Growing Lord Brahma's Garden Together: Hindu Care for Bees, Butterflies, and Pollinators

Did you know...?

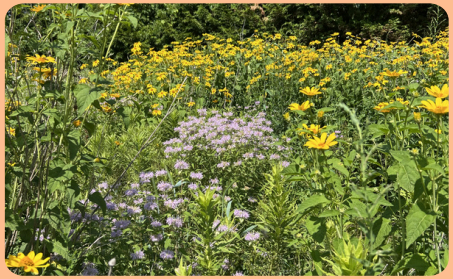
"The sun over there is honey to the gods. Heaven is the crossbeam, the mid-region is the beehive, and the rays are the eggs."
(Chandogya Upanishad 3.1.1)

Did you know that Canada is home to 800 species of native bees - none of which produce honey - and about 300 species native butterflies. These creatures are essential for the pollination of our fruits, vegetables, and flowers, bringing us an abundance of food and bounty of beauty.

This incredible diversity, shared by humans and other creatures, is an essential part of God's great plan for this planet.

POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP CANADA

BEES FOR PEACE



Hinduism teaches that all living beings are connected through the divine and that humans should live in harmony with nature. The Vedas and the Bhagavad Gita teach that all life is connected through the divine. In the *Bhagavad Gita* (3:14), Krishna explains that all living beings depend on nature and that humans have a responsibility to care for creation. Many Hindus view plants and animals as sacred manifestations of the divine and believe that respecting nature is a spiritual duty.

Caring for our planetary home is our primordial occupation.

What can you do today to fulfill your divine commission?

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Imagine a garden alive with bees, butterflies, birds, and blossoms.

Pollinators make it possible for flowers to bloom, fruits to ripen, and seeds to grow. Yet many are in decline because their homes are disappearing and they face increasing pressures from disease, pesticides, and climate change. A garden can be a sanctuary, offering safe harbour to these indispensable creatures.

Ideas for Our Mandir

Discover scripture's ecological wisdom.
"May the winds blow sweetly, may the rivers pour sweetness, may the herbs be sweet to us."
(The Rig Veda Mantra 1.90.6)

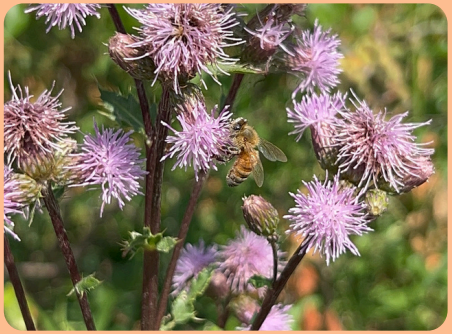
Center a puja around the rich connections between Hindu deities and bees.
"A worship of Lord Madhava, the divine bee, seeking to extract the spiritual nectar of devotion from the lotus of our hearts."

Guided meditations.
Integrate pollinator awareness into traditional meditation styles.

Have a celebration.
Break ground on your garden. Talk about healthy gardening practices and the benefits of locally produced foods.

Start a Pollinator Team.
Help cultivate your garden and educate your congregation.

Host a Bees For Peace summer camp.
https://www.beesforpeace.org/summer-camps.html



Nine Steps to Creating Your Own Devotion Garden!

- Choose a sunny location.
- Determine whether soil is clay, sandy or loamy.
- Follow the 3 × 3 × 3 Rule: 3 species × 3 plants × blooms across 3 seasons.
- Plant native flowers.
- Add water and nesting places.
- Avoid pesticides.
- Share seeds during the Season of Creation.
- Leave stems and leaves for wildlife through winter.
- Determine who will care for the garden over time.

To find what plants are native to your area, scan the QR code and see our Native Devotion Garden Template on the next page!

Native Plant Devotion Garden Template

Canadian Template

Here, we present a selection of flowering plants native to Canada, along with their ecological relationships with pollinators. They invite us to reflect on how each plant might harmonize with—and symbolize—our deeply rooted spiritual values. May these ideas encourage you and your community to contemplate together the relationship between your traditions and the ecological space we inhabit today—alongside other people, plants, and animals.:

Canada goldenrod

Reconciliation

Its abundant late-season blooms bring together pollinators at a time when other flowers are fading, symbolizing the healing of what has been divided.

Blue-eyed grass

Joy

Its vivid flowers bring a moment of brightness to meadows and open spaces while welcoming small pollinators, reminding us to notice and share in the simple joys of being alive.

Fireweed

Hope

A lifeline for pollinators as it pops up abundantly after wildfires, offering a massive, reliable wave of nectar when other food sources are gone. Its long-lasting blooms remind us to be hopeful during hardship.

Pearly Everlasting

Gratitude

It functions as an essential larval host plant for butterflies and provides a reliable, long-lasting source of late-summer nectar and pollen for bees.

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