

Nectar and pollen-rich trees for bees.

In the countryside trees are an important, stable long-term source of food for bees and other pollinators, providing thousands of flower heads all in one place. The following tree species are selected to benefit bees and other pollinators, with species that flower at different times of the year providing nectar, pollen and nesting sites as well as providing a haven for other wildlife and cleaning the air and water and storing carbon.

Early flowering trees (March to April) - trees for queens

- Goat or pussy willow (*Salix caprea*) and grey willow (*Salix cinerea*): Flower in March, April, May. These provide some of the most important early season resources with the conspicuous yellow male catkins offering an early spring lifeline for many pollinators. Male willow catkins produce both pollen and nectar, whilst female willow catkins produce only nectar. The pollen from male willows is a crucial protein source for growth of bee larvae. The pollen and nectar also provide valuable food for the early emerging solitary bees such as Clarke's mining bee (*Andrena clarkella*) and the Chocolate mining bee (*Andrena scotica*).
- Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*: March, April
- Cherry Plum (*Prunus cerasifera*): March, April
- Wild Pear (*Pyrus pyraster*): April

Mid-season flowering trees (April to July) - trees for workers.

As the season progresses and the workers emerge, nectar and pollen rich flowers continue to be important to enable the bees' life cycle to progress. Good sources of nectar and pollen include:

- Cultivated Apple (*Malus x domestica*) April, May. All wild bees are major pollinators of these trees, especially the Red mason bee (*Osmia bicornis*) which is the most effective pollinator of orchard apples.
- Wild cherry (*Prunus avium*): April, May
- Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*): April, May
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*): April, May, June
- Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*): May, June
- Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*): May, June
- Field Maple (*Acer campestre*): May, June, July
- Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*): May, June, July
- Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*): June, July

Small trees for gardens

Gardens are a fantastic resource for wild bees and can be managed for a year-round supply of nectar and pollen through planting of herbaceous perennials. Many of the trees for bees mentioned above grow to be too large for many gardens. However, there are however a huge selection of smaller trees, including all shapes and varieties of fruit trees, that are suitable for gardens. For example:

- Goat willow *Salix caprea pendula* 'Kilmarnock': a weeping variety of the all-important goat willow, grafted onto a dwarfing rootstock, which grows to a maximum height of only 2.5m.

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You can even grow it in a pot, as long as it gets plenty of water. Flowering period: March to April.

- Judas tree (*Cercis canadensis*): Flowering period March to April
- Juneberry, Service berry (*Amelanchier*) – There are many species and varieties to suit almost all gardens. Eg. Amelanchier ‘Ballerina’, A. ‘Lamarckii’ and A. ‘Obelisk’. Flowering period: March to April
- Apple (*Malus*) - There are many varieties to suit almost all gardens. Eg *Malus* ‘Evereste’, M. ‘Pink Glow’, M. ‘Toringo’, M. ‘Aros’, and M. ‘Laura’ are popular: April and May.
- Cherry (*Prunus*) - The best for bees are the single, or semi-double forms; avoid double flowering varieties as the bees won’t be able to get at the nectar. Eg *Prunus* ‘Accolade’, P. ‘Kanzan’, P. ‘Amanogawa’ and P. ‘Ruby’. Flowering period: April to May
- Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) eg. *Sorbus* ‘Chinese Lace’ and S. ‘Autumn Spire’. Flowering period: May
- Strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*): Flowering period: September - December