

How Irrigation Helps Pollinators

PLANNING FOR WATER SOURCES TO INCREASE POLLINATORS: PART 2 OF 2





Pond Water For Pollinators



- Creating a pond is one of the best things you can do for wildlife – they provide habitats, breeding grounds, food, water and shelter for a wide variety of wildlife, from invertebrates and amphibians to birds. Many pond plants attract pollinators when in flower, including bees, hoverflies, wasps, moths and butterflies.

- <https://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/pollinator-pond-plants/>





On the Edge of Water



- Marginal lands such as field edges, hedgerows, roadsides, sub-irrigated areas, and drainage ditches offer both nesting and foraging sites. Plan native plants where left-over water may already be present. Be aware of potential insecticide overspray or drainage that may kill pollinators.



- [https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/MI/Biol TN 20 Pollinator-Biology-and-Habitat v1-1_honey_bee_preferences.pdf](https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/MI/Biol%20Pollinator-Biology-and-Habitat%20v1-1_honey_bee_preferences.pdf)





Bees Use Water

- Many insects can obtain the water they need from their food. Bees, however, need to drink water.

<https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=13715>





Water That Attracts Bees



- Bees pick the most fragrant, nutrient-rich water they can find. Puddles, ponds, brooks, irrigation systems, bird baths, hose bibs, and pet dishes all attract bees—so do saltwater pools and even pools with chlorine.

- <https://honeybeesuite.com/water-sources-for-bees/>





Some Bees Need Mud



- Mason bees are named after masonry for a reason since female mason bees protect each nesting chamber with a wall of clayey mud.

- <https://crownbees.com/blog/makingmud/>





Keep A Moist Mud Source



- To build a mason bee mud source, dig a hole in the ground and line it with waterproof material such as polythene paper. After lining the hole, return the soil you dug up back into the hole and add water. A drip irrigation system can easily be adapted for this purpose. Simply allow the hole to capture the water from the drip irrigation sprinkler or emitter.

- <https://beekeepclub.com/the-beginners-guide-on-how-to-attract-mason-bees/>





Bees Like Safe Water Edges



- Bees prefer water with edges—water with safe places to stand where they won't drown or get swept away.
- <https://honeybeesuite.com/water-sources-for-bees/>





Bees Get Chilled

- On cool days in the spring and fall, warm water has an advantage over cold water since a bee can quickly become chilled from a small drink. If you want to provide a water source for your bees, keep it shallow, provide stepping stones or rafts, and wait for the slime to appear. Drip irrigation emitters can be adapted for this purpose, with a small collection receptacle to retain a portion of the release.

- <https://honeybeesuite.com/water-sources-for-bees/>





Butterflies In Your Garden

- Brightly colored butterflies can be a welcome addition to your wildlife garden, not only because of their beauty, but also because of their usefulness in pollinating flowers.
- <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Wildlife/Attracting-Butterflies>





Butterflies Live On Liquid Diets

- Butterflies are picky about their diets and different types of butterflies have different preferences, but in general, they require a liquid or semi-liquid diet.

- <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/beneficial/butterfly-garden-feeding.htm>





Butterflies Don't Need To Drink Water



- Butterfly water feeders really aren't necessary to supply water and butterflies don't need bird baths or ponds because they get the liquid they need from nectar.

- <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/beneficial/butterfly-garden-feeding.htm>





Butterflies Need Water For Puddling

- Butterflies need muddy or moist places to “puddle,” as “puddling” provides the critical minerals that butterflies require.
- <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/beneficial/butterfly-garden-feeding.htm>





Butterflies Like Wet Sand Spots



- Butterflies often congregate on wet sand. Place coarse sand in a shallow pan and then insert the pan in the soil of your habitat. Make sure to keep the sand moist. A simple drip irrigation system can be designed or small adjustments to current irrigation systems can easily accommodate wet sand locations.

- <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Wildlife/Attracting-Butterflies>





Drip Irrigation for Butterflies



- Create a damp salt lick for butterflies and bees. Use a dripping hose, drip irrigation line, or place your bird bath on bare soil to create a damp area. Mix a small bit of table salt (sea salt is better!) or wood ashes into the mud.



- https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/documents/simple_truthbrochure.pdf





Utilizing Water Features For Butterflies

- Butterflies like moving water. Bubbling fountains and waterfalls are good choices, as is a sprinkler. Installation of landscaped water features can be accomplished as part of an entire irrigation system or as independent units.

