



MID HUDSON NEW YORK CHAPTER

Bereaved Parents of the USA

Newsletter

together we remember... together we heal...

Kathy Corrigan Chapter Leader

www.mhbpusa.com

JULY/AUGUST 2019



Please join us for our next meetings

NO MEETING THURSDAY, JULY 4th

Saturday, July 6th -- Potluck Picnic & Bonfire @ Pinky's House

Thursday, August 1st -- Open Meeting

7:00 at The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie

10 Children's Way, Poughkeepsie, NY

Call Kathy (845) 462-2825 for information



A WARM WELCOME TO NEWCOMERS

We understand how difficult it is to attend your first meeting. Feelings can be overwhelming; we have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Our stories may be different but we are alike in that we all hurt deeply. We cannot take your pain away but we can offer friendship and support. Bring a friend or relative to lean on if you wish.

KIDNAPPED! By Chris Harder (Sacramento-South Placer County CA Chapter BPUSA)

My friend Chaplain Terry Morgan wrote a book which he titled, "What to do When Grief Kidnaps Your Soul." What an accurate description of what the death of our child does to us! It's like we disappear from life, and those around us wonder if we will ever come back again. I've heard adults whose sibling died when they were young say that they not only lost their brother or sister, but their parents as well, because their mom or dad couldn't quite get back into life again.

Child loss also changes a marriage relationship. Sometimes people are consumed by their grief for so long that they no longer recognize each other and find that they've grown apart. Friends become uncomfortable around us... they don't know what to say any more.

Unlike a kidnapping where the person disappears and people hope for their safe return, when our soul has been kidnapped by tragedy, we are still visible to those around us. They see us and wonder how long it will take before we will get over it and return to our "old self." It's confusing to everyone... even us! It's as if we become the walking dead because we feel empty and lifeless inside. We maneuver through the day without seeing what's going on around us because our mind is held captive by our grief.

Some people say, "time heals all wounds," or "just give it some time, you'll get over it." They're confused, aren't they? The truth is, time doesn't do the healing. It's what we do during that time that allows healing to take place so we can get through it. One of the difficulties is that there is nothing we could have done in advance to be prepared for losing a child. What we need to know about dealing with grief has to be learned while we are struggling.

So where do we start?

First, I'd encourage you to take care of yourself. Eat healthy, drink healthy fluids, rest (even if you can't sleep), and don't try to self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. As your strength returns, get some exercise. It relieves stress and gets you moving again, even if it's a short walk around the block. Take time for yourself and remember to find something that will bring you enjoyment by providing a little retreat from your grief.

Next, learn about the grieving process. Talk to people who have been through it. Attend a grief support series, the kind that teaches about grief systematically such as *GriefShare* (www.griefshare.org) or *Journeying Through Grief* (www.GriefToolbox.com).

Read about the grief journey others have experienced... there's a wealth of knowledge between the covers of the thousands of books that have been written on the subject. There are endless resources on the Internet for bereaved parents, and some on-line support groups are helpful.

This may sound odd, but there are many movies and television programs that include grief situations that we may not have noticed before. In my opinion, most of them are pretty accurate in their portrayal of grief. They won't teach us all we need to know about grief, but by observing these situations, they will help us figure it out for ourselves.

There are also conferences you can attend where you can learn from experts about dealing with grief. National bereaved parent organization, Bereaved Parents of the USA (www.bereavedparentsusa.org) has a national conference every year during the summer months. This year's Gathering is in St Louis. MO August 2-4.

