are the top choices for supporting pollinators in the Credit River watershed. These plants provide ample pollen and/or nectar and act as host plants for caterpillars. How you add these plants to your landscape will depend on several factors including size; characteristics of your site such as sun, shade and soil type; and how much effort you want to put into design and maintenance.

#### Suggestions on how to create pollinator habitat on your property:

- Add clumps of pollinator plants to an existing garden.
- Plant a pollinator garden: a small or large formal planting. •
- Plant a pollinator patch: a small or large informal planting.
- Plant a pollinator hedgerow or a cluster of flowering trees and shrubs.

#### Tips to improve planting success:

- Plant nectar plants alongside caterpillar host plants; you can't have a butterfly without a caterpillar first.
- Plant flowers in clumps of at least five per species to make them easier for pollinators to find.
- Use a mixture of colours and shapes that bloom throughout the season so a variety of pollinators can visit at different times.
- Plant the right plant in the right place. For more information about each plant, please refer to CVC's landscaping plant guides at creditvalleyca.ca/landscaping.

# **Don't Skip Over Grasses**

Plant native grasses and grass-like plants such as sedges to offer both food and shelter for caterpillars. This is especially important for a group of butterflies known as skippers. Best native grasses include:

- Bebb's Sedge
- Big Bluestem Grass\*
- Bottlebrush Grass
- Ebony Sedge\*

- Little Bluestem Grass\*
- Pennsylvania Sedge
- Stellate Sedge • Yellow Indian-grass\*
- Plantain-leaved Sedge
- Prairie Cordgrass\*
- \* Not for restoration or projects requiring a CVC permit. See page 10.



Trees and shrubs support pollinators, especially when they bloom early in the season before most wildflowers. They can provide nectar, pollen, caterpillar food and nest sites for bees. Plant some of these top pollinator choices near your wildflower garden or use the smaller trees and shrubs to create a pollinator hedgerow:

- Basswood
- Birch
- Cherry
- Dogwood

- Elderberry
- Maple
- Oak
- Poplar

- Raspberry
- Serviceberry
- Viburnum
- Willow

# **Other Ways to Help Pollinators**

### Give them a place to lay their eggs

#### Soil

- Leave patches of bare soil in your garden that you do not dig or cover with mulch. Ground nesting bees like bare, preferably sandy, soils.
- Some bees, like Mason Bees, will use mud to construct their nest cavities.

#### Tunnels in natural materials

- Leave plant stems standing at least 20 cm (or more) throughout the winter for cavity nesting bees. Cut down in the spring and lay them in a sheltered spot so the adult bees can emerge.
- Add nesting locations by installing a bee box filled with hollow tubes or by drilling holes in a block of wood.

#### **Host Plants**

• Butterflies will lay eggs on specific plants that caterpillars need for food once they've hatched.



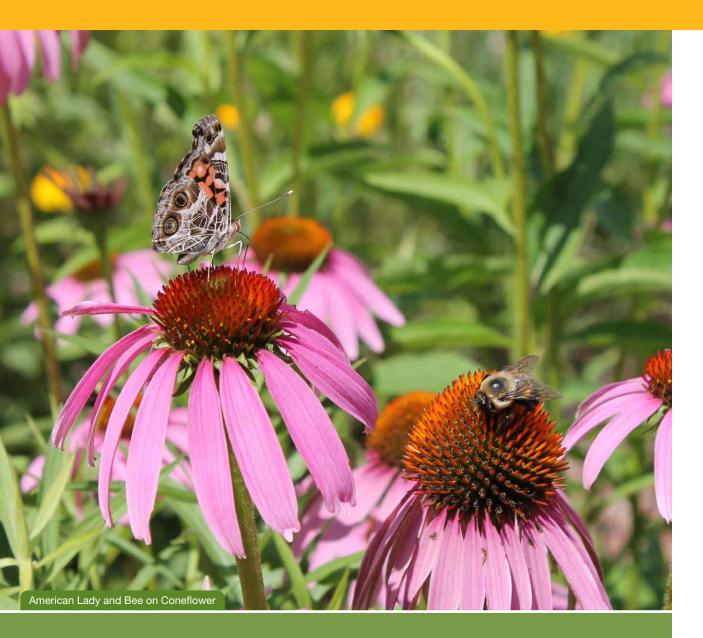


#### Insects need water too

- Provide water and add stones in a shallow dish so insects have something dry to land on.
- Add mud to provide the salts that some male butterflies need. Some groups of butterflies will gather around the mud to have a puddle party.

