

Pollinators in the Ten Broeck Mansion Gardens



There's quite a buzz: in the air! This self-guided tour is all about pollinators.

What are pollinators? Pollinators are insects and animals (bees, birds, butterflies and bats!) who visit flowers to feed on nectar. As they move flower to flower to eat nectar, they carry pollen from plant to plant. The movement of pollen from a flower's stamen to its stigma — or that of the next flower — fertilizes plants and produces fruits and seeds. Without pollinators, we would miss out on many fruits, vegetables and nuts.

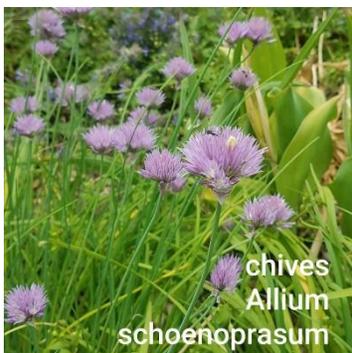
Stroll through our historic landscape and discover six early summer plants that attract pollinators, and notice how many pollinators you see on your walk.

For families:

- Family activity: find each of these flowers. Do you notice any visitors (bees, butterflies, other insects?) Count the number you see. Which had the most?
- Notice how the shape of a flower allows pollinators to visit. Some have nectar deep within a vase-like flower; others are wide open to allow many visitors!
- Did you see any other creatures? Squirrels, chipmunks, or groundhogs? Our garden is an ecosystem: each insect and animal has an important role to play.
- What's in a name? Did you know plants have a common name (in **bold**) and *scientific name* (in *italics*, written in Latin)? Common names vary from region to region, and often give a sense of local history. Scientific names help botanists keep the identities of plants clear.



- 1) **Meadow rue** (*Thalictrum*) the Ten Broeck Mansion gardens feature a native species, originating from the Adirondack Mountains, and was used by the Iroquois for medicinal use.



- 2) **Chives** (*Allium schoenoprasum*) are a magnet for pollinators. They are edible (including the blooms), vitamin rich, and are naturally deer resistant. A favorite 1800s recipe was making chive vinegar to flavor salads.



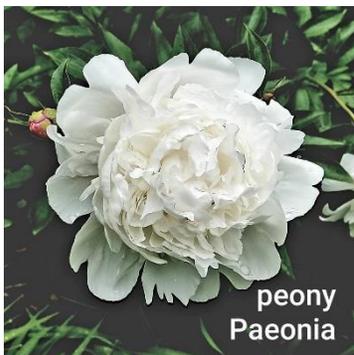
3) **False indigo** (*Baptisia*) is a North American native plant, and was used to make a blue dye by Native Americans and later settlers.



4) **Spiderwort** (*Tradescantia*) is another North American native species. It was given its current name to honor the English naturalists and explorers John Tradescant and his son, who introduced many North American plants to England. In Spanish, the flower is often referred to as “flor de Santa Lucia” referring to the plant’s medicinal use as eye drops (not recommended today!)



5) **Sage** (*Salvia officinalis*) is vitamin-rich, and used to season food (like Thanksgiving stuffing) and medicinal purposes dating back to ancient Greece. The name comes from the Latin word “to heal.”



6) **Peony** (*Paeonia*) are the official flower of China, where they originated from. Peonies were especially popular in American gardens during the 1800s and are in much Victorian artwork and poetry.



Ten Broeck Mansion volunteers help care for our gardens on Fridays and Saturdays throughout the season. Want to be involved?

Please contact us to learn more.

Albany County Historical Association



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Thank you for visiting our gardens today. Become involved: join as a member or volunteer.

The Albany County Historical Association is a 501c3 nonprofit educational museum.