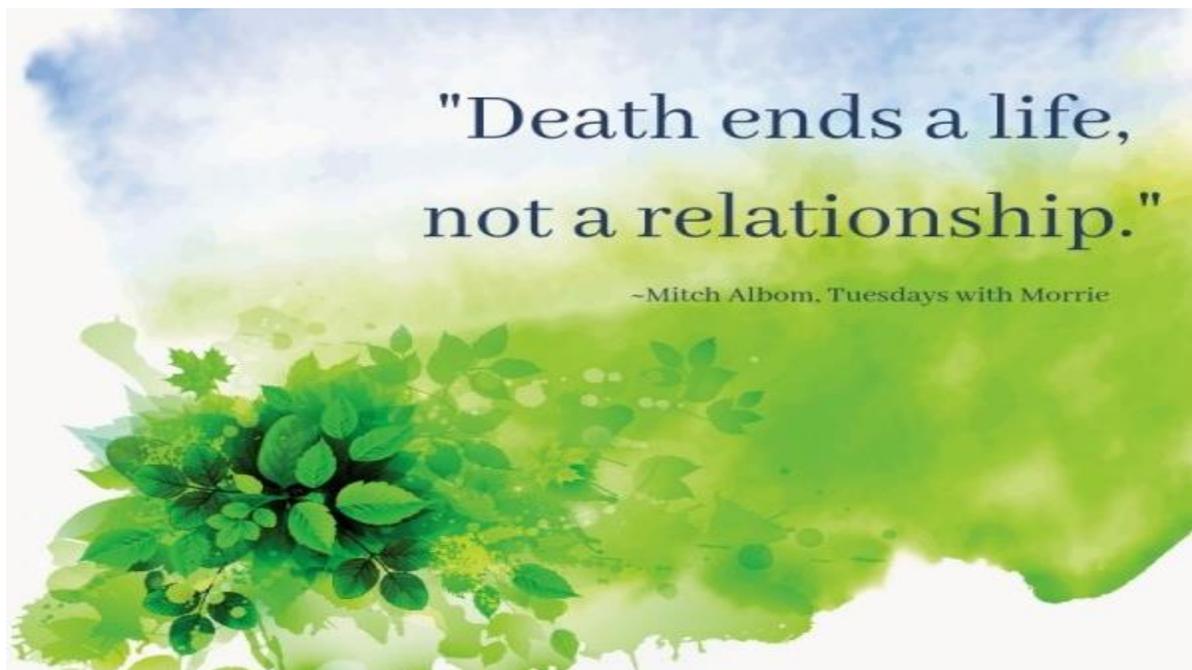
Connecting with other bereaved parents who truly understand is important beyond measure. When we are with people who understand, we don't have to wear the mask that says, "I'm ok." We can just relax and be ourselves. In time, you may be the "safe place" for someone else who is newly bereaved, or even someone who has stuffed their grief for a while and is now looking for help.

The good news is, we are created to be resilient! We are survivors! Most of us want to get through it and we don't want to give up. We may feel overwhelmed for a time, and we may feel pushed back by those waves of emotions, but we are inclined to get back up and keep moving forward.

The death of a child will change us forever. We may look the same on the outside, but we will never be the same on the inside. It will change our perspective on life, hopefully for the better. It will make us stronger. Arleah Shechtman, author of "My Beloved Child, My Journey Since the Death of My Daughter" said, "The biggest surprise I've had after Sharon's death is that my grieving has opened me up to all that is beautiful and wonderful about this world. My appreciation for others and their struggles is greater, and I stop to smell the roses more often - something I call 'living from the gut'."

If you're reading this and you're new in your grief, you may be doubtful that you'll ever feel this way. I think, though, that in time, you'll be surprised at how true this will be for you. Later in her book, Arleah goes on to say, "It might comfort you to realize that the life you build from this point on wouldn't have been possible without the love you felt - and still feel for your loved one. In a very real way, he or she is still a vital part of who you are."

When a kidnapped person returns, they are not the same person they were before. If you reach out for help and do the work, you will be able to figure out who you are again so you can function as the new person you have... or will... become. Yes, it's true... grief does kidnap your soul... but it doesn't have to be forever.



**It's not too late to make plans to attend the 2019 BPUSA National Gathering Conference
August 2-4 at the Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri.**

Our Gathering theme is ***Spirit of Love*** reminding us as we face our own struggles, of the inspiration and hope our nation once found in the ***Spirit of St. Louis***. Please join us and feel the love as we remember our children together.

The Gathering Conference will be a three-day event with keynote speakers, workshops, meals, entertainment and memorial ceremonies all designed to help bereaved parents and their families understand that they are not alone in their grief. Our annual Gatherings have been praised as wonderfully meaningful experiences, life-changing in many ways. Participants come away feeling refreshed and revitalized, better informed about the grieving process, more aware of hope and promise and affirmed by meeting new friends who travel the same path.

The Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel is a modern hotel designed to accommodate gatherings like ours, including clean, comfortable rooms, spacious conference facilities, a modern fitness center (including a pool) and a first-class restaurant. The hotel is offering special room rates to Gathering attendees.

Known for its iconic arch, a must-see attraction, St. Louis is a vacation destination of national prominence, with many sightseeing adventures to enjoy. Plan a family vacation in conjunction with the Gathering. Spend some time remembering your child and then explore life on the Mississippi in this bustling, modern "Gateway to the West."

ANNOUNCING OUR 2019 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



GLEN LORD SUSAN TOLER-CARR PAULA STEPHENS GARETH WILLIAMS

NATIONAL GATHERING 2019



Bereaved Parents USA
August 2-4 ♥ St. Louis, Missouri
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Meet Our Keynote Speakers

Grief experts from across the nation

GLEN LORD

Meet Glen Lord one of our keynote speakers: On June 14th, 1999 my son Noah Thomas Emory Lord age 4 and a half died following complications of a tonsillectomy. That first day it was impossible to imagine taking my next breath much less taking the first steps on what was going to be a continuous walk through grief. On this journey I have cried an ocean of tears, screamed myself hoarse and felt pain so intense that it seemed unbearable. There are no magic words or process that take will take away the pain of grief. Calendars and clocks have no place in the grieving processes, what we all need are a set of tools that we can pick up and decide how and when to use them to re-build our lives.

The death of his son put brakes on the life he had so carefully planned. As Glen sought a new path, he realized that there was a need for genuine, accurate grief information. This realization, plus his extensive business experience, fueled the founding of The Grief Toolbox and creation of the Walking Through Grief® program, both offer a community of grief resources around the world and a marketplace of grief and memorial products. He is a sought-after keynote speaker, inspirational presenter and workshop leader. Most recently Glen has come full circle is Co-Founder and CEO of the International Grief Institute, which provides a variety of grief education opportunities including Grief in the Workplace that promotes success in supporting grieving employees.

SUSAN TOLER CARR

Tragedy knocked on their door when Susan and her husband Darrell's seemingly-healthy only child Justin (age 16) died suddenly during swim practice in 2013 from an undiagnosed heart condition which later was determined to be cardiomyopathy. Susan previously managed design and construction projects for Walt Disney Imagineering, Universal Studios Creative and the University of Southern California and she worked for general contractors building stores including Tiffany & Co, YSL, Macy's and Crate & Barrel. She now works rebuilding lives and changing the conversation and responses to grief and loss and mental health by conducting workshops in the USA and Canada, in grief support groups and by providing non-therapeutic tools for how to live when facing grief. She is a Certified Grief Recovery Method® Specialist, an Education Advocate, Co-Founder of the Justin Carr Wants World Peace Foundation <http://www.justincarrwantsworldpeace.org>

GARETH WILLIAMS

When a child dies – whether from illness or other circumstances – the loss is profoundly catastrophic. For a parent, outliving one's child is gut-wrenching and disrupts the natural law and order of life. Furthermore, the loss is multi-layered and persistent...no graduation(s), no wedding celebrations, no celebrating your grandchildren's milestones. For siblings, loss of a brother or sister can be equally traumatic – a trauma that often goes unrecognized and unaddressed.

Fly-Hope-Dream is the legacy of a very special boy – Timmy Williams. Born with a congenital heart condition in 1996, Timmy passed away in 2008, following a long battle with a rare condition called Pulmonary Hypertension. He was just 11 years old. An audacious, fun-loving dreamer, Timmy's motto was "Dream BIG". Timmy's Dad, Gareth, quickly saw the unique potential of "low and slow" flight in vintage aircraft for lifting the spirits of those facing difficult circumstances. And so, Fly-Hope-Dream was born. <http://www.fly-hope-dream.org/>

PAULA STEPHENS

Paula Stephens, M.A. is a speaker and author of "From Grief to Growth: Five Essential Elements of Action to Give Your Grief Purpose & Grow From Your Experience. She became a gold-star mom in 2010 after her oldest son passed away while home on leave from the Army. Since that event Paula created the organization 'Crazy Good Grief' that provides support to those who've lost a loved one and want to learn to live in the sunshine of their loved one's life, not in the shadow of their death. She is also a yoga teacher who is known for her healing work within the military, law-enforcement communities and survivors of mass shootings such as the Aurora Theatre Shooting, and those who've lost a loved one in service to their country.

