



Hampshire &
Isle of Wight
Wildlife Trust

Wildlife Friendly Gardening: Award criteria information

Please find some further information about wildlife friendly gardening features below. By creating these features in your garden, you can apply for our award plaque and certificate.

The features are split into four criteria groups; food, water, shelter, sustainability. If your garden has ten or more features, with at least two features from each of the columns you can achieve our Wildlife Friendly Garden Award!

FOOD

Bird feeding station



Why? Hanging bird feeders and providing bird seed and suet balls is a simple way to encourage birds to your garden. Providing a range of different seeds will ensure that there is something to feast on for every species that visits your garden.

How? You can buy readymade feeders from most garden centres, or from our partner Vine House Farm. If you are feeling creative, you could also make your own bird feed cakes to hang in your garden.

What will it attract? Niger seed is a particular favourite of finches, whilst robins are partial to dried mealworms and dunnocks and tits seem to prefer the smaller grains found in the seed mixes. Unsalted peanuts are popular with most garden birds – and you may even see an opportunistic grey squirrel or wood mouse feasting on your peanut feeders! Numerous species of birds and possibly the occasional squirrel or opportunistic small mammal.

Teasel or thistle for seed eating birds

Why? Providing a range of different seeds and food sources will ensure that there is something to feast on for every bird species that visits your garden. Teasel and thistle both look attractive and the seeds they produce will provide a tasty snack for the local birds.

How? Choose an area in your garden to sow your teasel and thistle seeds. Remove the top layer of grass and sow your seeds in. Seed eating birds can then be catered for by delaying the cutting back of annual and herbaceous plants until late winter. Another tip is to sprinkle the teasel heads with niger seed as a winter snack for the visiting birds.

What will it attract? Goldfinches are particularly partial to niger seeds and teasel heads.

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Nectar rich plants for bees and butterflies



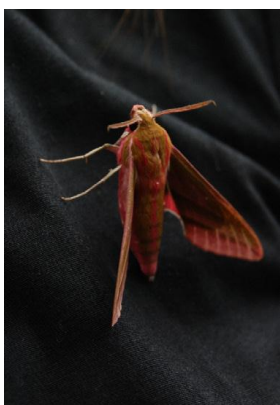
Why? In Hampshire we are lucky to have 46 different species of butterfly. However, the biggest threat to our native butterflies is the loss of natural habitat (meadows, hedgerows and woodlands) due to development. Your garden could play a small but significant role in helping to reverse this trend. Most butterflies are very mobile - particularly the Painted Lady and Clouded Yellow that migrate to the UK from Europe each year - so they will find their way into a garden if there is something there to attract them.

How? When planning an area for butterflies, you need to ensure that there is enough of each flower to make a visible display and to give off enough scent to attract the species. Warmth and shelter is important too, so ensure that you place your plants out of the wind - in a sun trap

if possible. Food plants for caterpillars should be included to support the butterfly during all phases of its life cycle. A few suggestions of plants that are best at attracting butterflies include; Aubretia, Honesty, Primrose, Sweet Violet, Cornflower, Knapweed, Lavender, Marjoram, Thyme, Valerian and Sweet scabious. Nettles, bramble, buddleia, michaelmas daisies, grasses and thistles are also good plants to attract butterflies and bees.

What will it attract? A range of bees and garden butterflies including comma, red admiral, meadow brown, orange tip, and peacock to name a few.

Night time nectar source plant for moths



Why? Moths feed on nectar, which they suck from flowers using their long proboscis like a straw. The sugar-rich drink provides them with the instant energy needed for flight. As most species of moth are more active at night, providing them with plants that produce nectar at night will provide your moth visitors with an energy-boosting snack.

How? Moths are lured by a good scent and so by planting evening-scented flowers like privet, sweet rocket, night-flowering stock, honeysuckle and evening primrose your garden will attract many species of moth. Fruit trees are also good for butterflies and moths, especially if you leave some of the fruit to rot on the ground.

What will it attract? A range of moth species including hawk-moths.

