

New Mexico Pollinator Habitat Restoration Kit Planting Guide 2025

Thank you for your interest and work in conserving pollinators in New Mexico. By planting this kit, you are an essential partner in pollinator conservation! This handout includes instructions for planting and follow-up care for successful habitat establishment.

What's in this kit? Each kit consists of 14 plants of 7 species in five-inch tubes for a total of 98 plants, including a variety of perennial wildflowers and shrubs documented to be attractive to native pollinators. The following tables include the species list for both restoration kit types.

Upland Kit – best for dry soils with supplemental watering for 1-2 years after planting.

Bloom Period	Common Name	Species	Plant Type	Max. Size (height x width)
early	Threeleaf sumac	<i>Rhus trilobata</i>	shrub	5–7 ft. x 3–8 ft.
early–mid	Apache plume	<i>Fallugia paradoxa</i>	shrub	6 ft. x 6 ft.
early–mid	Beargrass*	<i>Nolina microcarpa</i> *	perennial	3ft. x 3 ft.
mid	Upright prairie coneflower	<i>Ratibida columnifera</i>	perennial	1–3 ft. x 2 ft.
mid	Hairy false goldenaster	<i>Heterotheca villosa</i>	perennial	2 ft. x 2 ft.
late	Chamisa / Rubber rabbitbrush	<i>Ericameria nauseosa</i>	shrub	4 ft. x 6 ft.
-	Side oats grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	grass	3 ft. x 3 ft.

*replaced Chamisa (*Ericameria nauseosa*)

Riparian Kit – best for wet soils in floodplains, wetlands, stream banks or along acequias.

Bloom period	Common Name	Species	Plant Type	Max. Size (height x width)
early	New Mexico olive	<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>	shrub	12 ft. x 12 ft.
early	Golden currant*	<i>Ribes aureum</i> *	shrub	10 ft. x 10 ft.
early-mid	Woods' rose*	<i>Rosa woodsia</i> *	shrub	4 ft. x spreading ~5ft
mid	Showy milkweed	<i>Asclepias speciosa</i>	perennial	2–3 ft. x spreading ~3 ft.
mid–late	MacDougal verbena*	<i>Verbena macdougalii</i> *	perennial	2–3 ft. x 1 ft.
late	Canada goldenrod*	<i>Solidago canadensis</i> *	perennial	5 ft. x spreading ~5 ft.
-	Alkali sacaton	<i>Sporobolus airoides</i>	perennial	4 ft. x 5 ft.

*Species will do best in partly shaded locations.

Tips for plant establishment. The plants in your kit are ideally suited for most upland or riparian northern New Mexico landscapes, but they will need good care to get started:

Site Preparation:

Prevent weeds from going to seed prior to planting by mowing or string trimming the area periodically. Minimize soil disturbance if possible. Soil tillage will bring weed seeds up to the surface and exasperate weed growth. Herbaceous plants are generally less competitive with weeds, so clearing your planting area of established plants is important. Depending on your site conditions, methods such as solarizing, smothering, or sheet mulching may be more necessary to prepare a site and reduce weed competition. Refer to the Xerces [Site Preparation webpage](#) for more resources and checklists to help you minimize weed competition in your new habitat.

Planting:

Prior to planting, prepare each planting site. Use a hoe or shovel to scalp each planting location in a 2 ft diameter circle to remove any grass thatch or other vegetation from the soil surface prior to planting. A small auger attachment for a drill is a great option for digging holes if available. Refer to Max Size column on plant lists to determine spacing. Water plants 2-3 hours before planting to ease removal from tubes.

DO NOT squeeze the tubes to release plants. Gently tap the edge of the tube against a hard surface to release the plant from the tube and **slowly** remove plant, taking care to prevent the root and potting soil from breaking apart.

Gently pack soil around the plant. It is important not to make the holes too deep; the base or shoulder of the plant should be at the same level as the surrounding soil. Mark each planting spot with a tall marker or a flag so that each plant can be found in the future to be able to maintain the area free of weeds. If desired, place a 3-inch thick layer of wood chips or other mulch in a 1.5 ft radius around each plant to help maintain this area free of weeds. Make sure to leave a 3-inch radius circle free of wood chips around the base of each plant to prevent rot.

Irrigation: Plants will need some supplemental irrigation to get established. Irrigate plants thoroughly immediately after planting, and keep evenly moist for the first month. During the first year, plants should be irrigated during dry periods. Water deeply to ensure the entire root zone is moistened after each irrigation. Irrigation is often needed the second year after planting, but can be gradually decreased as the plants get established. After the first two years, irrigation may be needed during periods of drought. Drip irrigation is ideal for transplants to allow slow, deep watering.

Xerces is here to help! We are excited to partner with you on creating pollinator habitat. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or need additional guidance (kaitlin.haase@xerces.org). You will find publications about monarchs, pollinators, and habitat restoration work on our website (www.xerces.org).