Her blog post, "What I Wish More People Understood About Losing A Child" has been shared worldwide over two million times. Paula has a master's degree in Exercise Physiology and is an adjunct professor at Metro State University in the Human Performance & Sport Department.

Heard at last year's conference: *"goosebumps, inspiration and loving connections throughout the weekend" ... "meeting and learning from experts in the field of grief who lovingly guide us with their wisdom and compassion" ... "the feeling of being surrounded by all the love in the room that each parent has for their child" ... "so much acceptance there" ... learning from each other what works and what doesn't work on my grief journey" ... "Realizing that healing actually is possible" ... "Laughing -- yes laughing and crying together"* ❤️

Every Day Has Meaning...

Sara Ruble (*Sara will be a workshop presenter at the National Gathering Conference*)

<https://spiritteaches.org>

As I write these powerful spiritually channeled blogs, I am often restricted. Yes, held back, writing, deleting, writing some more, delaying...until it is time for these important words to be sent out.

Because I am the human element here...and I came to learn just like everyone else. Nothing is sent out from here that I am not being taught or experiencing before you read it.

Yes, my amazing son Scott writes with me. *I so love that.* I am beyond, beyond, beyond grateful! But I can tell you, it is also very hard sometimes. I am as human as you are. I, too, came here to grow, to see and experience more than I ever, ever could have expected.

Whew! There is a lot to being a human, isn't there? Especially on this profound journey of discovery...of our soul work, Love, as our children and loved ones open the doors to our spiritual paths.

So here we are all together...wondering about the challenges, the pain, the best way, the wrong way, helping others, pulling back, going for it, hoping it works. Questions and fear, hope, determination, resistance, success ~ sometimes all in one day!

What is this life really all about? What about our soul plans and their part in all we do?

I needed these answers too!

And so today, again as I write with Scott/Spirit coming through me, typing through me...let's search this out together. Xox

Spirit's words ~

This is a powerful journey you are all on. It is spiritually driven. Intentional. Determined. Most importantly, it is housed in more Love than can be known, dreamed of, hoped for.

Yes, it can break your heart. It can take your breath away... then show you beauty and spiritual connections that are vital to the human heart. Taking you places you never would have ventured to... *before.*

Soul work is absolutely the deepest part of you.

Your all-knowing soul lives within each of you. It goes beyond ego. It is not self-centered. It creates on a level that is often hard to understand...yet always has exceptional meaning and will fulfill the depth of growth, spiritual love, awareness and commitment that is written on your soul's plan.

Always.

Do you know when you are doing *your soul's work*?

E v e r y d a y.

Whether it is pain you feel, anger, disappointment, confusion, love, gratitude, or any emotions that are flowing...you are doing your inner soul work through your human experiences.

It is your soul planned day taking you where you need to be...to see more, feel more...take in, release...blow off steam or play in the sun.

YOU are a spiritual being having human experiences following the very precise soul plan you courageously came here to experience...just like us.

Not every day will make sense to you. It is not meant to...

Even confusion teaches...pushing you to grasp the meaning. Seeking balance in the midst of it all.



Just remember...*"All this will show me more. Somehow. Yes."*

When? When it is needed. When it is shown to you...and shown again...and again...to make sure you see it more clearly.

And remind yourself...

"My soul knows. My child, children, loved ones in Spirit know. I need this experience."

Because we, in Spirit, are the teachers...working through your soul to open you to greater awareness...as we promised before we were even born. Can you trust our timing?

Spirit teaches...We are One.

Immersed in Love...even through the greatest challenges. Connected by Soul Plans and Soul Love. It cannot get any deeper than that.

Your soul knows. Can you feel this? Breathe it in...

You are going deeper...and your spiritual connection with us deepens as the path continues.

Trust the journey. Trust Love.

Every day has meaning.