#### Practise safe maintenance

- Leave fallen leaves in the garden to protect overwintering butterflies.
- Avoid using pesticides or other chemicals near pollinator habitat because bees are very sensitive.



#### **Restoration Projects and Planting in Regulated Areas**

Restoration projects and those requiring a CVC permit must use common species native to the Credit River watershed. Common native plants on this list are those without an asterisk. For a complete list of approved plants for CVC planning applications and restoration projects refer to **creditvalleyca.ca/plantselectionguide**.

# About this Guide: Choosing Your Plants

#### 1: Name

Plants are grouped and sorted alphabetically by common name with both the common and scientific names given.

### 2: Reference Plant Guides

All plants in this guide are native within the Credit River watershed or just beyond. They can each be found in one of our two habitatspecific native plant guides:

- Prairie and Meadow Plants for Landscaping - showcases native plants for your garden that originally evolved and naturally grow in prairie or meadow habitat.
- Woodland Plants for Landscaping showcases native plants for your garden that originally evolved and naturally grow in woodland habitat.

Refer to each respective guide for full details on conditions each plant needs to thrive. (See page 23 for information on where to find these guides.)

## 3: Bloom Time and Colour

Pollinator species emerge and are active at different times of the year, so plant flowers to provide blooms throughout the growing season. The corresponding list identifies when each flower will be in bloom and what colour the blooms will be.

## 4: Flower Shape

Illustrates a simplified shape of the flower.

### 5: Notes

Describes an interesting fact about pollination for that plant.

# 6: Examples of Butterfly and Moth Users

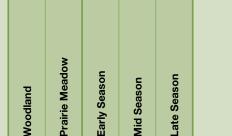
Includes examples of local butterflies and moths that may visit these plants for food. Butterflies and moths listed with an asterisk (\*) also use that plant as a host plant when they are in the caterpillar stage.

# 7: Examples of Bee Users

Features examples of bee families that may visit each plant. Some plants support or require specialist bees that rely on one or very few plants for food. These bees are identified by common names. Lesser known bees may not have a common name. In this case the scientific name is used.



Bumble Bees on Aster









Mason Bee



Common Buckeye Butterfly on Aster

Common Name	Scientific Name	ant 1unity**	BI	oom Ti	oom Time			Notes	Examples of Butterfly and Moth Users	Examples of Bee Users
Alexanders, Golden*	Zizia aurea		Ŷ			<b>\$</b> *		Small bees pollinate; large bees only get nectar	Black Swallowtail Butterfly Northern Azure Butterfly	Mining Bees, e.g. Golden Alexanders Andrena^ Mason Bees
Aster, Calico	Symphyotrichum lateriflorum				W					
Aster, Flat-top White*	Doellingeria umbellata var. umbellata				W					
Aster, Heart-leaved	Symphyotrichum cordifolium				B			Large number of flower heads attract many pollinators	Pearl Crescent Butterfly*** Common Buckeye Butterfly	Long-horned Bees, e.g. <i>Melissodes druriella</i> ^ Bumble Bees
Aster, Large-leaved	Eurybia macrophylla				Ø	*				
Aster, New England	Symphyotrichum novae-angliae				Ø	ঈ৻ৼ	κ.			
Aster, Sky-blue*	Symphyotrichum oolentangiense				B	_				
Aster, Swamp	Symphyotrichum puniceum				P					
Aster, White-Heath	Symphyotrichum ericoides var. ericoides				Ŵ					
Beardtongue, Foxglove*	Penstemon digitalis			W		<b>6</b> 3		Attract long-tongued bees and butterflies	American Copper Butterfly Blinded Sphinx Moth	Mason Bees, e.g. <i>Osmia distincta^</i> Small Carpenter Bees
Beardtongue, Hairy*	Penstemon hirsutus			P		*				
Bergamot, Wild	Monarda fistulosa var. fistulosa			P		<b>*</b> *		New flowers open as old ones are depleted	Hermit Sphinx Moth*** Silver-spotted Skipper Butterfly	Sweat Bees, e.g. Monarda Dufourea^ Bumble Bees

Bloom Time: Early: April-June Mid: June-August Late: August-October

Bloom Colour: 🔞 red 🧿 orange 🍸 yellow Ġ green 🚯 blue 🕑 purple 📵 pink W white

Flower Shape: Simple ktube klipped kaisy-like spike tuber

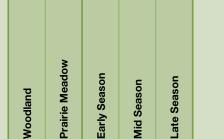
\* Not for restoration or projects requiring a CVC permit. See page 10.

