



# WILD PATCH INFORMATION SHEET

## Planting for wildlife

### Create your Wild Patch

There are many areas in the garden that can be made more wildlife friendly by choosing or nurturing the right kind of plants, shrubs and trees.

#### Flowers

Growing nectar-rich flowers will attract pollinators like bees, butterflies and other insects – crucial to the ecosystem. Bees feeding on nectar transfer pollen on their legs from one plant to another, this allows fertilisation to take place and the plant to set seed.

Size doesn't matter! Just one lavender in a pot will still attract insects.

Aim to have something flowering through the seasons: from snowdrop and grape hyacinth in the early spring through to michaelmas daisy and ivy flowers in the late autumn. Planting at different heights will create a 'multi-storey' larder for different insects.

#### Some plants for pollinators

##### Native

- Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)
- Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*)
- Hemp agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*)
- White clover (*Trifolium repens*)
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
- Scabious (*Knautia* spp)
- Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*)
- Sallow / pussy willow (*Salix* spp)
- Mint (*Mentha* spp)

##### Non-native

- Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Butterfly bush (*Buddleia davidii*)
- Thyme (*Thymus pulegioides*)
- *Verbena bonariensis*
- Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*)
- Cotoneaster
- Heathers (*Erica* spp)
- *Phacelia tanacetifolia*
- Ice plant (*Sedum spectabile*)
- Hebe 'Great Orme' (*Hebe Plantaginaceae*)

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
The flight of the bumblebee demands a lot of energy, so make it easy for them by grouping flowers in sunny places.



Native species are ideal, but there are plenty of non-natives that are full of nectar and attract clouds of pollinators (see panel). Look for the bee symbol on plant labels at garden centres.

Modern cultivars with double flowers are not suitable as they are too complex for bees and butterflies to be able to access and feed from them. Some don't even have pollen or nectar.

There are around 59 species of British butterfly, most of which depend on specialised food plants and habitats such as heathland or woodland. However there are 12 or so that can be tempted into the garden with a variety of nectar-rich flowers – or fruit such as brambles and windfall apples.

#### Shrubs and hedges

Birds can be more attracted to a garden if there is a variety of woody shrub, hedge and tree species with a range of structures and heights.

Bird feeders should ideally be positioned near shrubs or a tree as most birds need to have a good scout round from the shelter of cover before they move in to feed.

Hedges link habitats together and provide vital shelter and nest sites, especially if they are mixed species such as hawthorn, dogwood, holly and spindle. Some hedgeplants will only fruit on the previous year's growth. So, cutting the hedge on alternate years will allow the plants to bear fruit. Don't cut the hedge at

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all until well after all the birds have fledged in late spring or early summer.

Growing climbing plants up vertical surfaces is another great way to provide habitat. Choose plants like honeysuckle, ivy and clematis which provide food for moths and butterflies as well as nest sites for birds.

### Some plants for birds

#### Fruits

- Hawthorn (*Crataegus*)
- Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*)
- Cotoneaster spp
- Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
- Spindleberry (*Euonymus europaeus*)
- Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)

#### Seeds

- Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*)
- Lavender (*Lavandula*)
- Sunflower (*Helenium annuus*)
- Golden rod (*Solidago virgaurea*)
- Firethorn (*Pyracantha*)
- Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*)



### Further information

**British Wildflower Plants** [www.wildflowers.co.uk](http://www.wildflowers.co.uk)

**Buglife** [www.buglife.org.uk](http://www.buglife.org.uk)

**Bumblebee Conservation Trust**  
[www.bumblebeeconservation.org](http://www.bumblebeeconservation.org)

**Butterfly Conservation**  
[www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

**Emorggate Seeds** [www.wildseed.co.uk](http://www.wildseed.co.uk)

**Plantlife International** [www.plantlife.org.uk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk)

**Really Wild Flowers** [www.reallywildflowers.co.uk](http://www.reallywildflowers.co.uk)

**The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds**  
[www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)

**The Royal Horticultural Society** [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)

**The Wildlife Garden Project**  
[www.wildlifegardenproject.com](http://www.wildlifegardenproject.com)

**The Wildlife Trusts** [www.wildlifetrusts.org.uk](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org.uk)

**Wild About Gardens** [www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk](http://www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk)

**Wildlife and wildlife gardening**  
[www.naturalsurroundings](http://www.naturalsurroundings)

### Trees

Trees provide a wide range of habitats – as well as to support bird and bat boxes. They don't have to be large to be effective for wildlife: the oak hosts the largest amount of species (600!) but the silver birch and hawthorn are not far behind.

A tree is a vertical larder and multi storey hotel providing food and shelter at every level. Allowing the grass to grow long beneath it, or if it is underplanted with woodland or hedgerow flowers, will enhance its benefits to wildlife.

Contrary to popular belief, our native ivy is NOT a parasite! The ivy provides habitat and shelter for wildlife. It flowers late in the year and is a valuable source of nectar, plus the berries are a winter food source for some birds.

Don't be too tidy! Allowing leaves to lie, seeds to set and some areas untrimmed will provide food and shelter for a variety of plant and animal species.

### Contact us

If you'd like some more advice, contact us:

Email: [info@southyarewildlifegroup.com](mailto:info@southyarewildlifegroup.com)

Website: [southyarewildlifegroup.org](http://southyarewildlifegroup.org)