



Planting for Pollinators in Barnsley: A Beekeeper’s Guide to a Buzzing Garden

Top Plants for Honey Bees (from <https://www.rosybee.com/research-study>):

The scores are average pollinators per square meter x weeks of flower

1. Calamintha nepeta — 50.9
2. Origanum onites — 46
3. Borage (SG) — 44
4. Origanum vulgare subsp. Hirtum — 41
5. Origanum vulgare — 37.3
6. Helenium 'Sahin's Early Flowerer' — 35.2
7. Helenium autumnale — 34.9
8. Teucrium hircanicum — 33.2
9. Geranium rozanne — 22.5 (although lower than others, not bad!)
10. Lavandula angustifolia 'Eidelweiss White' — 25.2

Top 10 overall plants for pollinator generally (because any smart beekeeper and pollinator-friendly gardener should think about all pollenators:

Rank	Plant Name	Total Score	Honey Bee Score	Notes
1	Calamintha nepeta	113.2	50.9	🐝 Huge all-rounder, and <i>excellent</i> for honey bees. Win-win.
2	Origanum vulgare subsp. Hirtum	103.1	41	🐝 Another powerhouse, great for bees and others.
3	Geranium rozanne	87.1	22.5	✅ Amazing for solitary bees, some honey bee appeal too.
4	Lavandula angustifolia 'Eidelweiss White'	73.9	25.2	✅ Strong bumble bee attraction, some honey bees too.
5	Origanum onites	69.9	46	🐝 Superb for honey bees, decent overall.
6	Echium vulgare	57.2	13.7	✅ Brilliant for bumble bees.
7	Borage (SG)	57	44	🐝 Excellent honey bee score! Reliable favourite.
8	Rudbeckia fulgida	56.2	6.7	✅ Not much for honey bees, but fantastic for solitary bees and hoverflies.
9	Origanum vulgare	55.3	37.3	🐝 Another good oregano! Very bee-friendly.
10	Helenium autumnale	55.1	34.9	✅ Nice generalist, good honey bee score too.

Summary:

- **Calamintha nepeta** and **Origanum vulgare subsp. Hirtum** are your absolute stars — brilliant for everything, bees included.
- **Geranium rozanne** and **Lavandula 'Eidelweiss'** are solid for diversity.
- **Origanum onites** and **Borage (SG)** are honey bee favourites and still respectable all-rounders.
- **Rudbeckia fulgida** is brilliant for variety (hoverflies + solitary bees).

Seasonal Spread Planting Plan

Based on the top pollinator plants, with extras for flow

Early Season (March–May)

You want to wake up those early honey bees and queen bumbles!

- **Borage (SG)** — early flowering, self-seeds like mad, excellent for honey bees ■ (blue star flowers, medium height)
- **Calamintha nepeta** — early-mid, cloud of tiny flowers, silvery green foliage ♡ (soft white/pale lilac, low-medium height)
- **Lavandula angustifolia 'Eidelweiss White'** — May, fragrant and elegant ♡ (compact-medium, white)

Bonus: Add a few early bulbs like *Crocus* and *Allium* for nectar boosts.

Mid-Season (June–July)

Peak time for all pollinators!

- **Origanum vulgare subsp. Hirtum** — fantastic midsummer performer, aromatic, great bee plant ● (pink-mauve, low-medium)
- **Geranium rozanne** — long flowering from early summer to autumn ♡ (trailing, violet-blue flowers, ground cover)
- **Echium vulgare** — tall, architectural, bees adore it ♡ (bold blue, tall spikes)

Bonus: Add *Nepeta 'Walker's Low'* (catmint) for a soft haze and lots of bees.

Late Season (August–October)

Keep food going into autumn when stores matter!

- **Origanum vulgare** — keeps going late, aromatic ● (mauve-pink, low-medium)
- **Rudbeckia fulgida** — sunny golden daisies, loved by hoverflies ● (medium-tall)
- **Helenium autumnale** — bright and late flowering ♡ (orange-gold, medium-tall)

Bonus: Add *Sedum spectabile* (Ice Plant) for late nectar and structure.

Planting Heights & Colours

I've grouped them for structure and visual appeal:

Height Group	Plants	Flower Colour Palette
Tall / Architectural	Echium vulgare, Rudbeckia fulgida, Helenium autumnale	Blues, golds, oranges
Medium Height	Borage, Calamintha nepeta, Origanum vulgare subsp. Hirtum, Lavandula 'Eidelweiss', Sedum spectabile (bonus)	White, mauve, silver
Low / Groundcover	Geranium rozanne, Origanum vulgare	Purples, blues

Visual Flow Tip:

- Use **Geranium rozanne** as a pretty ground layer.
- Echo silvers and whites (*Calamintha*, *Lavender*) through the planting to cool the palette.
- Add pops of **gold/yellow** (*Rudbeckia*, *Helenium*) for warmth and late summer glow.
- Go big with **Echium** for drama!

Summary:

- ✓ **Seasonal coverage:** From early spring to autumn
- ✓ **Height variety:** Structure and layers for garden interest
- ✓ **Pollinator diversity:** Honey bees, bumbles, solitary bees, hoverflies
- ✓ **Visual beauty:** Flowing complementary colours