Love Always,
Scott/Spirit/ Sara



By Laura Diehl (**Laura will be a workshop presenter at our National Gathering Conference**)

Any loss takes time to process and work through. The loss of a loved one can take weeks, months, and years. The loss of a child takes a lifetime.

Grief has its own individual path for each person. We may often hear the words, "There is no right or wrong way to grieve," and yet much of society shouts the exact opposite to those who are in deep mourning.

We are asked when we are going to "get over it," or are told we need to let our child go and start moving forward. This can make us angry and add to the painful confusion, making one wonder, "What's wrong with me, that I am taking so long to be able to function again?" So, we put on a mask, to keep people around us from knowing what a mess we still are, months and even years later.

What most people don't realize, is that most experts consider the death of one's child traumatic grief, and that up to five years can be considered "fresh" grief. And as grieving parents, we need to know this; that it's okay if you are still barely functioning or are unable to go out and "have fun" with friends, or attend painful family events that your child should have been part of, years after the loss.

You may be interested to know that as I started hearing from other bereaved parents in the first couple of years of my journey, I discovered there does seem to be an underlying generic time-frame that many of us pareavors (a newly coined word for bereaved parents) sort of fall into.

The first year is a painful fog, full of numbness, confusion, pain, and disbelief. All the “firsts” hit us hard. The first time he or she is not with us for each holiday or yearly family event, the first year they are not here for their birthday and of course, the first anniversary of their death.

I thought the second year would be easier, because I had already gone through everything once. As pareavors just starting out on this horrific journey, we don’t think it is even possible, but the second year of being without our child is usually worse than the first year. I hope that is not the case for you, but I want to be up front and honest that it is a strong possibility.

Why does that happen to so many of us?

Well, for me personally, that first year I braced myself for all the “firsts,” plus I was still in that fog of trying to figure out if this had really happened. The second year caught me off guard as the fog began to lift. Round two of all those yearly events no longer had the blessing of numbness to block the full depth of the pain. When that initial shock finally wore off, it caused the weight of my loss to hit me full force, with a heaviness and darkness that left me wondering if I would ever get through it. I remember thinking how desperately I wanted the pain to end, afraid that it never would.

The third year for many of us becomes more livable. We are starting to accept the finality and painful fact that our child will never again be with us at any of these events. We are starting to resign ourselves to the fact that no matter how much it hurts, we must figure out who we are without our child. Some of us even begin to see glimmers of hope; that we can still have joy and happiness in the life we are living with those who are still here whom we love, and who love us.

After saying all of that, I also want to emphasize that we are all on our own individual journey.

Unfortunately, there many parents who are stuck in the second-year level. They take many more years to get to the place of painful acceptance, which is necessary to be able to start building their new normal in a way that brings peace, joy, love and laughter back into their lives. For instance, I personally know someone who waited over four years before they could even bring themselves to have a tombstone made for their child’s grave.

Let me say it again, because it is so important. **NO ONE** is on the same timetable of grieving the death of their child. *Do not look at any dates to see where others were emotionally in our grieving process and use it as some sort of a timeline to force on yourself. We are all on our own individual timeline and need to go through the process at our own speed. Yes, there are some “patterns” (for lack of a better word) that some of us seem to fall into, but don’t expect yourself to fit into that. Give yourself grace to walk your own necessary path. As long as you are putting one foot in front of the other, you will get there. (When Tragedy Strikes.)*

How close you were (or weren’t), how he or she died, their age at death and so many other things all play a factor in how you grieve and how long it takes to be able to function again, much less actually learn how to live with your child being “amputated” from you.

Even within this three to five year “acceptance” range, we are all different, including those of us who are “early” or “late.” Here are what a few others have to say about their journey and this “three year” timeline:

- *Four years later, I still struggle with these feelings, but not on a daily basis.*
- *I just passed anniversary number 5. For me, year 1 -I hardly remember anything, mainly a fog. Year 2 (for me) was worse. The numbness was gone. It was real. It was crushing. I survived day-to-day. Year 3 -I started feeling some joy again. Able to go a few days without crying. Year 4 – still painful, but more like a slap than a body-slam.*
- *At first, I experienced waves of grief that crashed over me throwing me prostrate to the floor in agony. After 3-4 years it was mostly a gentle longing with times of intense pain and feelings of loss.*
- *I honestly couldn’t tell you anything about the first 2 years. Year 3 things began to get a little better. Lord knows I still cry every day. Year 4 I smiled again. Real smiles not forced ones. And just over the past few months I have finally begun to feel happiness.*
- *Year 2 is worse. But I am intentionally seeking Joy and now I’m halfway through the second year. I think I can see Joy every now and then although it is still a ways ahead of me yet.*

