



Andrena fulva © Frank Vassen/Flickr

# Business and nature working together: action by the horticulture sector to protect wild pollinators

## What about pollinators?

Pollinators – such as bees, hoverflies, moths, butterflies and beetles – are declining dramatically around the world, and Europe is no exception. With pollinator populations being essential in underpinning the stability of pollinator services over time, this decline of pollinators puts managed and natural ecosystems functioning at risk.

## Why should your business care?

The loss of pollinators would decrease crop production by more than 90% in 12% of the leading global crops. With horticultural businesses facing possible shortages of plant or seed material, reduced production and a decline in crop quality, it's no overstatement that pollinator decline calls for urgent conservation action.

However, the horticulture sector can turn this problem into an opportunity. Restoring pollinator populations to healthy levels will help prevent economic losses, provide other environmental and social benefits and assist the company in building/maintaining a good rapport with the public.



Figure 1. A snapshot of the diversity of wild pollinators



## What can your business do?

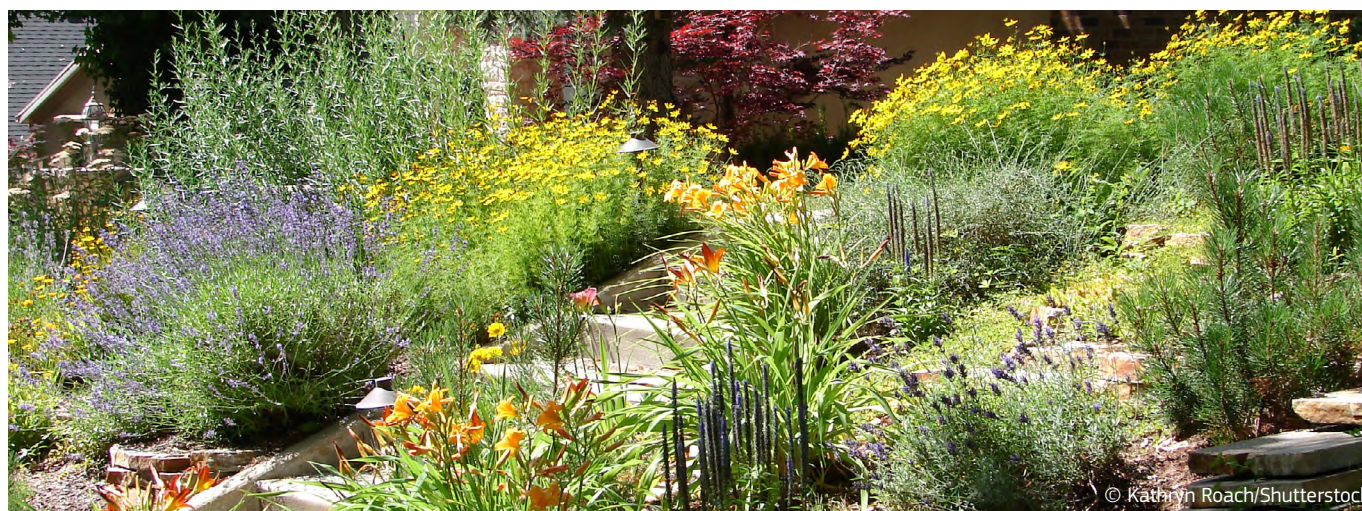
The horticulture sector is well placed to contribute towards stopping the decline of wild pollinators. The sector can lead by example showing how horticultural plants are produced and which producing practices should be rewarded.

It is recommended for the sector to take action to protect wild pollinators. These actions include:

- ▶ make a well-considered choice of plant species, considering the importance of the plant species for pollinators, and avoiding invasive alien species;
- ▶ (convince its suppliers to) take measures directly on the fields, for example by creating multifunctional field margins, installing patches of flower rich habitat and thereby diversifying their production landscapes and increasing habitat heterogeneity;
- ▶ avoid the usage of pesticides, by adopting integrated pest management (IPM) practices;
- ▶ promote actions to ensure healthy pollinator populations within the value chain;
- ▶ encourage its suppliers to take action by offering long-term contracts tied to commitments to deliver richer biodiversity on their land and greater diversity of habitats for pollinators;
- ▶ raise awareness of the role of pollinators to its stakeholders and encourage them to partake in actions that promote pollinator conservation;
- ▶ direct its customers into buying native, pollinator-friendly plants and provide them with advice on how to apply sustainable management practices that ensure varied and rich flowering from early spring to late autumn to benefit bees, butterflies and other insects;
- ▶ monitor and evaluate the impacts of its actions on wild pollinators;
- ▶ partner up with NGOs, local nature authorities and/or academics when drafting, implementing and evaluating actions for pollinators, whether they focus on company's site or the supply chain.



© Miriam Doerr Martin Frommholz/Shutterstock



© Kathrin Roach/Shutterstock

Small steps —> tangible results —> real change

More detailed guidance is provided in “Business and nature working together: action by the horticulture sector to protect wild pollinators” and on the [EU Pollinator Information Hive](#)