- <https://www.storey.com/article/water-for-butterflies/>



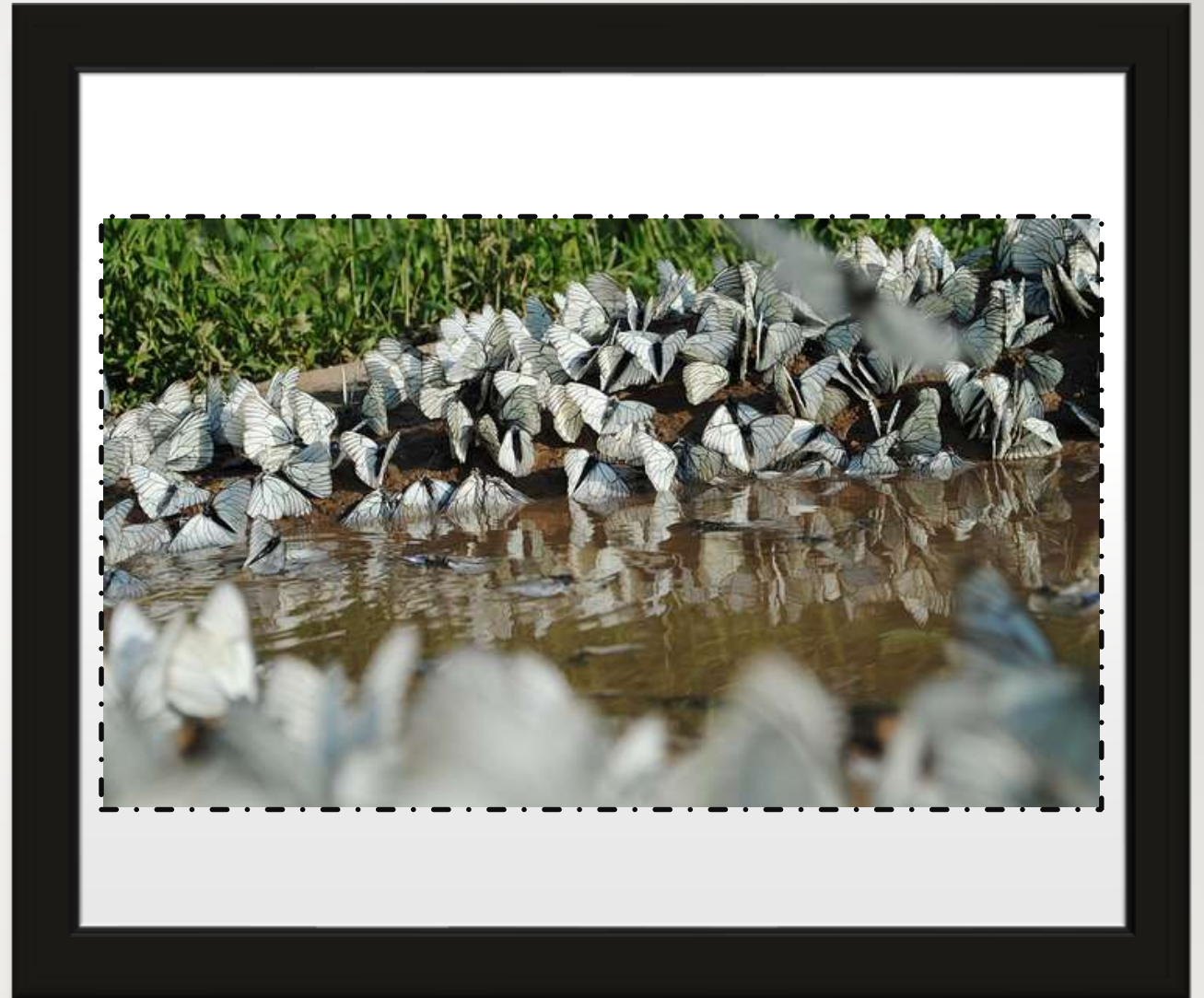


Butterflies Play In Sprinklers



- Butterflies sometimes float through the mist of a waterfall or garden sprinkler. They seem to enjoy taking showers and can be seen swaying through light summer rains. Attaching specific butterfly attracting drip irrigation sprinklers to existing irrigation systems is not difficult.

- <https://www.storey.com/article/water-for-butterflies/>





When Dew Is Sparse



- Shallow pools will attract pollinators, especially if you're in a dry climate or there hasn't been much morning dew.



Irrigation systems can have simple adjustments made to accommodate a small amount of pooling.

- <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/8-ways-attract-bees-and-butterflies>





Irrigate To Pollinate



- As vital as irrigation is to crop growth, providing sources of native vegetation for pollinators is becoming urgent. Water for native plants and pollinators must be planned. Pesticide free water sources and plants need to be established to keep a healthy pollinator population.

- <https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/BMPs/documents/PollinatorFriendlyBMPsFederalLands05152015.pdf>





Drip Irrigation Supplies and Parts

- Drip irrigation is a simple way to plan for providing a variety of water sources for pollinators and plants with different water requirements.
- <https://www.irrigationsupplyparts.com/product-category/drip-irrigation/sprinklers-drip-irrigation/>





Drip Irrigation Supplies and Parts

- IrrigationSupplyParts.com is a privately owned company based in Michigan. Our parent company is Triple K Irrigation, who has been serving the agricultural community for over thirty years.



End Of Part 2 of 2

