

Month	Plant		Pollen colour	Pollen	Nectar	Comments
	Common name	Latin name				
January	Christmas Box	Sarcococca		✓✓	✓	Garden plant. No petals for protection, requires +6°C for bees to fly.
January	Winter Cherry	Prunus x subhirtella		✓✓	✓	Garden tree. Flowers in mild spells throughout the winter. Requires +6°C for bees to fly.
January/February	Hazel (cobnut)	Corylus avellana	Pale green yellow	✓✓		Worked by bees for pollen only as no nectar secreted (wind pollinated plant). Requires calm still mild weather for bees to work it. Small pollen loads as difficult to collect.
February	Snowdrops	Galanthus nivalis	Bright jaffa orange	✓✓	✓	Bees love these - plant in the green (with leaves) in the Spring rather than dry bulbs in the Autumn. Choose single flowered varieties, not double.
February	Lenten Rose, Christmas Roase	Heleborus species & hybrids		✓✓	✓	Flowers point down protecting pollen and nectar from bad weather, long flowering season.
March	Winter flowering shrubby honeysuckle	Lonicera fragrantissima or x purpusii		✓✓	✓	Definite favourite. Plant this if no other. Sweetly scented garden plant, long flowering period.
March	Cherry plum	Prunus cerasifera		✓✓	✓✓	Definite favourite. Plant this if no other. First true Spring blossom. Valuable source of early pollen and nectar to kick-start the colony. Good for jam.
March	Willow	Salix; species and hybrids	Yellow. Bees dusted all over	✓✓✓	✓✓	Valuable source of pollen and nectar. Needs dry weather when in flower as easily spoiled by rain. Male trees produce pollen and nectar. Female trees produce nectar only.
March	Almonds and apricots	Prunus dulcis & armeniaca		✓✓	✓✓	Early flowering nut and fruit trees - blossom can be spoiled by late frost. Eagerly worked by honeybees.

April	Cherries and plums	Prunus avium & domestica		✓✓	✓✓	As above
April - throughout the year	Dandelion	Taraxicum officinale	Orange - spikey pollen	✓✓	✓✓✓	Good honey crop if good weather. Flowers close up on dull days. Sometimes it is the only crop around. Yellow oil stains wax comb
April/May	Apple	Malus domestica		✓✓	✓✓✓	Possible honey crop if good weather and colonies are strong enough.
April/May	Sycamore	Acer Pseudoplatanus		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Considered as a weed tree but brilliant for honeybees. High-quality honey, medium amber with a hint of green.
May (Feb - June)	Oil Seed Rape	Brassica napus (Canola in USA)		✓✓	✓✓✓	Widespread sowing ensures a honey crop although honey is bland and crystallises rapidly in the comb. Fine grain honey. New varieties do not yield like the old ones.
May (Feb - June)	Hawthorn (May)	Crategus monogyna	Pale cream, large loads	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Does not yield every year. Temperature around 23 ⁰ C required. Sweet almond scent/taste to honey.
May	Holly	Ilex aquifolium		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Yield for about 2/3 weeks at the most. Pollen and nectar from male trees. Nectar only from female trees.
May	Horse Chestnut	Aesculus hippocastanum	Brick red	✓✓✓	✓✓	Flowers late Aril, early May. Larvae can sometimes turn pink when fed copious amounts of this pollen.
May/June	Raspberry	Rubus idaeus		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Yields a high quality honey tasting of raspberries. Bees work flowers even in poor weather. Honey granulates quickly.
June	Field beans	Vicia faba	Grey	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Good quality amber honey if field density high. Extra-floral nectaries also found on this plant.
June	Acacia	Robinia pseudoacacia		✓	✓✓✓	Yield high quality pale honey in hot weather (25 ⁰ c and above). Flowers best after a hot dry continental summer in the previous year.

June	Lime (Linden)	Tilia species			✓✓✓	Yields best in warm humid sultry weather, with moisture in the soil and overcast skies. The pollen is generally not collected. Yields honeydew in some years if dry and lots of aphids about.
July	Blackberry (bramble)	Rubus fruticosus	Slate grey	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Yields pollen and nectar in bright sunny weather. Rain washes out the pollen and nectar as flower faces upwards.
July	White clover	Trifolium repens		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Yields best with moist soil or after heavy dew, showery weather with good spells of sun to increase air temperature. Red clover has too long a corolla so bees can't access the nectar unless it is a second crop.
July	Sweet chestnut	Castanea sativa	Yellow (Bees dusted all over)	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Yields best under hot dry conditions (above 27 ⁰ C) Dark amber honey with bittersweet notes.
July	Rosebay willow-herb (fireweed)	Chamerion angustifolium	Blue/purple	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Very pale almost white honey. Requires a big stand/area, usually after a fire.
August	Himalayan Balsam	Impatiens glandulifera	White	✓✓	✓✓✓	A notifiable weed but brilliant for honeybees. Bees get a white stripe of pollen down their back (miller bees). Yields best when roots are in water.
August	Purple loostrife	Lythrum salicaria		✓✓	✓✓	Waterside wild flower giving useful supplies of pollen and nectar in water meadows or pond sides.
August	Mint	Mentha species		✓	✓✓✓	Only useful if large stands of plants but water mint and other mints are worked freely for nectar.

August	Heather (Ling)	Caluna vulgaris	Biscuit grey	✓✓	✓✓✓	Only yields well once in every 4 years. Requires rain in growing season and good weather when in flower. Strong thixotropic honey (almost red in colour). Many beekeepers drive to the moors to secure a crop.
August/September	Sunflowers	Helianthus species		✓✓	✓✓	Nectar secreted most in heat-wave conditions (27 ⁰ C and above). Not reliable in UK at the moment.
September	Golden rod	Solidago species		✓✓	✓✓	Good late source in urban areas that contributes to the rearing of winter bees.
October	Ivy	Hedera helix	Orange/yellow	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Brilliant late summer crop - last to flower of the important pollen and nectar crops. Honey sets very fast . Flavour is strong but mellows after 6 months in store. Yields best in warm or mild autumn weather with little or no rain.
October	Loquat	Eriobotrya japonica		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	Sweetly scented garden plant. Late flowering so useful but requires a large stand to really contribute to over-wintering.
November (and early Spring)	Mahonia, Oregon grape	Mahonia x media		✓✓	✓✓	Sweetly fragrant winter flowering garden shrub, much worked by bees in urban areas.
December	False castor oil plant	Fatsia japonica		✓✓	✓✓	Shrubby Ivy relative from Japan. Yields best with shelter of wall receiving summer shade but winter sun.
December	Winter heliotrope	Petasites fragrans		✓✓	✓✓	Rampant garden escape with highly scented mid-winter flowers worked by honeybees when weather permits (temperatures above 6 ⁰ C)