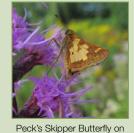
\*\* For detailed plant information and alternate plant names, please cross-reference with CVC's Woodland Plants for Landscaping (creditvalleyca.ca/woodlandplants) and Prairie & Meadow Plants for Landscaping (creditvalleyca.ca/prairiemeadowplants) booklets.

\*\*\* Use plants as host plant.



Camouflaged Looper Moth on Black-eyed Susan





Blazing Star



fly on Black Swallowtail Butterfly on Coneflower



Leafcutter Bee on

Common Milkweed



Common Name	Scientific Name	Pla Comm	ant iunity**	В	Bloom Time		Bloom Time		Flower Shape		Notes	Examples of Butterfly and Moth Users	Examples of Bee Users
Black-eyed Susan	Rudbeckia hirta var. pulcherrima				Ŷ		貒		Large flower head creates landing pad	Camouflaged Looper Moth*** Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly	Long-horned Bees Mining Bees		
Blazing-star, Dense*	Liatris spicata					P				Monarch Butterfly	Bumble Bees		
Blazing-star, Slender*	Liatris cylindracea					P	<b>*</b> *		Abundance of nectar attracts butterflies	Peck's Skipper Butterfly	Leafcutter Bees		
Bloodroot	Sanguinaria canadensis			W			\$		If no pollinators, they can self pollinate after the third day flowering	Tufted Apple-bud Moth*** Mourning Cloak Butterfly	Cuckoo Bees Mining Bees		
Boneset, Common	Eupatorium perfoliatum					W	<b>*</b> *		Large clusters with easy access to nectar	Clymene Moth*** Red Admiral Butterfly	Sweat Bees Yellow-faced Bees		
Columbine, Wild	Aquilegia canadensis			ß			*		Also attracts Ruby-throated Hummingbirds	Columbine Borer Moth*** Black Swallowtail Butterfly	Mason Bees Sweat Bees		
Coneflower, Cut-leaved	Rudbeckia laciniata				<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>	<u>۵</u>				Long-horned Bees Mining Bees		
Coneflower, Eastern Purple*	Echinacea purpurea				P				Large flower head creates landing pad	Black Swallowtail Butterfly American Lady Butterfly			
Coneflower, Gray-headed Prairie*	Ratibida pinnata				Ŷ								
Coneflower, Pale Purple*	Echinacea pallida				P	P							
Coreopsis, Lance-leaved	Coreopsis lanceolata				Ŷ	<b>(Y</b> )	貒		Large flower head with easy access to nectar	Orange Sulphur Butterfly Viceroy Butterfly	Miner Bees, e.g. Coreopsis Miner Bee^ Small Carpenter Bees		
Culver's Root*	Veronicastrum virginicum				W		*		Continuous access to nectar as plants bloom from bottom to top	Culver's Root Borer Moth*** Aphrodite Fritillary Butterfly	Green Sweat Bees Leafcutter Bees		

Bloom Time: Early: April-June Mid: June-August Late: August-October

Bloom Colour: 10 red O orange Y yellow G green 13 blue P purple 10 pink W white

Flower Shape: Simple ktube klipped kaisy-like spike tuber

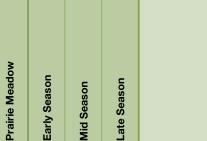
\* Not for restoration or projects requiring a CVC permit. See page 10.

\*\* For detailed plant information and alternate plant names, please cross-reference with CVC's Woodland Plants for Landscaping (creditvalleyca.ca/woodlandplants) and Prairie & Meadow Plants for Landscaping (creditvalleyca.ca/prairiemeadowplants) booklets.

\*\*\* Use plants as host plant.