Shrubs and bushes with berries



Why? Shrubs and bushes can provide a sheltered area to build a nest for birds, but also provide a natural food source in the form of seeds and berries. Much of this food becomes available in late summer/autumn when birds need to build up their fat reserves to prepare for winter.

How? Even in the smallest garden, planting seed- or fruit-bearing plants will attract birds. The varieties you pick depend on the size of your garden, so the list that follows is just for ideas. Barberry, Bramble, Dogwood, Honeysuckle, Holly, Ivy, hawthorn, Alder, Elderberry, Guelder rose, Blackberry and Buckthorn.

What will it attract? A range of bird species and small mammals such as wood mice or bank voles may also come to feast on the berry crop.

Herb garden



Why? Herbs are the perfect all-purpose plants; they are attractive and colourful, have wonderful scents and the flowering herbs are great for nectar loving invertebrates. As well as being great for wildlife, you can enjoy them too!

How? Create your herb garden by including plants such as marjoram, fennel, lavender, thyme and mint.

What will it attract? A large number of butterflies and bees. Marjoram is favoured by the gatekeeper and common blue butterflies, fennel will attract garden hoverflies, lavender is the busy bees favourite, whilst thyme and mint provide a rich source of nectar for solitary bees.

WATER

Wildlife pond (no fish!)



Why? The addition of a pond is an excellent way of attracting wildlife to your garden as water is such a vital resource for all species. A pond offers a spot to bathe, drink from and breed in. Your pond needn't be large as even a small pond will attract a wealth of wildlife.

How? First identify a suitable site in your garden where the pond won't be too shaded or likely to be filled with leaves in the autumn. Dig your pond with gently sloping sides to allow wildlife to get in and out with ease. If you want to put plants in your pond, be careful not to buy non-native invasive

species such as new Zealand pygmy weed, parrots feather or Nuttall's pondweed. Further information on pond design, lining and suitable plants can be found on our factsheets.

What will it attract? Birds, amphibians, dragonflies, damselflies, mammals, reptiles. You'll be amazed at how quickly your new pond will be visited by the local wildlife!

Bird bath

Why? Birds need a supply of water throughout the year for drinking and bathing. A bird bath provides a relatively safe environment for the birds to preen and quench their thirst.

How? You can buy ready-made bird baths or you could build your own using shallow buckets or pots.

What will it attract? Birds to bathe but a range of wildlife may visit to drink and bathe. If your bird bath is on the ground, make sure it has shallow sides that wildlife can climb out of easily should they fall in.

Water butt



Why? By collecting rainwater and using it on your garden as an alternative to sprinklers or a hosepipe, you can reduce the amount of mains water you use.

How? Water butts can be bought from almost all garden centres and most have an attachment that fixes to your drainpipe to maximise the amount of rainwater you can collect. A cheap yet effective alternative to a water butt is simply placing buckets outside on a rainy day to collect the rainwater.

Boggy area



Why? A boggy area alongside your pond will enhance the aquatic habitat and provide shelter for amphibians and invertebrates. The plants that thrive in the boggy areas are also extremely attractive.

How? Plant up some native marginal and bog plants including: Bugle, Marsh marigold, Hard rush, Lady's smock, Yellow flag iris, Ragged robin, Purple loosestrife, Marsh woundwort and Great willow herb

What will it attract? Dragonflies, damselflies, butterflies, frogs, toads and a range of other insects.

SHELTER

Bird nest box



Why? What garden is complete without a bird box?! You can buy them ready made, or make your own – simply contact WildLine for an easy guide or see our website Natural nest sites, such as hollow trees or cavities of old buildings are fast disappearing, so by putting up a nest box, you can provide nesting birds with a suitable home. It is estimated that over 2 million chicks are reared in nest boxes each year, so please help by putting a nest box in your garden, school or workplace.

How? Put your box up in a sheltered spot at least 2m from the ground for safety from predators. Make sure that your bird box has drainage so that rainwater does not collect in the box and don't forget to fix up and clean out the box each winter. Removing the old nest material and pouring in boiling water will kill any parasites and make to box spick and span ready for the next inhabitants in spring.

