



A [honey bee](#) collecting nectar from an [rosaceous flower](#).

The nectar resource in a given area depends on the kinds of flowering plants present and their blooming periods. Which kinds grow in an area depends on soil texture, soil pH, soil drainage, daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, extreme minimum winter temperature, and growing degree days. The plants listed below grow in [USDA Hardiness zone 5](#). A good predictor for when a plant will bloom and produce [nectar](#) is a calculation of the [growing degree days](#). [Hopkins' Bioclimatic Law](#) states that in North America east of the Rockies, a 130 m (400-foot) increase in elevation, a 4° change in [latitude](#) north (444.48 km), or a 10° change in [longitude](#) east (two thirds of a [time zone](#)) will cause a biological event to occur four days later in the spring or four days earlier in the fall. In [botany](#), the term [phenology](#) refers to the timing of flower emergence, sequence of bloom, fruiting, and leaf drop in autumn.

The classification in major or minor nectar source is very dependent on the agricultural use of the land. An agricultural crop such as canola or alfalfa may be a major or minor source depending on local plantings. Generally, the more diverse a forage area is, the better for a stationary apiary. Urban, suburban and areas not under cultivation provide more consistent warm-season nectar forage than areas that are heavily cultivated with only a few agricultural crops. The nectar sources from large cultivated fields of blooming apples, cherries, canola, melons, sunflowers, clover etc. benefit a bee keeper who is willing to travel with his hives throughout the season.

Honeydew sources are not included in this listing.

Trees and shrubs

Plant type	Nonscientific name	Scientific name	Begin Bloom Month	End Bloom Month	Monofloral honey	Availability	Source: honey bees / pounds honey per acre
T	Maple	<i>Acer</i>	2	4	no	feral	major but temperate usually to cold
T	Red Maple ^[1]	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	2	4	no	feral	major but temperate usually to cold for bees to fly
T	Ohio Buckeye ^[2]	<i>Aesculus glabra</i>	4	5	no	feral	minor
S	Shadbush	<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	4	5	no	feral	minor
S, T	Devils-walkingstick	<i>Aralia spinosa</i>	7	8	no	feral	minor
S	Red Chokeberry	<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i> , <i>Photinia pyrifolia</i>	5	6	no	feral	minor
S	Black	<i>Aronia</i>	5	6	no	feral	minor

	Chokeberry ^[3]	<i>melanocarpa</i>					
T	Catalpa, Indian Bean [2][3][4]	<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>	6	7	no	feral, ornamental	minor
S	Common Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	4	5	no	feral	minor
S	Buttonbush [2]	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	7	8	Honey is light in color and mild in flavor.	feral	
S	Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus</i>	4	5	no	feral	minor - 50 100 pounds/a
S	Honeysuckle [2]	<i>Diervilla Ionicera</i>	6	8			minor
T	Honey Locust	<i>Gleditsia triancanthos</i>	5	6	no	feral	minor
S	American Holly	<i>Ilex opaca</i>	4	6	no	feral	minor, important southeast US
T	Tulip-tree ^[5]	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	5	6	yes, see Monofloral honey	feral	major in southern Appalach and Piedmont
					No, the nectar is		

T	Apple ^[3]	<i>Malus domestica</i>	4	5	mostly used for spring brood raising and not stored for surplus. see Monofloral honey^[4]	cultivated	minor
T	Crab Apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i> ; <i>Malus coronaria</i> ^[2]	3	6	no	ornamental	minor
T	Cherry ^{[2][3]}	<i>Prunus cerasus</i>	4	5	no	feral, cultivated	minor
T	Pear	<i>Pyrus communis</i>	4	5	no	cultivated	minor
T	Black Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	4	5	no	feral, cultivated	minor
T	Plum	<i>Prunus</i>	4	5	no	feral, cultivated	minor
S	Common Buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	5	6	no	feral	minor
T	Sumac ^[2]	<i>Rhus glabra</i>	6	7	mixed with other honeys	feral	major
							major - 80 1200