Mining Bee on Goldenrod



Woodland







Leafcutter Bee on

Coneflower



Primrose Moth on Evening Primrose Mourning Cloak Butterfly

Bumble Bee on Joe Pye Weed

Common Name	Scientific Name	Pla Comm	ant iunity**	** Bloom Time		Bloom Time			Notes	Examples of Butterfly and Moth Users	Examples of Bee Users
Evening Primrose, Common	Oenothera biennis				<b>Y</b>		\$		Opens in the evening with a sweet smell	Primrose Moth*** Waved Sphinx Moth	Mining Bees, e.g. <i>Anthophora abrupta</i> ^ Bumble Bees
False Soloman's-seal	Maianthemum racemosum			W					Insects visit mostly for pollen	White Triangle Tortrix Moth***	Bumble Bees Sweat Bees
False Soloman's-seal, Star-flowered	Maianthemum stellatum			W			\$			Northern Azure Butterfly	
Fireweed*	Chamerion angustifolium				2	2	*		Long-tongued bees get nectar; short-tongued bees get pollen	White-lined Sphinx Moth*** Hummingbird Clearwing Moth	Bumble Bees Sweat Bees
Geranium, Wild	Geranium maculatum			P			\$		Dark lines on petals act as nectar guides	White-marked Tussock Moth*** Mourning Cloak Butterfly	Mining Bees, e.g. Andrena distans^ Sweat Bees
Goldenrod, Blue-stemmed	Solidago caesia					<b>()</b>	Ŷ				
Goldenrod, Early	Solidago juncea				<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>					
Goldenrod, Gray	Solidago nemoralis ssp. nemoralis					<b>()</b>	_		Numerous shallow flowers provide abundant nectar	Goldenrod Flower Moth*** Pearl Crescent Butterfly	Mining Bees, e.g. Hairy-banded Andrena^ Cellophane Bees
Goldenrod, Stiff*	Solidago rigida ssp. rigida					<b>()</b>					
Goldenrod, Zigzag	Solidago flexicaulis					<b>Y</b>					
Joe Pye Weed, Spotted	Eutrochium maculatum var. maculatum					•	**		Produces large quantities of nectar	Ruby Tiger Moth*** Red-spotted Purple Butterfly	Bumble Bees Cuckoo Bees
Leek, Wild	Allium tricoccum var. tricoccum			W			\$¥		Long anthers easily transfer pollen to bees' backs	Eastern Tailed Blue Butterfly Question Mark Butterfly	Cellophane Bees Leafcutter Bees

Bloom Time: Early: April-June Mid: June-August Late: August-October

Bloom Colour: 🔞 red 🧿 orange 🍸 yellow Ġ green 🚯 blue 🕑 purple 📵 pink W white

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Canadian Owlet Moth Caterpillar on Meadow-rue

Prairie Meadow

Woodland

Early Season

Mid Season

Late Season





Leafcutter Bee on





Great Spangled Fritillary Butterfly on Common Milkweed

Silvery Blue Butterfly Common Milkweed

Yellow Bumble Bee on Canada Milk-vetch

Common Name	Scientific Name	Pla Comm	ВІ	Bloom Time		Bloom Time		Flower Shape		Notes	Examples of Butterfly and Moth Users	Examples of Bee Users
Lupine, Wild*	Lupinus perennis		P			<b>k</b>		Large bees pry open petals allowing smaller bees to visit later	Karner Blue Butterfly (Extirpated)*** Wild Indigo Duskywing Butterfly***	Bumble Bees Mason Bees		
Mayflower, Canada	Maianthemum canadense		W			\$		Insects visit mostly for pollen	White Triangle Tortrix Moth*** Northern Azure Butterfly	Bumble Bees Sweat Bees		
Meadow-rue, Early	Thalictrum dioicum		G			<b></b> ♥			Canadian Owlet Moth*** Crocus Geometer Moth***	Sweat Bees, e.g. Bronze Sweat Bee^ Bumble Bees		
Meadow-rue, Tall	Thalictrum pubescens			W								
Milk-vetch, Canada*	Astragalus canadensis			<b>Y</b>		<b>k</b> i		Bees may bite holes in the back of flowers to rob nectar	Clouded Sulphur Butterfly*** Eastern-tailed Blue Butterfly***	Bumble Bees Leafcutter Bees		
Milkweed, Butterfly*	Asclepias tuberosa			0								
Milkweed, Common	Asclepias syriaca			(2)		<b>₩</b>		Sticky pollen sacs known as pollinia attach to the legs of large bees	Monarch Butterfly*** Great Spangled Fritillary Butterfly	Cuckoo Bees Leafcutter Bees		
Milkweed, Swamp	Asclepias incarnata			<b>P</b>								
Onion, Nodding*	Allium cernuum			<b>P</b>		<b>\$</b> ₩		Long anthers easily transfer pollen to the bees' backs	Eastern Tailed Blue Butterfly Edward's Hairstreak Butterfly	Cellophane Bees Leafcutter Bees		
Phlox, Wild Blue*	Phlox divaricata		B			**		Attracts long-tongued bees and butterflies	Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly*** Hummingbird Clearwing Moth	Bumble Bees Yellow-faced Bees		
Silverweed, Common*	Potentilla anserina ssp. anserina			Y		\$		Striking bullseye pattern that can only be seen by bees	Banded Hairstreak Butterfly Silvery Blue Butterfly	Mining Bees Yellow-faced Bees		
Strawberry, Wild	Fragaria virginiana		W			\$		Distinct nectar guides are only seen by bees	Purple Lined Sallow Moth*** Bronze Copper Butterfly	Long-horned Bees Mining Bees		