What will it attract? Depending on the size of the hole in your nest box you will attract different species including coal tits, marsh tits, great tits, blue tits, nuthatches, house sparrows and tree sparrows.

Log pile

Why? Deadwood is extremely important to a wide range of species.

How? Whether as a log pile, a branch on an old tree or an entire dead tree left standing wildlife will thrive if the temptation to tidy it away is avoided.

What will it attract? Bees and wasps particularly like deadwood in a sunny spot, don't worry if this is not possible as the beetles will like the shade.

Hedgehog box

Why? Providing a ready made hibernation box for our prickly friends is one way to ensure that they won't be disturbed from their slumber during the cold winter.

How? Place some dry leaves or hay into the chamber for warmth, and place a little cat or dog food in the entrance so that the hedgehogs are attracted to the box to investigate.

What will it attract? Hedgehogs! If you are lucky enough to get a hedgehog lodger, try to keep disturbance to a minimum.

Native hedge



Why? Trees, shrubs and hedges provide nesting places and materials, food sources and cover for a great variety of creatures as well as creating a functional border. With almost half of Britain's ancient woodland being destroyed in the last 50 years, the need for these habitats is greater than ever, and you can help by planting a hedge, tree, or shrubs in your garden.

How? Native shrubs suitable for hedges include Blackthorn, Buckthorn, Elder, Guelder rose, Hawthorn, Hazel, Dogwood, Spindle and Dogrose. Ongoing maintenance is necessary to ensure that the hedge does not grow out of control and continues to provide shelter and food sources for wildlife. By cutting back at least half of the new season's growth each winter you will encourage lower branches to grow creating a shorter, denser hedge. By pruning the hedge so that

the sides are tapered and narrower at the top, you will allow rainwater and sunlight to reach the lower foliage and the base soil.

What will it attract? Nesting birds, small mammals and a range of insects including butterflies and bees.

Mini wildflower meadow

Why? Sowing some wildflower seeds in a sunny corner is an excellent way of creating a sheltered habitat for a range of invertebrates, along with providing a rich nectar source. Even a small patch of nettles can provide a food source so think twice before you get the mower out.

How? Your wildflower area is best located in a sunny spot with soil that has not been heavily fertilised. Once you have decided where it would be best placed, prepare the soil by



digging and raking the area and sow the seed in early September. Wildflowers do not require any additional watering or feeding, but a mowing regime can help you to manage which wildflowers will thrive. For a mixed meadow with a range of flowering times cut down to 5cm in autumn and leave the cuttings on the ground for several days to allow the seeds to drop. To encourage spring flowering species mow towards the end of July, and for late summer wildflowers mow in September and spring, removing the cuttings before they can drop their seed. When buying wildflower seed, try to find a

local supplier and purchase seed of British origin from sustainable sources.

What will it attract? Bees, butterflies, moths and a wide range of other invertebrates.

Unmown area of long grass

Why? Leaving an area of long grass is a very simple way of providing a sheltered environment for your garden visitors.

How? Simply give your mower a rest in a shady area of your garden.

What will it attract? Nettles are the food plant for butterflies such as the small tortoiseshell, comma and red admiral. The longer grass will also provide a damp environment for hunting frogs and toads, delicate grasses for specialist butterflies to lay their eggs on, and a home for grasshoppers and crickets.

SUSTAINABILITY

Compost heap or bin



Why? Along with reducing the amount of food waste that your household sends to landfill, a compost heap in your garden provides food, shelter and a breeding site for a range of species.

How? Find a corner of your garden with plenty of space for your compost heap. Your compost heap can be free standing or you can buy a compost bin. Have an earth bottom rather than concrete as this will help with drainage.

What will it attract? The warmth produced by the rotting material acts as an excellent incubator for grass snake eggs (pictured). Slow worms, toads, frogs and hedgehogs are also known to be found in compost heaps so always take extra care when turning your compost.

