

# Flowering plants for Honey Bees in the Maltese Islands

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Galea, <sup>2</sup> Victor Busuttil, <sup>3</sup> Semi Vella

<sup>1, 2</sup> Malta Beekeepers Association P.O Box 29, Vjal il-wiehed u ghoxrin ta' Settembru, Naxxar

<sup>3</sup> Agriculture Consultant

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**Indigenous Trees, shrubs and wild flora** - *This section includes indigenous species as well as other species which were introduced by man in ancient times and can be found both in the wild or cultivated. We believe that this section lists the most important foraging plants for bees that also impart an array of flavours and fragrances that characterise genuine Maltese honey into such a fine and distinct product.*

*Many of these plant species such as *Vitex agnus-castus* are protected by law while others like *Galactites tomentosa* are considered as weeds. These plants constitute a fundamental part of the abundant Maltese flora shaping the Maltese habitats and ecosystems while also providing an essential source of food, not just for honey bees but also for a host of other wild pollinators.*

*We can safely state that *Thymbra Capitata*, *Hedysarum coronarium*, *Galactites tomentosa* and *Ceratonia siliqua* (marked\*) represent the main honey flows in the Maltese islands. The first flow is of multifloral origin and depends heavily on *Hedysarium coronarium* and *Galactites tomentosa*. Two nectar flows follow, yielding 2 distinct honeys originating from *Thymbra capitata* and *Ceratonia Siliqua*.*

<b>Maltese</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Botanical</b>
Sagħtar*	Mediterranean thyme	<i>Thymbra capitata</i>
Harruba*	Carob Tree	<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>
Silla*	Red Clover/Sulla	<i>Hedysarum coronarium</i>
Xewka Bajda*	Mediterranean Thistle	<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>
Fidloqqom	Common Borage	<i>Borago officinalis</i>
Klin	Rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus Officinalis.</i> , var
Berwieq	Summer Asphodel	<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>
Lewża	Almond	<i>Prunus dulcis</i> var; <i>Amygdalus</i>
Siġar tal-Virgi	Chaste Tree	<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>
L- Imbragla	Strawberry tree	<i>Arbutus Unedo</i>
Kappar	Caper Bush	<i>Capparis orientalis</i> var; <i>spinosa</i>
Widnet il- Baħar	Maltese rock Centaury	<i>Cheirolophus crassifolius</i>
Ġenista Safra	Spanish Broom	<i>Spartium junceum</i>
Nefel	Medicago spp	<i>Medicago</i> spp.
Tullier komuni	False yellowhead	<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>

Liftija	Wild Turnip	<i>Brassica rapa sylvestris</i>
Spraġġ Xewwieki	Mediterranean Asparagus	<i>Asparagus aphyllus</i>
Ġarġir Isfar	Perennial wall rocket	<i>Diplotaxis tenuifolia</i>
Ġarġir Abjad	White wall rocket	<i>Diplotaxis eruroides</i>
Erika	Mediterranean heather	<i>Erica Multiflora</i>
Harira Hamra	Scarlet pimpernel	<i>Anagallis avernensis</i>
Il-Palm tat-Tamar	Date Palm	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>
Kromb il-Baħar isfar	Sicilian silver ragwort	<i>Jacobaea maritima sicula</i>
Riħan	Common myrtle	<i>Myrthus comunis</i>
Liedna	Ivy	<i>Hedera Helix</i>
Is-siġra ta' Ġuda	Judas Tree	<i>Cercis Siliquastrum</i>
Ġummar	Dwarf fan palm	<i>Chamaerops humilis</i>

**Fruit trees and cultivars** – This section includes some of the most common cultivations in the Maltese islands. Both farmers and beekeepers benefit from this situation whereby bees find food while farmers obtain free pollination services. Many of these cultivations, like Marrows, bloom in particular months of the year when there is a very limited availability of wild flora. Consequently, these cultivations are crucial for sustaining a healthy population of pollinators like honey bees.

Ċitru:(Laring/Lumi/bakkaljaw/...)	Citrus fruits	<i>Citrus., var</i>
Naspli	Loquat	<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i>
Hawħ	Peach	<i>Prunus persica</i>
Berquq	Apricot	<i>Prunus armeniaca</i>
Għajnbaqar / pruna <i>cerasifera; var</i>	Cherryplum/ plums	<i>Prunus nestica;</i>
Nagħniegħ	Spearmint	<i>Mentha spicata</i>
Habaq	Basil	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>
Merqtux	Marjoram	<i>Origanum majorana</i>
Rieġnu selvaġġ	Oregano	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>
Tursin	Parsley	<i>Petroselinum sativum</i>
Bużbież	Fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>
Salvja Selvaġġa	Wild Sage	<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>
Salvja ta' Sqallija	Three-lobed sage	<i>Salvia fruticosa</i>
Qara var.	Marrows/pumpkin/...	<i>Cucurbita var.</i>
Dullieġħ / Bettieġħ	Water melons / melon	<i>Citrillus var.</i>
Frawli	Strawberry	<i>Fragaria var.</i>

**Non-native plants** – This section lists non-native plants many of whom are cultivated in gardens, public spaces and urban areas. Other plants like the cape sorrel and Eucalypts are also found widely dispersed in rural areas and considered to be alien species. However, these plants (marked\*) provide strategic foraging resources for honey bees and other pollinators since they bloom in particular times of the year when native flora provides neither pollen nor nectar. In this context, from a bee-keeping perspective, these plants are considered providential since they provide a timely source of nectar and pollen and, in the case of Eucalyptus, even a strong nectar flow that yields a honey harvest.

Sigra tal- Gamiem* <i>var gamphocephala</i>	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>
Haxixa Ingliza*	Bermuda buttercup	<i>Oxalis pes-caprea</i>
Bajtar tax-xewk	Prickly pear	<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>
Duranta	Golden Dewdrop	<i>Duranta repens</i>
Lavander	Lavender	<i>Lavandula., var</i>
Lantana	Lantana	<i>Lantana var.</i>
Palm tal – Imrewħa	Mexican fan palm	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>
Palm tal- Imrewħa	Desert fan palm	<i>Washingtonia filifera</i>
Palma tal – kannizzati	Canary islands date palm	<i>Pheonix Canariensis</i>
Tipuana	Rosewood	<i>Tipuana tipu</i>
Lagunarja	Primrose Tree	<i>Lagunaria Patersonii</i>
Pittosporum	Japanese Mock Orange	<i>Pittisporum Tobira</i>
Fjuri tax – xema’	Wax plant	<i>Hoya carnososa</i>

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