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Bloom Colour: 10 red O orange Y yellow G green 13 blue P purple 10 pink W white

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\*\*\* Use plants as host plant.



Common Wood Nymph Butterfly on Hoary Vervain











Leafcutter Bee

Sweat Bee on Coneflower

Common Name	Scientific Name	Pla Comm	Bl	Bloom Time		Bloom Time		Bloom Time		Flower Shape		Notes	Examples of Butterfly and Moth Users	Examples of Bee Users
Sunflower, False*	Heliopsis helianthoides			Y										
Sunflower, Pale-leaved	Helianthus strumosus			Y	Y	*			Painted Lady Butterfly***	Sweat Bees, e.g. <i>Dieunomia heteropoda ^</i> Long-horned Bees				
Sunflower, Tall*	Helianthus giganteus			Y	Y				Common Ringlet Butterfly					
Sunflower, Woodland	Helianthus divaricatus			Y	Ŷ									
Tick-trefoil, Showy*	Desmodium canadense			P		K		Large bees pry open petals allowing smaller bees to visit later	Northern Cloudywing Butterfly*** Orange Sulphur Butterfly***	Leafcutter Bees Small Resin Bees				
Vervain, Blue	Verbena hastata			P		10 i		Continuous access to nectar as plants	Common Buckeye Butterfly*** Common Wood Nymph Butterfly	Long-horned Bees Mining Bees				
Vervain, Hoary*	Verbena stricta			P		*		bloom from bottom to top						
Violet, Canada	Viola canadensis var. canadensis		W						Giant Leopard Moth*** Great Spangled Fritillary Butterfly***	Small Carpenter Bees Sweat Bees				
Violet, Common Blue	Viola sororia		B											
Violet, Round-leaved Yellow*	Viola rotundifolia		Ŷ			K		Dark lines on petals act as nectar guides						
Violet, Sweet White	Viola blanda		Ŵ											
Violet, Yellow	Viola pubescens		Ŷ											

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## Additional Resources

- Native Woodland Plants for Landscaping (creditvalleyca.ca/woodlandplants)
- Native Prairie and Meadow Plants for Landscaping (creditvalleyca.ca/ prairiemeadowplants)
- Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (xerces.org)
- Butterflies and Moths of North America (butterfliesandmoths.org)
- Bug Guide (bugguide.net)
- Bee Basics: an Introduction to Our Native Bees (fs.usda.gov)
- Yard Map (content.yardmap.org)



### Credit Valley Conservation landscaping information and programs

CVC offers programs and resources that support sustainable landscaping and naturalization.

Your Green Yard offers workshops and presentations on sustainable landscaping to local residents within the Credit River watershed. creditvalleyca.ca/ygy

**Greening Corporate Grounds** offers advice, landscape concept plans and events to businesses and institutions within the Credit River watershed. **creditvalleyca.ca/gcg** 

**Countryside Stewardship** offers workshops as well as technical and financial assistance to support rural environmental stewardship. **creditvalleyca.ca/countrysidestewardship** 

For additional landscaping fact sheets and resources, visit creditvalleyca.ca/landscaping

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