

# Pollinator-Friendly Seed Starter Kit

## Contents of kit:

One plastic bag of potting soil, six biodegradable pots and three seed packets, each packet containing a different plant species. You can read about each of the plants on the reverse side of these instructions.

## Instructions for sowing pollinator-friendly seeds:

1. Sprinkle a small amount of water into the bag of soil. Close the bag and shake it to evenly distribute water. The soil should be moist, not soggy.
2. Place the pots on a tray and fill each pot with soil. Use **all** the soil.
3. Use your pointer and ring finger to make small holes in the soil of each pot.
4. In the six pots sow 12 seeds, 2 seeds to a pot: 4 sundrops, 4 mountain mint and 4 lavender beebalm seeds.
5. Insert one seed in a hole at a depth 4x the width of the seed or sprinkle on soil. Barely cover the seeds with soil.
6. The seeds need warmth and lots of natural light. Keep the pots inside throughout the month of May. Check plants daily and sprinkle with water.
7. Pots are **dark** brown when wet, and **light** brown when it's time to water.
8. Seedlings should be ready for planting into the ground by the second or third week of June if seeds are started in April.
9. When ready to transplant outside, dig a hole and place an **entire pot** in ground and cover with soil. Roots can penetrate the pots: **plant whole pots**.
10. The pots will degrade enriching the soil. Nurture and water regularly.
11. Visit often to watch your plants grow and blossom. Keep a log of all bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, or moths that you see visiting the flowers.
12. **Spread the word** encourage others to plant native, pollinator-friendly plants just like you have done. Thank you for helping our local pollinators to survive.

*\*For more information, including a downloadable Pollinator Journal, visit the Monkton Conservation Commission website or email RCP Coordinator: <http://monktonvt.com/boards-and-committees/conservation-commission/>*

Gardener's Supply donated potting soil mix and **CowPots, The Pots You Plant!** to be used in these seed kits that have been prepared for use by the Mid-Champlain Valley Regional Conservation Partnership. Coordinator: Laura Farrell, lfarrell@gmail.com

## Your Three Native Pollinator Friendly Plants

**Prairie Sundrops** (*Oenothera pilosella*) Native to eastern US and Canada, through the Midwest.

Perennial, hardy to zone 3, related to Evening Primrose and also known as Meadow Evening Primrose.

Will form a spreading mat of bright, yellow flowers on 1½ ft high plants that bloom for about a month during the daytime in early summer. They prefer full sun and moist soil, but do well in dappled shade, and some dryness. Often planted in the front border or where they can naturalize. Fragrant.

**Pollinators:** The lines on the petals are nectar guides for insects and are more easily seen by insects. They are visited by bees, butterflies, moths, and other pollinators. The very light seeds will be dispersed by the wind. Somewhat resistant to deer and rabbits.

**Slender Mountain Mint** (*Pycnanthemum Tenuifolium*) Perennial, native to the eastern US, prairies, TX

Just barely cover the tiny seeds with soil and keep moist.

1-3 feet tall. Prefers full sun and moist to slightly dry conditions. Easy to grow. Spreads and is somewhat invasive, so good for a location where it can naturalize. Dried leaves used as flavoring and in teas.

Small, flat, white flower heads with purple spots. Delicate and airy. Blooms all summer. Narrow leaves.

**Pollinators:** Short, tubular flowers filled with nectar attract many different kinds of bees, wasps and flies and butterflies. Of special value to bumble bees and honeybees.

**Lavender Beebalm/Wild Bergamot** (*Monarda fistulosa*)

Perennial, mint family, native eastern US.

Prefers sun in Vermont, soil moist or dry. Well-drained, aerated soil and good air circulation around the plant helps prevent powdery mildew, as does allowing it to spread naturally in a meadow or dividing the plants every three years.

Clusters of lavender, pink or white raggedy pompom flowers atop 2-4' stems. Blooms mid-summer in Vermont.

**Pollinators:** Fistulosa means tubular. Nectar attracts hummingbirds, bees and butterflies. Special value to native bees and bumblebees. Deer resistant.

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