Wildlife friendly pest control (no pesticides or slug pellets)

Why? A damp spring is wonderful for slugs and snails and is great if you are into molluscs, but can be a real problem if you are trying to grow seedlings in a garden or have tender plants that molluscs regard as gourmet food. Too often these days we seek a quick fix in the garden and companies play on this by promising instant results if you buy their noxious chemicals. Do remember that taking time to achieve a balance in your garden will actually give you much better results, but may take a season to become effective.

How? There are a number of methods that have all been shown to work in controlling the numbers of slugs and snails in domestic gardens: removing cover for mollusks, encouraging natural predators to your garden, setting beer traps, changing the ground surface around plants, coconut shell halves, planting out more seedlings than you need, planting vegetable in containers and using nematode worm preparations. Further information can be found on our 'Slug it Out' factsheet. Also please remember that not all slugs and snails are bad. The garden snail probably does the most damage and they can easily be collected by hand and moved to a more suitable location.

What will it attract? The slugs and snails themselves will attract species such as song thrushes and hedgehogs that feed on molluscs. By not using chemicals to control the slugs and snails, you will reach a more natural balance in your garden.

Water with a watering can not a hose

Why? By using a watering can to water your plants instead of a hose or sprinkler you will be more aware of how much water you are using, and will hopefully use less! You can also fill your watering can up from your water butt to reduce the amount of mains water you use in the garden.

How? Collect rainwater in a water butt or containers in the garden and fill up your can when you need to give your garden a drink.

What will it attract? The watering can itself probably won't attract much! However the plants you use the rainwater on will be sure to attract a wealth of wildlife, and by cutting down on the mains water you use, you will be helping to conserve Hampshire and the Islands rivers.

Peat-free compost



Why? Many gardeners don't think twice about using peat and can't imagine using anything else. Peat started to be used widely in the 1950s and this sadly led directly to the destruction of some wonderful wildlife habitats in Britain. In the UK, peatlands cover 1.6 million ha. The lowland bogs are used for peat extraction and less than 10% of this habitat is in near natural condition.

How? There are a range of peat-free products available from most garden centres and your local refuse centre will sell a product called Pro-grow which is made from recycled garden waste. If you build your own compost heap you can use that on your garden!

What will it attract? By going peat-free you will help to conserve the valuable lowland bogs and a compost heap in your garden may attract frogs, toads, hedgehogs and grass snakes.

Drought resistant plants

Why? Many plants will tolerate the hotter, drier British summers that are predicted in future. Once established, these plants will need little or no watering. Drought resistant plants usually have leaves that are small, fleshy, waxy or hairy.



How? Even drought resistant plants need careful watering before they become established. Water early in the mornings and in the evening to reduce evaporation. Mulch will also reduce the need to water. Think about plants for dry shady places, as well as hot sunny areas. Plants such as Fatsia, laurel and Euphorbia, will tolerate dry shade and provide shelter, flowers and berries for wildlife all year round. Plant as densely as you can. The shade from leaves will create cooler microclimates. Remove weeds to reduce competition for water and mass plants together to keep the soil cool. Buddleia, ice plant, tulips, sea holly, rosemary, hebe, teasel, rock rose, lavender and thyme

are all good examples of drought resistant plants.

What will it attract? Drought resistant plants are good for wildlife and provide food for birds, butterflies and bees.

Green roof on your shed, porch or conservatory

Why? A green roof will soak up rain, provide habitat for a range of species and looks extremely attractive!

How? The main principles of green roofs are that the roof must remain watertight, so make sure your waterproofing is intact. You may also need to strengthen your roof in order to hold the weight of the vegetation. Pre-seeded rolls of wildflower turf can be used so shop around and do some research on the different types available.

What will it attract? Bees, butterflies and birds.

If you would like to **find out more** about how to encourage wildlife into your garden, please see the Wildlife Gardening pages of our website at <http://www.hiwwt.org.uk/wildlife-gardening>.

If you have a question about wildlife you may find in your garden please contact **WildLine**, the Trust's free **wildlife information service** on 01489 774446 or Email: wildline@hiwwt.org.uk