- *Sadly, the only way to 'get past this' is to go through it!! I am broken now in a place that will never heal. But I do find that I can laugh more than I used to, but I define my life 'before my son died' and 'after he died.' The trick is to wake up every day and try to have a plan and a purpose.*

In other words, whether you fit the “pattern” or not, you are in a normal place with your grief, and the right one for you.

Year one, year two, year three, year five, year ten, year twenty, the rest of this lifetime... and then comes our glorious reunion. And the best part? Each day we remain here on this earth doesn't mean we are getting further away from our children, but that we are one day closer!

Editor's Note: My Memory Garden planted for Michael and now for Christopher brings me great comfort, Simply by choosing the right flowers, you can attract, birds, butterflies and even bees, which are very beneficial insects. You can start small with a container or two and work your way up to a small garden. I hope you enjoy the informative article below! KC

ATTRACTING BUTTERFLIES, HUMMINGBIRDS AND OTHER POLLINATORS

5 techniques for backyard gardeners

By [Kathy LaLiberte](#)

1. Plant nectar- and pollen-rich flowers

The most important step you can take is to plant a pollinator-friendly garden. Choose nectar and pollen-rich plants like wildflowers and old-fashioned varieties of flowers. A succession of blooming annuals, perennials and shrubs is best so nectar and pollen will be available throughout the growing season. Also, include plants like dill, fennel and milkweed that butterfly larvae feed on.

Any size garden can attract and support pollinators — from a [wildflower meadow](#) to a [planter with a few well-chosen species](#). Researchers in Tucson, AZ, have found that communities of bees can sustain themselves for long periods of time in small vacant city lots.

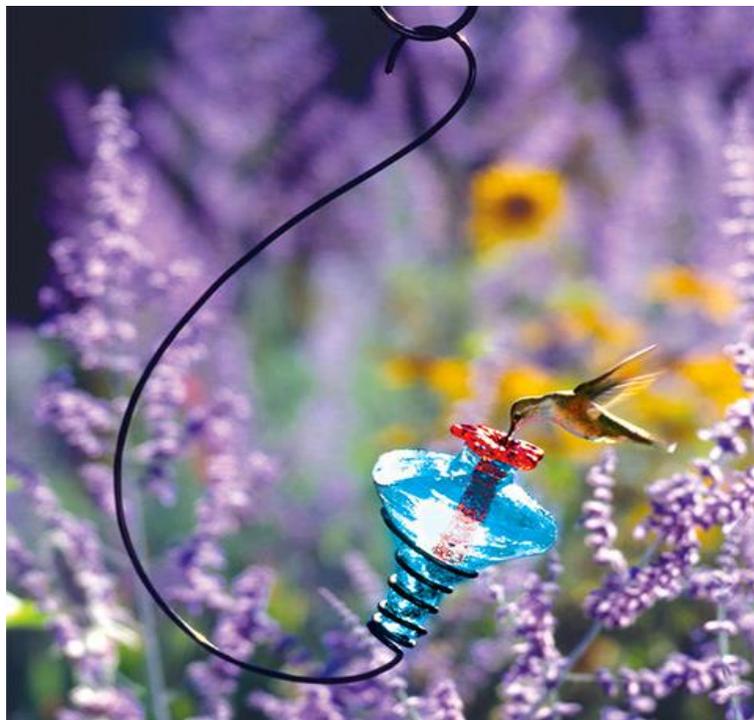
A [patchwork of pollinator gardens](#) in neighborhoods, cities and rural areas around the country could provide enough habitat to restore healthy communities of beneficial insects and pollinators.

2. Go organic

Many pesticides — even organic ones — are toxic to bees and other beneficial organisms. There's no need to use powerful poisons to protect your garden from insects and diseases. In the short term they may provide a quick knock-down to the attackers, but they also kill beneficial organisms. In the long term, you expose yourself, family, pets and wildlife to toxic chemicals, and risk disrupting the natural ecosystem that you and your garden inhabit.

