



For additional information on specific species of plants mentioned in the document links, please see the [USDA PLANTS database](#). Technical information and guidance on the use of conservation plants for pollinator habitat can be found on the [Plant Materials Program website](#) by searching for “pollinator” in [technical documents](#) or [contact the nearest Plant Materials Center or plant materials specialist](#).

AskUSDA

One central entry point for you to access information and help from USDA 

 Ask.USDA.gov

 1-833-ONE-USDA

 askusda@usda.gov

 Feedback



Incorporating grasses into pollinator-friendly initiatives and habitat restoration efforts can have a positive impact on the abundance and diversity of pollinators in our ecosystems. NRCS partners and cooperators have [resources available](#) to get started on your own pollinator initiatives!

Larval Host Plants: Certain warm-season grasses serve as larval host plants for specific pollinator species. Butterflies lay their eggs on the grass, and the emerging caterpillars feed on the leaves. For example, [little bluestem](#) (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) is the larval host plant for several skipper species and [big bluestem](#) (*Andropogon gerardii*) and [switchgrass](#) (*Panicum virgatum*) are the caterpillar host plants for banded skippers and satyrs. By incorporating these grasses into landscapes, we provide crucial resources for the complete life cycles of these pollinators.

Connectivity and Corridors: Warm-season grasses can create pollinator corridors and add connectivity between habitats.

These [grasses are often planted](#) in large swaths or prairie restorations, forming a network of suitable foraging areas for pollinators. This interconnectedness helps pollinators find suitable resources, enhancing their foraging efficiency and genetic exchange.

[National Pollinator week](#) is June 17-23 and while blooming plants are important to pollinators like bees, bats, butterflies, beetles, hummingbirds, and more, grasses play a foundational role in the pollinator lifecycle and in [USDA-NRCS conservation practices](#). Grasses provide soil stability, protect waterways, create shelter and food for wildlife, and are an indicator of ecosystem health. Specific ways in which grasses help pollinators include:

Habitat and Shelter: Grasses provide essential [habitat and shelter](#) for pollinators. Their dense foliage and upright growth form create microhabitats where insects are protected from adverse weather conditions, predators, or disturbances. The clumps or bunches of grasses also offer nesting sites for ground-nesting bees and other insects.

Grasses provide soil stability, protect waterways, create shelter and food for wildlife, and are an indicator of ecosystem health. For all their benefits, the role grasses play in the pollinator life cycle is often overlooked.





nrcs.usda.gov



An official website of the United States government



Natural Resources
Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

MENU

NEWS

Pollinators Need Native Grasses Too!

TOPICS: [PLANT MATERIALS](#)

PUBLISH DATE: June 18, 2024

