

Wildflower Gardening

As Americans have grown increasingly conscious of the natural environment in recent years, gardening with wildflowers has grown in popularity. “Wildflowers” has come to be a catch-all term for most any flowering plant of field and roadside.

While many of these flowers are “native” to the United States, there are also quite a few “exotic” flowers which have escaped from our gardens over the years and established themselves (naturalized) among our native plants. Many of the wildflower seed mixes feature a combination of native and superbly adapted exotic flowers to ensure your SUCCESS!

Advantages of Wildflowers: Wildflowers offer a variety of advantages to the time, energy, environment, and cost conscious home owner.

- These plants are adapted to survive without pampering, they are TOUGH!
- A sizable area can be seeded for a sea of bloom at a very reasonable cost.
- Seed mixes provide a succession of colorful blooms from spring through autumn.
- Special mixes are available for different degrees of sun or shade, moist or dry.
- A wildflower planting is a great source of cut flowers for use in fresh arrangements or for drying.
- Wildflowers are attractive to butterflies in summer, and birds feast upon their seed heads in autumn.
- They are far prettier than weeds!

Getting Started with Wildflowers No matter how large or small, wet or dry, sunny or shady your site, you can grow wildflowers. Let the helpful staff at STAUFFERS of KISSEL HILL assist you in choosing the proper seeds, robust container perennials, and other necessary materials from our unbeatable selection.

For the patio gardener, a mix of established perennial and annual plants can be planted into a generous container in an informal arrangement. Over winter the perennials by moving the container to a cold but frost-free location (a garage is ideal). For those with a meadow or wildflower patch in mind, sowing seed is the easy approach.

Wildflowers from Seed, step-by-step

1. Select the area to be seeded. Success is most easily achieved on relatively moist soil in full sunlight. Remove all existing lawn, mulch, or weeds. This can be accomplished by hand or by use of appropriate herbicides which our SKH staff will be happy to recommend.
2. Measure the square footage of the area to be sown. This is essential to determine the quantity of seed to purchase.
3. Choose a seed mix from the wide variety available at SKH. Keep in mind any special interests of your family, as there are special blends for cutting, attracting butterflies, etc.
4. Prepare the seedbed by raking to a fine texture of bare soil. Sow the seed according to package directions. If you have not selected one of the products which include mulch with the seed, you may find it beneficial to lightly straw the area to conserve moisture and prevent erosion.
5. Keep the area moist until the seed germinates, and do not allow the seedlings to dry out until established. Weed seed, which is present in all soil, will also emerge along with your wildflowers. Occasional removal of these invaders is needed until the wildflowers begin to establish and out-compete them for water and light. The easy way to distinguish the young weeds from the wildflowers is to leave a small area unsown with seed. Watch what emerges in this area as you water the planting. These are the culprits to remove throughout the patch.
6. Once established, there's little to do with wildflowers other than enjoy their blooms and the wildlife they attract!
7. In autumn or the following spring, the wildflower stems may be cut or mown to ground level, and any seed produced may be scattered over the area. Over-seeding or reseeding annually will produce the finest effects.