

**Syringa** spp & hybrids Lilacs. Spring NP  
Wide range of medium & large shrubs, mostly  
spring flowering, all strongly scented.

**Tamarix** spp May-late summer NP  
Feathery foliage, profuse masses of  
tiny, pink flowers. Varying flowering times  
from May to late summer.

**Ulex europaeus, U. minor** Gorse. N? P  
Long flowering periods.

**Viburnum** spp Wide range of evergreen & deciduous  
shrubs. Good species include:  
**V. bodnatense, V. fragrans** Winter NP  
Deciduous, winter flowering, scented.  
**V. burkwoodii** Evergreen, scented. Apr NP  
**V. carlesii** Scented. Apr NP  
**V. juddii** Scented. Apr-May NP  
**V. opulus** Guelder rose. Jun-Jul NP  
**V. tinus, V. laurustinus** Evergreen. Oct-Mar P

**Weigela florida** & hybrids May-Jun NP?  
Pink, red or white flowers.

**Wisteria** spp Climbers.  
**W. floribunda & W. sinensis** Apr-May (N)P

To find out more about specific plants and their cultural requirements most garden centres and libraries have a reference section with encyclopaedias of garden plants.

## Bush Fruits

Most bush fruits are valuable bee plants, some producing copious nectar (marked §). Flowering time varies with the variety.

§Bilberry Whortle berry Black, red & white currants

§Blackberries Wild & cultivated



Blueberries



Gooseberries

Hybrid berries: Boysenberry, Worcester berry, Jostaberry

§Raspberry & Loganberry

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## Shrubs useful to Bees

This leaflet lists a number of shrubs (defined as a perennial plant not growing normally on an single trunk) useful for providing pollen and/or nectar for bees and other pollinating insects.

The list includes a wide range of plants suitable for a range of habitats, including small and large gardens and some may also be found in the wild. Brief details are given of the less common species.

All will normally flower in the UK, although some will need a good summer to flower well. In most cases pollen production is relatively reliable, but nectar production is not, being more affected by the soil and weather. There is an increasing number of species now being grown in the UK which originate from hotter countries and these may be especially variable in flowering and nectar production. Many of these are not reliably hardy in colder parts of the country but with warmer summers and milder winters some of these plants can be grown far more widely, and may produce more nectar in good weather.

**Key to list:**

\*\* tender. \* not reliably hardy. Spp = species.  
(N) = nectar produced when weather good enough.  
N = nectar collected. P = pollen collected.

**\*\*Abutilon vitifolium** May–Jul NP  
Soft grey/green vine shaped downy leaves,  
large saucer-shaped flowers, various colours.



**Berberis** spp Apr–Jul NP  
Wide range of species, all attractive to bees.

**Buddleia alternifolia** Long lilac spikes. Jun NP  
**B. globosa** Globular orange flowers. May NP  
**B. x weyeriana** Orange panicles. Jun–Oct NP

**\*Ceanothus** spp NP  
Wide range of species, all attractive to bees.  
Range from spring to late summer flowering.

**Chaenomeles** spp Ornamental quinces. Feb–Apr NP

**Cistus** spp Rock roses. May–Jul NP  
Evergreen. Range of colours.

**\*Choisya ternata** 'Mexican Orange Blossom' Apr–Jun P  
Evergreen.

**Clematis** spp  
Climbers. Most large flowered hybrids only  
produce pollen.

**C. armandii** Evergreen, strongly scented. Apr–May (N)P  
**C. cirrhosa** Evergreen, small bell-like flowers. Dec–Feb (N)P  
**C. montana** Apr–May NP  
**C. vitalba** Traveller's Joy, wild clematis. Jun–Jul NP

**Clethra alnifolia** Acid soils. Aug–Oct P

**Cotoneaster** spp Jun NP  
Wide range of good garden plants.

**Cytisus** spp Brooms. NP  
Wide range of species & hybrids, mostly  
early flowering.

**Deutzia** spp Summer P  
Very pretty free flowering shrubs.

**\*Escallonia** spp & hybrids NP  
Wide range of good garden plants. Evergreen.

**Eschscholtzia** spp Late summer–autumn N  
Unusual lovely shrubs, mint-scented leaves,  
flowers various colours. Good nectar producer.