T	Black locust ^{[3][4]}	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	5	6	yes, see Monofloral honey	feral	pounds/; short bloo period of about 10 days
S	Raspberry	<i>Rubus</i>	5	6	yes, see Monofloral honey	feral, cultivated	major in some are
S	Blackberry	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	5	6	yes, see Monofloral honey ^[2]	feral, cultivated	major in some are
T	Willow	<i>Salix</i>	2	4	no	feral, ornamental	major but outside temperatu are usuall too cold f bees to fly 100 - 150 pounds honey per acre; 1,500 pounds pollen
T	Pussy Willow	<i>Salix discolor</i>	3	4	no	feral, ornamental	major but temperatu usually to cold for b to fly
T	Bee bee tree	<i>Tetradium</i>	7	9		ornamental	major

T	Basswood ^{[3][4]}	<i>Tilia americana</i> , <i>Tilia cordata</i>	6	7	yes, short flow up to 14 days; Honey white; aromatic ^[2] see Monofloral honey	feral, ornamental Produces a high volume of honey on a cycle of every five to eight years, with lower volume of nectar other years.	major 800 1,100 pounds honey
T	American Elm	<i>Ulmus americana</i>	2	4	no	feral	minor
S	Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i> , <i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i> , <i>Vaccinium pennsylvanicum</i>	5	6	no. Honey amber and of good flavor.	cultivated	minor in most areas Strong colonies may store 50-90 pounds of surplus from it. ^[2]
S	Black haw ^[3]	<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	5	6			
T	Redbud		4	4	no	cultivated, ornamental	minor

Flowers, crops, herbs and grasses

Plant type	Common name	Latin name	Begin Bloom Month	End Bloom Month	Monofloral honey	Availability	Source
F	Anise hyssop ^[3]	<i>Agastache foeniculum</i>	7	10	no	feral	minor
F	Blue bugle, Bugleherb, Bugleweed, Carpetweed, Common bugle ^[3]	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	5	5			
F	Chives ^[3]	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	5	9	no	cultivated	minor
C, F	Garlic chives	<i>Allium tuberosa</i>	8	9	no	cultivated	minor
F	Leadwort	<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	6	7	no	feral	minor
F	Milkweed ^{[4][5]}	Asclepias spp. 55 species	7	8		feral All species are great for honeybees. Nectar is so abundant that it is possible to shake the blossom and actually see the nectar	major 250 p hone depe soil a good fertili. Ascle syriac the h

						fall.	hone
F	Butterfly Weed ^[3]	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	7	8	no	feral	mino
C	Asparagus	<i>Asparagus officinalis</i>	5	6	no	cultivated	mino
F	Milk Vetch	<i>Astragalus</i> spp.	5	6	no	feral	mino
F	Aster	<i>Aster</i> spp.	8	10	usually mixed with goldenrod ^[2]	feral, ornamental	majo
F	Borage ^[3]	<i>Borago officinalis</i>	6	10	no	feral, ornamental	mino can be on cu area poun hone acre; poun polle
C, F	Mustard ^[5]	<i>Brassica arvensis</i> (L.); <i>Brassica campestris</i>	4	5	no?	cultivated	mino
C	Oilseed Rape (Canola) ^[3]	<i>Brassica napus</i> L., <i>Brassica rapa</i>	5	6	yes, see Monofloral honey	cultivated	majo
F	Marigold	<i>Calendula officinalis</i>	6	9	no	ornamental	mino

F	Canada thistle	<i>Carduus arvensis</i>			light honey of good quality ^[2]		
F	Thistle	<i>Centaurea</i> spp.	7	9	no	feral	mino
F	Mountain Bluet	<i>Centaurea Montana</i> (Knapweed)	5	5	no??	feral	majo
F	Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	7	9		feral (invasive in North America)	
F	Sweet Autumn Clematis	<i>Clematis terniflora</i>	9	9		ornamental	mino
F	Clethra Summersweet ^[3]	<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	7	8	no	feral	mino
C, F	Cucumber		6	9	no; Honey is pale yellow or amber with strong flavor. ^[2]	cultivated	mino
C	Melon		6	10	no	cultivated	mino
C	Pumpkin	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	6	10	no	cultivated	mino
C, F	Wild Carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>	8	9	no	feral	mino
F	Leopardsbane	<i>Doronicum cordatum</i>	4	5	no	feral	mino

