



### **Bee Pollinator Mix**

*Olds specially formulated mix of wildflowers and native grasses provides a ready food source to bees and other beneficial pollinators. Mix contains 10 perennial wildflowers and two native grasses and grows 2–6' tall. 1 lb. sows 1,500 sq. ft.*



### **Southeast Mix**

*Annuals and perennials ideal for the Southeast U.S. Grows 1–5' tall. 1 lb. sows 3,700 sq. ft.*



### **Northeast Mix**

*Annuals and perennials ideal for the Northeast U.S. Grows 2½–3' tall. 1 lb. sows 4,000 sq. ft.*



### **Hummingbird Garden**

*Perennials, biennials, and reseeding annuals favored for nectar. Big color impact. 18–72" 1 lb. sows 3,500 sq. ft.*



### **Shade Garden**

*For a long season of changing color in light to dense shade. Max. 36" tall. Widely adapted. 1 lb. sows 4,000 sq. ft.*

## **Steps to Wildflower Success**

### **1. Plan ahead to sow seed at the best time.**

Do not rush to sow seed. The site preparation described below is your key to success! In spring, sow any Olds mix when the soil has warmed, before spring rains end. In the north, this is May to mid-June. Do not plant mixes with annual species after June 30. Annuals will not have time to flower and set seed before frost. Plant perennial mixes mid-August to mid-September. Perennials continue to put down roots in cool weather after top growth stops. They will bloom the following season. Plant any mix in late fall, when soil temperature is too cold for germination — below 50°F. This is called a dormant seeding: the seed overwinters and germinates in spring. Only do this on well-prepared sites, where weeds have been eradicated; otherwise, cool season weeds will get ahead of the flowers in spring.

### **2. Decide what you want on your site.**

• **Flowers the first year?** Plant an Olds mix that includes annual species. Perennials will bloom the second year from seed. All-perennial mixes are available.

• **Lots of color?** Olds mixes combine native and naturalized species to produce lots of color throughout the season. Sow the heavier recommended rate for the most color.

### **3. Consider your site and the flowers' requirements.**

Except for our shade garden mix, a site with at least a half day of full sun is essential. On steep banks use a fiber mat for erosion control.

### **4. Select your wildflower mix from Olds.**

Olds mixes do not contain filler or carriers — inert ingredients used to help sow seed. Supply your own carrier inexpensively. Don't buy it mixed in with your seed! Olds mixes contain high quality seed; that is, seed with high purity and germination rates. Olds mixes contain species selected and mixed by a professional horticulturist using a sophisticated computer program, which compares data of each species, rates their *flower power*, and recommends the best mix for them to compliment each other. Olds mixes contain native and naturalized species well-adapted to your region, be it Midwest, Northeast, Southeast or Northwest.

### **5. Clean your site thoroughly.**

To prepare a small area, cut and remove vegetation, till to a shallow depth or power rake and remove debris to allow seed-soil contact. See steps 6 and 7 below before planting. To prepare a large area, use a flail mower to cut the grass and scuff the soil surface. For sites with existing native grass you want to keep, mow grass to 2" and clean off cuttings to provide good seed-soil contact. See steps 6 and 7 below.

### **6. Prepare soil properly.**

Do not disc or till deeply unless the soil is heavily compacted. Deep tilling may lift weed seeds to germinate and compete with flowers. For a site covered with subsoil, devoid of nutrients, apply a fertilizer like 5-10-10 at the recommended rate.

### **7. Sow in an appropriate manner.**

Lightly scuff the soil surface immediately before sowing with a rake or scuffle hoe. Seeds are best sown mixed with a carrier. Mix approximately one handful of seed with one quart carrier. Dry "baby" sand is OK. Milorganite® works better. On small areas, broadcast seed mixed with carrier by hand. Lightly rake in the seed by hand. Do not cover the seed more than 1/8" to 1/4". Use a lawn roller and irrigate to ensure that seed has good contact with soil. Divide a large area into small plots for sowing or sow seed and carrier with a broadcast or cyclone seeder. Use a drag mat and/or roller behind a tractor to press seed into good contact with soil. Irrigate. Avoid planting seed too deep, avoid not giving seed good contact with soil.

### **8. Care for your site during the first year.**

Keep the site moist for several weeks to germinate as many species as possible, then reduce water. Once established, many wildflowers are drought tolerant. Seedlings emerge in two to three weeks, with first blooms of annuals in six to 10 weeks. If by mid-summer you have a huge crop of weeds, mow the site to keep weeds from setting seed. Set a push mower as high as possible to allow perennials to thrive. This sacrifices the annuals, but they can be sown again in late fall or spring. If you can irrigate during dry spells, a good soaking every two weeks lengthens periods of bloom. Expect to see several waves of color during a season from various species. The first fall, after flowers set seed, mow the site at 4–6" to scatter seeds. This is not desirable in later years if native grasses are incorporated. Native grasses display pleasing colors and textures through late fall and winter.



**Butterfly Garden**

Best widely adapted flowers to attract many species of butterflies over a long season. 9-48" tall. 1 lb. sows 3,500 sq. ft.

**Midwest Perennial Mix**

Gorgeous annual and perennial flowers form seed heads to attract popular song birds in fall. 18-72" tall. 1 lb. sows 2,000 sq. ft.



**Midwest Wildflower Mix**

Olds' most popular wildflower mix combines native and naturalized species, 40% annual and 60% perennial by weight, for waves of color through the growing season. Do not sow after June because the annuals will not have time to flower and set seed. Plan on three to four years of quality color before weed competition reduces show. Some species may grow to 72" depending on moisture. Seed set of annuals depends on the weather. 1 lb. sows 4,000 sq. ft. Use 10 lbs. per acre.

**Perennial Midwest Wildflower Mix**

This mix combines native and naturalized perennials for years of color. Grows to 48". 1 lb. sows 2,000 sq. ft. Plant Olds' Midwest Perennial Wildflower Mix in spring or in late summer for flowers the following season.

Advantages of planting perennials in late summer include:


- Ample time during the summer to prepare the site
- Ample moisture commonly available through the fall growing season
- Continued root growth into late autumn after above ground growth stops.

**9. Enjoy color on your site for years to come.**

Reinforce flowers and suppress weeds by overseeding with the original mix or the annual mix after a season in which color seems to fade or seed set is poor due to inclement weather. Harvest mature seed by hand throughout late summer and fall. Scuff the soil with your shoe, sprinkle mature seed, scuff to cover, and step on for firm soil contact. Control weeds as they appear. Even after thorough site preparation, encroaching weeds will appear. It is tempting to pull weeds, but that brings more weed seeds to the surface to germinate. Cutting immature seed heads off annual weeds by hand is time consuming but effective. A wand applicator with a glyphosate herbicide is effective in warm weather; simply moisten weeds with the wand.

Many factors affect how long wildflower plantings look good. Site preparation is key to any success; and, while we can't provide ideal weather, some after-planting attention will pay off in colorful benefits. In general, Olds mixes perform well for three or four years, if left alone on a well-prepared site. Some may provide good color even longer; but, three or four years are about as long as a site will look good without some intervention.

*Compliments of your local Olds seed dealer*



**Olds**<sup>®</sup>  
SEED

*Seed you can count on*<sup>®</sup>



# Steps to Wildflower Success



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