**\*Fuchsia magellanica** Late summer N  
Naturalised in S & W. Free-flowering.

**Genista** spp Gorses. Early NP  
Wide range of garden varieties.

**\*Hebe** spp NP  
Wide range of sizes from dwarf to large, evergreen,  
flowering periods vary from early summer to late.  
Some very tender species.

**Helianthemum** spp & hybrids Sun roses. P  
Evergreen dwarf shrubs, many colours.

**Hydrangea**  
Only those varieties with fertile florets are used  
by bees, not the showy sterile ones (Hortensia).  
**H. petiolaris** Climber. Jun NP  
**H. paniculata** and **H. villosa** Late summer NP



**Hedera helix** Ivy. NP  
Climber, evergreen. Good source of late nectar.

**Kalmia** spp Calico Bush Jun NP  
Evergreen, acid soils.  
**K. angustifolia**, **K. latifolia**

**Kolkwitzia amabilis** May–Jun NP  
Uncommon shrub, easy to grow, beautiful drooping  
bell-shaped flowers.

**Lonicera** spp Honeysuckles. NP  
Shrubby honeysuckles have smaller more open  
flowers, with more available nectar than the  
climbing varieties. Some flower late winter.  
**L. angustifolia**, **L. standishii**, **L. purpusii**

**Mahonia** spp Winter/spring P  
Evergreen shrubs with yellow flowers.  
Valuable pollen source early in the year.  
**M. aquifolium**, **M. bealei**, **M. japonica**, **\*M. lomariifolia**

**\*Myrtus communis** Late summer (N)P  
Evergreen, fragrant flowers.

**Olearia** spp Daisy bushes.  
**O. haastii** White flowers. Jul–Aug NP  
**O. macrodonta** Jun NP

**Parthenocissus quinquefolia** Virginia creeper. Aug NP

**Perovskia atriplicifolia** Aug–Sep NP  
Aromatic grey foliage & purple/blue  
flowers. Excellent bee plant.

**Philadelphus** spp Mock Orange. Jun–Jul NP  
Large number of species and varieties, most  
strongly scented.

**Potentilla fruticosa** NP  
Many varieties & hybrids. Small shrubs, white  
or yellow flowers. Long flowering period.

**Prunus laurocerasus** Cherry laurel. Apr NP  
Evergreen. Also has extrafloral nectaries,  
very attractive to bees in summer.

**Prunus lusitanica** Portugal laurel. Jun NP  
Evergreen.

**Pyracantha** Firethorn. May–Jun NP  
**P. angustifolia**, **P. coccinea**

**Rhododendron** spp NP  
Small varieties of rhododendron & azaleas  
can be worked by honey bees.  
**R. ponticum** can produce poisonous honey occasionally.

**Ribes** spp  
**R. sanguineum** Flowering Currant. Apr NP  
Pink, red or white flowers.  
**R. odoratum** Buffalo Currant, yellow flowers. Apr NP  
**R. speciosum** Red flowers. Apr–May NP

**Rosa** spp N? P  
Only single flowered types.  
Wild roses & **R. rugosa**.

**Rosmarinus officinalis** Rosemary. Apr–May NP  
Evergreen, aromatic.

**Salix** spp Willows. Early spring NP  
Numerous small shrubby willows. Good  
species include:  
**S. apoda**, **S. boydii**, **S. hastata**, **S. lanata**,  
**S. melanostachys**, **S. uva-ursi**

**Symphoricarpos** spp Snowberries. Jun–Aug NP  
Most produce copious amounts of nectar.  
**S. alba**, **S. occidentalis**, **S. orbiculatus**, **S. rivularis**