F	Candytuft ^[3]	<i>Iberis sempervirens</i>	5	5			
						<p>feral In California, spring blooming plant with repeat bloom. Fall bloom provides nectar for bees for overwintering. The most unusual feature of <i>Echium vulgare</i> is the protection of the nectar inside the flower from vaporization (when it's hot) or flushing away (when it rains). It is why almost for 2 months this plant is a</p>	

F	Viper's Bugloss, Blue thistle, Blue weed ^[3]	<p><i>Echium vulgare</i></p> <p><i>Echium vulgare</i> is most widely known, though there are about 60 additional species.</p>	6	8	no	<p>stable source of nectar for bees. Additionally this plant produces nectar throughout the day unlike most plants which produce nectar for a short period of time. If the bees have a good access to <i>Echium</i> they can collect between 12-20 lbs of nectar a day. The concentration of sugars in the nectar vary 22.6-48.3% depending on the quality of</p>	<p>major source of nectar for honey bees depends on soil. In 2000 dark pollen</p>
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						the soil, and not on the amount of rain. The honey is light amber in color and very fragrant with a pleasant taste, and does not crystallize for 9–15 months. ^[6]	
F	Globe Thistle	<i>Echinops ritro</i>	8	8		feral	majo
F	Fireweed	<i>Epilobium angustifolium</i>	6	9	yes	feral	majo
F	Heather	<i>Erica vulgaris</i> , though many varieties			see Monofloral honey		100 - pound hone
F	Joe-Pye weed, Boneset, White Snakeroot ^[3]	<i>Eutrochium</i> spp. "Eupatorium" spp. <i>Eupatorium purpureum</i> ; <i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i> ; <i>Eupatorium</i>	8	9	no	feral	mino

		ageratoides					
C, F	Buckwheat ^[3]	<i>Fagopyrum esculentum</i>	7	8	can be; dark honey with distinct flavor; granulates quickly ^[5]	rarely cultivated now	mino
F	Blue vine	<i>Gonolobus laevis</i>			no. Honey is clear, heavy bodied of excellent flavor. ^[2]	feral	mino hives colle 100 poun
C, F	Soybean	<i>Glycine soja</i>	7	10		cultivated	majo
C, F	Sunflower	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	6	9	can be	feral, cultivated	mino 100 poun
C, F	Basil	<i>Koellia</i>			no	cultivated	mino
F	Henbit Deadnettle	<i>Lamium sp</i>	3	5	no	feral	mino valua to earlir hardi
C, F	Lavender	<i>Lavandula angustifolia</i>	6	9	can be, see Monofloral honey	cultivated	mino
F	Birdsfoot trefoil ^[3]	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	6	8	no	feral	mino

C, F	White Sweet Clover ^{[2][4]}	<i>Melilotus alba</i>	5	8	yes	feral, cultivated	majo 200 p per h
C, F	Yellow Sweet Clover ^{[2][4]}	<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	5	8	yes	feral, cultivated	majo 200 p per h
C, F	Alfalfa ^{[2][3]}	<i>Medicago sativa</i>	7	8	as clover honey. Alfalfa honey granulates readily. ^[2]	feral, cultivated	majo
C, F	Clover ^[3]	<i>Melilotus</i> spp. and <i>Trifolium</i> spp.	5	8	as clover honey	feral, cultivated	majo 500 p per a good
F	Melissa, Lemon Balm ^[2]	<i>Melissa officinalis</i>				Western USA - Prolonged bloom of 45 – 50 days generally in summer, but with repeat blooming in California. Delicate honey with very light, pinkish color.	150 - poun hone acre; poun polle

