

Dutch White Clover  
(*Trifolium repens*)



Creeping Thyme  
(*Thymus serpyllum*)

While **non-native flowers** may be aggressive, they can still be very useful. Dutch white clover (*Trifolium repens*), and creeping thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*) are two species that benefit pollinators and will flower in a mowed lawn.

White clover provides additional nitrogen and tolerates drought, making it easy to grow in low maintenance conditions.

Dandelions and Creeping Charlie also benefit pollinators but are very aggressive and typically are not favored by homeowners.

## MANAGING BEE LAWNS

- **Mowing:** The one-third rule is a good guide: do not mow more than one-third of the vegetation at one time to a height between 3.5 and 4 inches to ensure that flowering plants survive and produce flowers to sustain pollinators.
- **Watering:** Soil moisture should be monitored. White clover and fine fescue grasses are quite drought-tolerant but may need supplemental watering after several weeks with no rain.
- **Fertilizing:** A soil test (visit [soiltest.cfans.umn.edu](http://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu)) will determine if nutrients need to be added. Fertilizer requirements will be minimal if clippings are returned, mowing heights are kept high, and soil quality is good.
- **Weeding:** Hand weeding is preferred option, with spot treatments with selective herbicide as needed. Learn what weeds have value to pollinators, are diverse and add to a long flowering season for bees and other pollinators.

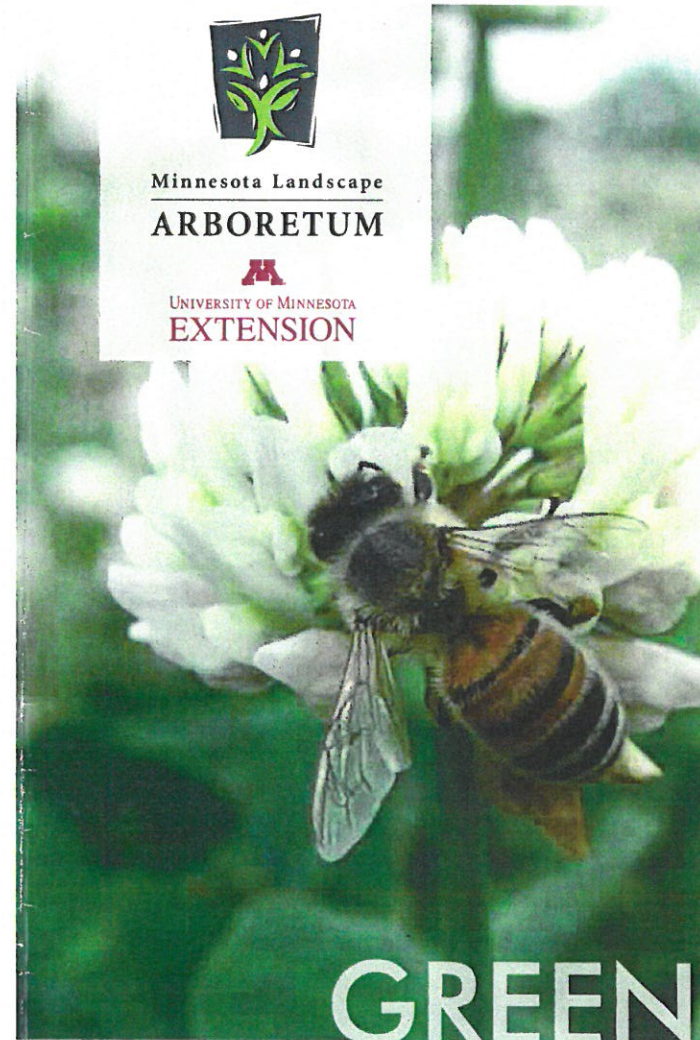
**Visit Bee Lawn Demo/Trial Plots at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, located near shrub garden collection along Three-Mile Drive.**

### Additional Resources:

- **University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum**  
[arboretum.umn.edu/gardensandcollection.aspx](http://arboretum.umn.edu/gardensandcollection.aspx)
- **[beelab.umn.edu/bees](http://beelab.umn.edu/bees)**
- **University of Minnesota Extension:**  
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## Bee Lawns Turf Grass with Flowering Plants

[arboretum.umn.edu](http://arboretum.umn.edu)

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## BENEFIT OF BEE LAWNS

Traditional lawns are ornamental or recreational plantings of turf grass that are mowed and managed.

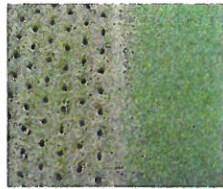


A bee lawn features flowering plants as well as turf grasses, with these benefits to bees and pollinators:

- Natural diversity
- Less mowing, fertilizing and watering
- Beauty of flowers
- Increased resilience to extreme seasonal temperatures, drought



## ENHANCE YOUR LAWN TO PROMOTE POLLINATORS



A new lawn planting includes the desired flowers; or you may seed flowers into an existing lawn. Seeding into an existing lawn is more economical but can be challenging to establish, as new flowers compete for space with grass. Satisfactory seed germination requires adequate moisture, good soil to seed contact and erosion protection. Scalping (mowing existing grass to 1 inch or less), aerating and then adding flower seed has proven successful.

For more information visit:  
[beelab.umn.edu/bees](http://beelab.umn.edu/bees)

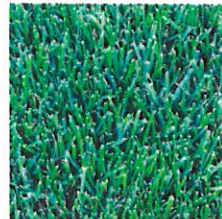
## GRASSES TO USE



**Native Fine Fescue:** This group of species, including hard fescue and creeping red or Chewing fescues; grow slowly and do not compete against bee-friendly plants. Fescues

are main components of shady lawn mixtures but grow well in full sun. Their drought and low fertility tolerance makes them good choices for flowering lawns.

**Kentucky Bluegrass:** This popular lawn grass establishes slowly, allowing non-native flowering plants\* to grow along with the lawn.



\* The use of non-native species in a bee lawn does not meet the Board of Water and Soil Resources' native vegetation establishment and enhancement guidelines, and does not meet project requirements section of the ENRTF appropriation.

## NATIVE FLOWERS FOR BEE LAWNS

Through research trials at the University of Minnesota, results show that the best native plants for lawns germinate quickly and adapt to the soil. Native species demonstrating potential include:

- Ground Plum (*Astragalus crassicaarpus*)

A low-growing species in the pea family that is native and common to the prairies of Minnesota.



- Lanceleaf Tickweed (*Coreopsis lanceolata*)

A late spring bloomer in the aster family.



- Lanceleaf Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris ssp. lanceolata*)

In the mint family and is distributed widely in the United States and Europe. There are three self-heal subspecies, with *ssp. vulgaris* being native to Europe and throughout North America, and *var. lanceolata* being native to Minnesota.



- Calico American Aster (*Symphotrichum lateriflorum*)

A late blooming flower, typically grows around 3 ft. tall. When mowed, calico aster will form small dense rosettes, blooming below a 3.5 inch cutting height.

