



WHAT IS A POLLINATOR LAWN

or low mow lawn

Traditional turf lawns dominate urban landscapes, deplete the soil and provide no food for pollinators. And yet urban habitat is crucial for pollinator survival. A pollinator lawn or low mow lawn is a flowering carpet that requires no pesticide, herbicide or weed & feed treatments, needs very little mowing, can take foot traffic, increases healthy biodiversity, filters groundwater, is drought tolerant and feeds pollinators.

Recommended - ENHANCE EXISTING LAWNS (early spring is best):

1. Mow short/scalp existing lawn very low to 1" or less.
2. Rake in mulch with a hard rake. About 6 yards for a standard size yard (4,000 square feet).
3. Seed into mulch liberally with white dutch clover, and fine, creeping and/or hard fescue.
4. Water well and cover lightly with straw.
5. Keep watered daily until germination occurs – then water weekly until established.
6. After establishment or the 2nd year, water only during dry spells.
7. You may want to overseed in the Fall or following year, and add other flowering plants from list below.

-or- START FROM SCRATCH (early spring or late fall):

1. Remove existing vegetation (organic methods: sod cutter, smother, or solar burn).
2. Loosen soil. Sow with seed mix (for a quick grassy cover, add annual rye grass to seed mix).
3. Follow steps 3-6 above.

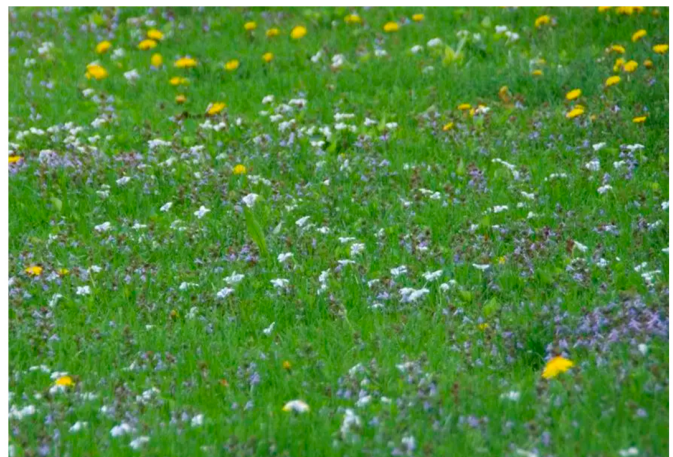
INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE

- Traditional turf depletes the soil. Consider fortifying the soil with a compost tea or compost to prepare for sowing seed, or mix seed with an organic fertilizer such as Sustane or Milorganite.
- Avoid mowing until after flowering. pollinators love the flowers. Mow ONLY when 4" or higher to encourage flowers. Hand weed or selectively weed wack if needed.
- Over-seeding in subsequent seasons may be necessary to achieve desired flower/grass ratio.
- May take 2-3 years and some nurturing for complete transformation.
- Do not use pesticides: insecticides, herbicides or fungicides. Pesticides harm pollinators.
- Grass seeding is best done either early spring, or late fall.

FLOWERING PLANTS, FESCUE GRASS SEEDS:

- Fescue grass such as low-mow fescue, chewings, hard, fine and/or creeping fescue
- White dutch clover (*Trifolium repens*)
- Self heal (*Prunella vulgaris*). Sow in fall. Needs to over winter to germinate.
- Creeping thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*), Violets, Wild strawberry, Calico aster (*Symphotrichum lateriflorum*), Lanceleaf coreopsis, Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia*), Pussy toes (*Antennaria plantaginifolia*)
- Creeping charlie and dandelion are pollinator plants too. Let some be.

2019 "Lawns to Legumes" cost share program provides incentives for turf to habitat conversion. To be launched fall, 2019 by BWSR.



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