C, F	Peppermint ^[4]	<i>Mentha piperita</i>			no	feral	
F	Catnip, Cat mint ^{[2][3]}	<i>Nepeta mussinii</i> ; <i>Nepeta grandiflora</i> ; <i>Nepeta cataria</i>	6	9	no	feral, ornamental	mino
F	Oregano	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	6	9	no	cultivated?	mino
C, F	Poppy	<i>Papaver somniferum</i>					mino 30 p /acre
F	Russian Sage	<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	7	9	can be	ornamental	mino
C, F	Phacelia, Tansy	<i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>				Western US - One of the best spring forage sources for honeybees. Blooms 45–60 days and continuously produces nectar throughout the day. Can be seeded several times per year. Prefers three	180 - poun hone acre, depe soil c and c 300- poun polle

						feet of topsoil.	
G,H	Plantain	<i>Plantago Major</i>	7				[7]
F	Smartweed	<i>Polygonum</i> spp.	8	9		feral	majo
F	Selfheal	<i>Prunella</i> <i>vulgaris</i>	7	8	no	feral	mino
F	Lungwort	<i>Pulmonaria</i> spp.	5	5	no	feral	mino
F	Appalachian Mountain Mint	<i>Pycnanthemum</i> <i>flexuosum</i>	8	10			mino
F	Azalea	<i>Rhododendron</i> spp.	6	8	no	ornamental	mino
F	Scrophularia	<i>Scrophularia</i> spp.	7	7	no	feral	mino
F	Sedum, Autumn Joy [3]	<i>Sedum</i> <i>spectabile</i>					
F	Goldenrod [2]	<i>Solidago</i> spp.	9	10	can be; Honey golden color of deep amber; marked flavor; granulates quickly	feral	majo
F	Woundwort	<i>Stachys</i>	5	5	no	feral	mino

		<i>byzantina</i>					
F	Chickweed ^[3]	<i>Stellaria Media</i>	4	7	no	feral	mino
F	Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	4	5	no Honey deep yellow will granulate quickly; mostly consumed by bees during brood rearing ^[4]	feral	majo
F	Germander, Thyme	<i>Teucrium canadense</i>	7	8	no	feral	mino
F	Thyme	<i>Thymus pulegioides;</i> <i>Thymus serpyllum</i>	6	7	no	feral, cultivated	mino 150 p hone
F	Red-Flowering Thyme	<i>Thymus praecox</i>	6	7		feral?	majo
C, F	Alsike Clover ^[2]	<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>			as clover honey. Alsike clover honey is one of the very best honey	feral, cultivated	majo 500 poun ^[3]

					plants in America. ^[2]		
C, F	Crimson clover	<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>			as clover honey	feral, cultivated	majo
C, F	Red Clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	6	7	as clover honey	feral, cultivated	majo
C, F	White Clover ^{[4][5]}	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	6	7	as clover honey; The honey is white or nearly white; very mild flavored and does not granulate readily. see Monofloral honey	feral, cultivated	majo
F	Blue Vervain	<i>Verbena hastata</i> L.	7	8	no	ornamental?	mino
F	Tall Ironweed	<i>Vernonia altissima</i>	8	9	no	feral	mino
F	Speedwell	<i>Veronica spicata</i>	6	6	no	feral	mino
F	Tufted Vetch, Common Vetch ^[3]	<i>Vicia cracca</i>	7	8	no	feral	mino

F	Common Vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	7	8	no	feral	mino
F	Blackhaw	<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	5	6	no	feral	mino

Gallery



A honey bee on Sweet autumn clematis in September.



Honey bee on Sedum 'Autumn Joy' ([Hylotelephium telephium](#)).



Two [Bees](#) on a Creeping Thistle [Cirsium arvense](#).

See also

- [Forage \(honeybee\)](#)
- [List of honey plants](#)
- [Honeydew source](#)
- [Nectar source](#)
- [Pollen source](#)
- [Melliferous flower](#)
- [Regional honeys](#)

References

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3. [^] [a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z a a a b](#) [Tew, James](#) [Some Ohio Nectar and Pollen Producing Plants](#) [Ohio State University](#) Extension Fact Sheet, 2000
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6. [^] [a b](#) ["Top Five" Plants for Honeybees](#) (accessed Sep 2009)
7. [^] ["A Selection of Bee Forage Plants"](#) (PDF). *Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary*.