



Insecta-Flora Standard, High and Low

Insect-Attracting Seed Blends

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Protect Plants with an Insect Army

The right predatory insects, given the opportunity, will control bad bugs. Increasing biodiversity provides food for beneficial insects, especially lacewing adults and highly specialized parasitic wasps and flies. Raking and disking to expose bare earth is replaced by appropriate low-maintenance plantings. Dirt tracks are planted with cover crops or insect attracting strips or hedgerows to provide nectar and pollen for survival of many beneficial insects when pests are dormant or reduced in numbers. Covering bare areas reduces dust on leaves, dust which invites spider mites to move in. It also protects plants from the heat from bare soil that causes spider mite populations to explode.

Investing one percent of your land in beneficial insect habitat provides big returns in pest control. Some of the smaller beneficials will fly a couple hundred feet to the occasional island or row of flowers that keep them going. If you have prevailing winds, an insectary border along that side will provide a welcoming committee of beneficials for entering pests. Insecta-Flora is expensive compared to many cover crop and "bug-blend" mixes because it contains mostly attractive flowers that reseed themselves. Averaged over 4 - 5 years the cost is quite reasonable.

Insecta-Flora mixes have flowers that bloom at different times through the year. The standard mix has low and medium height plants. The low-growing mix grows about one foot high and also serves well for nitrogen-fixing and erosion control. The high-growing mix grows to about three feet high providing cut flowers, herbs and a low visual screen for the landscape. Some of the blooms have open flower structures that permit large and small insects to get nectar. Some have lots of pollen. Some will tolerate shade, some will take mowing. Insecta-Flora also provides habitat for birds.

Planting and Management

Prepare a seed bed by scratching the surface to get aggregate particle size of ½ to 1 inch range. Drill in the seed or broadcast and lightly cover. Avoid planting too heavily as the faster growing plants will overwhelm the slower growing plants, and the resulting diversity will be lower. Plant 11 pounds per acre, 1 pound per 4,000 square feet, 1 ounce per 250 square feet, 1 gram per 9 square feet. Fall planting is best in a Mediterranean climate, giving plants time to establish in the rainy season. If planted in the spring, water to get established. In dryer areas water several times in summer. Avoid spraying pesticides on areas planted with Insecta-Flora, even soft ones, like soap, oil, and Bt. The area can be mowed, but to maintain the habitat, mow or weed-whip about half at time and then the other half about a month later. To keep the stand for several years let the flowers set seed before mowing.

Insecta-Flora Insect-Attracting Seed Blends – Standard Mix

Common Name	Latin Name	Height	Habit	Notes
arroyo lupine	Lupinus succulentus	12-36 "	A	closed flower, early bloom, fixes nitrogen
alyssum	Lobularia maritima		A	reseeds for long season, takes mowing, comes up quick, early bloom, open flower
bachelor buttons	Centaurea cyanus		A	gets aphids
birdsfoot trefoil	Lotus corniculatus			flower early winter/late spring, closed flower, fixes nitrogen
calendula	Calendula officinalis		P	2-3 blooms per season, suppresses nematodes,
California poppy	Eschscholzia californica	6-15	Bl	open flower,
Chinese houses	Collinsia heterophylla		A	extra shade tolerance, early, closed flower
crimson clover	Trifolium incarnatum			closed flower, fixes nitrogen
goldfields	Lasthenia californica		A	open flower,
western marsh-rosemary	Limonium californicum			late bloom,
yarrow	Achillea millefolium		P	late bloom, open flower, pollen source

Tall Growing Mix

Common Name	Latin Name	Height	Habit	Notes
Crimson Clover	Trifolium incarnatum	12 inch		closed flower, fixes nitrogen
California Poppy	Eschscholzia californica	6-15	Bl	open flower,
Blue Flax	Linum perenne	24	P	May to Sept
Baby's Breath	Gypsophila paniculata	36	P	July to Oct
White Yarrow	Achillea millefolium	18	P	late bloom, open flower, pollen source
Goldfields	Lasthenia californica		A	open flower,
Calendula	Calendula officinalis	12	P	2-3 blooms, suppresses nematodes
Bachelor Buttons	Centaurea cyanus	12-30	A	gets aphids
Alyssum	Lobularia maritima	5	A	reseeds for long season, takes mowing, early sprout & early bloom, open flower
Carpet of Snow				
Western Marsh-Rosemary, Statice	Limonium californicum			late bloom, tolerates heat, some drought
Chinese Houses	Collinsia heterophylla	12-24	A	extreme shade tolerance, closed flower, early flower, spring to early summer
Arroyo Lupine	Lupinus succulentus	12-36	A	closed flower, early bloom, fixes N
Violet, Johnny Jump-up	Viola cornuta	12	A/P	late bloom, open flower, pollen source
Coriander, Cilantro	Coriandrum sativum	12-15	A	pink-white flowers attract parasitic wasps

Low Growing Mix

Common Name	Latin Name	Height	Habit	Notes
English Daisy	Bellis perennis	6 inch	P	
Dwarf Alyssum	Lobularia maritima	5	A	reseeds for long season, takes mowing, early bloom, open flower
Carpet of Snow				
Snow-in-summer	Cerastium berbersteinii	12	P	
Pot Marigold	Calendula officianalis	12-24	A	2-3 bl/season, suppress nematode
African Daisy	Dimorphotheca (arantiaca) sinuata	12-18	A	
Goldfields, dwarf	Lasthenia chrysostoma	12	A	open flower
Birdsfoot Trefoil	Lotus corniculatus	12-24	P	closed flower, fixes nitrogen
Rose clover, Hykon	Trifolium hirtum	12-24	A	closed flower, fixes nitrogen
Subterranean clover	Trifolium subterraneum	12	B	closed flower, fixes nitrogen
Five Spot, Buffalo Eyes	Nemophila maculata	12	A	
Anis	Pimpinella anisum	24	A	open flower feeds parasitic wasps
Foxtail Fescue, Zorro	Festuca megalura		A	grass, pollen feeds predatory mites
Violet, Johnny Jump-up	Viola cornuta	12	A/P	late bloom, open flower, pollen source