An organic approach is both safer and more effective. By applying the simple principles of ecological plant protection, you can work with nature to control pests and diseases, enjoy a healthier garden and harvest and protect pollinators and other beneficial insects.

If you do apply pesticides make sure you apply them carefully and selectively. To protect pollinators, do not use pesticides on open blossoms or when bees or other pollinators are present.



3. Provide shelter

Butterflies, bees and other pollinators need shelter to hide from predators, get out of the elements and rear their young. Let a hedgerow or part of your lawn grow wild for ground-nesting bees. Let a pile of grass cuttings or a log decompose in a sunny place on the ground. Or, allow a dead tree to stand to create nooks for butterflies and solitary bees.

Artificial nesting boxes can also help increase the population of pollinators in your area. Wooden blocks with the proper-sized holes drilled into them will attract mason bees, as will our bamboo [Mason Bee House](#). Bat boxes, such as our [Bat-Chelor Pad](#), provide a place for bats to raise their young.

4. Provide food and water

A pollinator garden will provide pollen and nectar. Consider adding special feeders to help attract hummingbirds and butterflies.

Bees, birds and butterflies also all need water. Install a water garden, a [bird bath](#) or a catch basin for rain. Butterflies are attracted to muddy puddles which they will flock to for salts and nutrients as well as water.

5. Backyard beekeeping

You don't have to live in the country to keep bees. All you need is a little space, a water source, plenty of nearby flowers for them to visit, and a willingness to learn. Keeping a beehive or two in the backyard used to be a common practice. Maybe it's time to bring back this old-fashioned hobby. It does require equipment and some specific knowledge. But it's nothing an interested hobbyist can't handle. For more information, read [Attracting Beneficial Bees](#).

Plants that attract butterflies

Alyssum
Aster
Bee balm
Butterfly bush
Calendula
Cosmos
Daylily
Delphinium
Dianthus
Fennel
Globe thistle
Goldenrod
Hollyhock
Lavender
Liatris
Marigold
Musk mallow
Nasturtium
Oregano
Phlox
Purple coneflower
Queen Anne's lace
Sage
Scabiosa
Shasta daisy
Stonecrop
Verbena
Yarrow
Zinnia

Plants that attract butterfly larvae (caterpillars)

Borage

Fennel
Grasses
Hollyhocks
Lupine
Milkweed
Nettle
Thistle
Willow

Plants that attract hummingbirds

Ajuga
Bee balm
Begonia
Bleeding heart
Butterfly weed
Canna
Cardinal flower
Century plant
Columbine
Coral bells (heuchera)
Cleome
Crapemyrtle
Dahlia
Dame's rocket
Delphinium
Fire pink
Four o' clocks
Foxglove
Fuchsia
Gilia
Geranium
Gladiolus
Glossy abelia

Hollyhocks
Impatiens
Iris
Lantana
Liatris
Lily
Lupine
Nasturtium
Nicotiana
Penstemon
Petunia
Phlox
Sage
Salvia
Scabiosa
Scarlet sage
Sweet William
Verbena
Yucca
Zinnia

Plants that attract bees

Perennials and Annuals
Allium
Aster
Basil
Bee balm
Bee plant
Bergamot
Blanket flower
Borage
Cosmos
Flax
Four o'clock

Gaillardia
Geranium
Giant hyssop
Globe thistle
Goldenrod
Helianthus
Hyssop
Joe-pye weed
Lavender
Lupine
Marjoram
Mint
Mullein
Paint brush

Poppy
Rosemary
Sage
Skullcap
Sunflower
Thyme
Verbena
Wallflower
Wild rose
Zinnia

Trees, Shrubs and Fruit
Almond
Apple

Blackcurrant
Cherry
Gooseberry
Hawthorn
Linden
Locust
Pear
Plum
Raspberry
Strawberry
Wild lilac
Willow



**I am summer
yearning for a drop
of your rain**

- Gemma Troy



**The pain of missing you,
is a beautiful reminder,
of the joy of loving you**

Dean Jackson

