

Bee Pasturage

Q.What is bee pasture? Q.What is foraging behaviour in bees? Q.What is the best forage for honey bees?

Q.Why is bee pasturage important? Q.What do you mean by honey flow period?

Plants that yield pollen and nectar are collectively called bee pasturage or bee forage. Plants which are good source of nectar are tamarind, moringa (সজনে ডাঁটা), neem, *Prosopis juliflora*, Soapnut tree, *Glyricidia maculata*, eucalyptus, *Tribulus terrestris* and pungam.



Prosopis juliflora



Soapnut Tree



Tribulus terrestris

Bee pasture or bee forage is the area containing plants that yield nectar and pollen. The season in which these plants flower is called **honey flow period** and the season which nectar and pollen is not available is called lean period, dearth period or short period.

Honey bees try to collect and store as much nectar and pollen as possible during the honey flow period so that it could be used to sustain the colony during adverse periods such as winter and extreme summer days. Honey gathering activity of foragers is not determined by the quantity of honey present in the hive but by the abundance of nectar yielding flowers in nature.

Not all flowers yield nectar and pollen. Wind pollinated flowers generally lack nectar and yield only pollen. A good knowledge of nectar and pollen yielding plants is necessary to set up an apiary and harvest rich yield of honey.

Q.Which plant are good source of both pollen and nectar are? Q.Which plant is a good source of nectar?

Q.What is the role of nectar in pollination? Q.Why do many plants produce nectar?

Some supply both nectar and pollen abundantly when in bloom, and these are often called **honey plants**, because they are best suited for honey production. Plants producing nectar but little or no pollen are also considered to be honey plants. Other plants, however, may yield pollen but little or no nectar.

Temperate fruit trees such as apple, pear, plum, peach, apricot, almond, cherry, walnut, citrus such as orange, lemon etc, *Acacia arabica*, *Cassia fistula*, *Daucus carota*, Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*), Polygonum, *Cedrella toona*, guava (*Psidium guajava*), mango (*Mangifera indica*) etc.



Daucus carota



Coriandrum sativum

Pollen yielding plants

Sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*), rose, pomegranate (*Punica granatum*), tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*), brinjal (*Solanum melongena*), potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), tea (*Camellia sinensis*), maize (*Zea mays*), date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*), millets, wheat, rice, sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*), castor (*Ricinus communis*) etc.

Nectar yielding plants

Tamarindus indicus, *Azadirachta indica*, Eucalyptus, *Pongamia glabra*, *Morinda tinctoria*, *Quisqualis indica*, *Glyricidia maculata*, wild cherry (*Prunus cerasoides*), *Santalum album*.