



# Nectar and Pollen Plants of North America

A Project to Further Research on Honey Bee Nutrition

In Conjunction with Oregon State University and Washington State University

2026



## How can I ensure I provide season-long sustenance to my honey bees?

- Do the plants my bees forage on provide GREAT, marginal or no nutrition to honey bees?
  - Attraction  $\neq$  great nutrition. Like ice cream is to people, not every flowering plant provides great nutrition for honey bees.
- What should I plant in my bee yard to provide great nutrition over the entire season?



# There are lots of pollinator plant lists. Why is this project needed?

- The Problem:
  - Very few lists are specific to honey bees vs. pollinators generally.
  - There is VERY LIMITED data on the nutritional value of specific plants.
  - Analysis of pollen protein content and nectar sugar content is not free. It requires both people and equipment.
- The Value of this Project:
  - This project builds a “short list” of plants that specifically attract honey bees. OSU and WSU can then analyze pollen and nectar, starting with the most attractive plants and work down the list.
  - Beekeepers will be better able to provide GREAT nutrition for our bees over the entire season.



# How do you participate? There's an app for that!

This project uses the iNaturalist app for iOS and Android.

- The app integrates with your phone's camera and captures the location data for the observation. Submitting observations is seriously easy!
- You can also submit observations via your computer at the [www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org) website.



Is this take a big time commitment? **NO!!!!**

- Record as often as you like, but no more than once per day per flower species per location.
- The process is simple: photograph the plant and answer three quick questions:
  - Many, some or only a few honey bees were visiting the plant,
  - Were any bees collecting pollen, and
  - What color was that pollen?



## How do I Volunteer? Easy!!!

- Download the iNaturalist app to your phone or go to [www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org).
- Create your (free) account.
- Join the project.
  - In the app, from the Menu, select “Projects,” search for and select “Nectar and Pollen Plants of North America,” select “Join”.
  - On your computer, at the top, select “Community” and then “Projects,” search for “Nectar and Pollen Plants of North America” and in the top right, select “Join this Project.”
- You are now ready to submit observations!



# Start Making Observations!

- Submit a photograph(s) of the flower. (*This is necessary*).
  - Take the photo using the iNaturalist app and the app will capture both the photo and the location data.
  - On your computer: Upload the photo and add the address. iNaturalist will determine geo coordinates based upon that address.
- Select the level of honey bee activity on the plant (from a list).
- Check the box if any bee is collecting pollen or has pollen in its pollen baskets.
- Select the pollen color from the list.
- Submit!



## Tell me about the picture you want.

- If you are able to get only one picture, photograph the flower. But to help our experts confirm the plant identity, try to include four pictures:
  - **The Flower:** A clear close-up of the whole flower.
  - **The Foliage:** A close-up of a leaf.
  - **The Profile:** A shot from the side or bottom of the flower (helpful for ID for some plants).
  - **The Whole Plant:** A wide shot showing its overall growth habit.



# Multiple Cultivars, Multiple Locations, Different Days

- If you have multiple plants of the same species in one spot, one record per day is the maximum. However, if you have two different cultivars (like two different types of apples), please record both.
- You might record the same plant species in different bee yards or even the same plant over several days to see if its attractiveness to bees changes. The more data we have from different areas, the stronger this database becomes.



# What if I'm not sure of the plant name?

- **Let the App Help:** When you start typing a name, iNaturalist will provide an **autofill list** of recognized botanical species.
- **Focus on Species:** While you might know your tree is a "Honeycrisp Apple," the system focuses on the core species level, like "Apple" or *Malus domestica*.
- **Cultivars in the Notes:** If you know the specific variety or cultivar, please choose the broader species name from the autofill list and then type the specific name (like "Honeycrisp") into the **Notes** section.
- **Don't be over confident:** If you are not really sure what plant it is, but only know it is some kind of flowering plant (Angiospermae), then select that level.
- **Community Review:** Don't worry if you aren't sure of the exact name; other users in the community will review your photo and help refine the identification to the correct botanical category.



# Thanks, Progress and Questions

Thanks for your time and thanks to COBKA for allowing me to present this.

If you have questions about volunteering or about how to submit an observation, contact me at:

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