



GO WILD IN THE GARDEN



Practical, low cost ideas and ten tips to encourage wildlife into your garden.

Any part of a garden, no matter what the size—small pots included—has the potential to be a valuable haven for wildlife. Choosing plants and creating areas for wildlife will add to your garden's character and so provide pleasure for all. And there's no need to stop at just your own patch: there are opportunities to enhance your surroundings at school or work, or at your local church, community garden or allotment.

Some plants are rich in nectar and pollen for insects like butterflies, bees and hoverflies. Other plants provide seeds, berries and hips for birds. Many more provide food and shelter for mammals, birds and insects that can be allies for the gardener.



Discover the wildlife in ten different areas in the garden. Choose the plants that appeal to you and see the benefit they will have for our local biodiversity.

♦ **Grow pots of herbs on the patio**—Chives, comfrey, sage, mint, borage, thyme, lavender and marjoram all provide an excellent source of nectar and smell wonderful too!

♦ **Plant an 'edible' hedge**—Dog rose, holly, hazel and hawthorn provide a valuable habitat for a range of creatures, help feed the birds in the winter and provide you with privacy.



♦ **Flower beds can be a feast of colour and scent**—Michaelmas daisy, mallow, phlox, ice plant, sunflowers, golden rod, foxglove, native bluebell and primrose attract butterflies and bees.

♦ **Use climbing or wall shrubs for a wildlife wall**—Honeysuckle, clematis, wisteria, dogwood, cotoneaster and ivy provide food for birds, bats and beneficial bugs.

♦ **In a very small garden use containers or window boxes**—Pot marigold, nasturtium, wallflower, lobelia, bizzy lizzie and candytuft for bees and butterflies.

♦ **Small trees can provide a focal point**—Crab apple, rowan and bird cherry provide fruit and berries for birds. Grow an old Scottish variety of fruit tree and share the fruit with your wildlife visitors



♦ **Even a small rockery can benefit wildlife**—Thyme, aubrieta, poached egg plant, rock rose, sedum and hebe for butterflies and bees.

♦ **Shrubs come in all shapes and sizes**—Buddleia for butterflies, flowering currant, hebe and mahonia for bees.

♦ **Create a wildlife meadow even if it's only a corner of your garden**—Campion, scabious, cranesbill, poppy and cornflower provide seeds for small birds or nectar for butterflies and bees.



♦ **Make use of small ponds and wet areas**—Marsh marigold, purple loosestrife, ragged robin, water avens and water forget-me-not for caddis flies, damsel flies and a variety of other insects which will in turn encourage frogs, toads and hedgehogs. Make the pond sides sloping and different depths to safeguard wildlife.

TOP TEN HINTS



Include plants that encourage birds and butterflies—Planting native wildflowers and some types of non-native garden plants can help attract birds and butterflies. Try to avoid species with double rows of petals as these often do not provide as much nectar as species with only a single row.

Reduce waste—By composting your garden and household waste you can then add it back into your garden the following year to improve your soil structure and help retain soil moisture. It will also reduce the amount of waste going to your local Landfill site and save you money. Check the base and sides of your compost for sleeping wildlife before using though.



Choose Peat-free compost—If you have to buy compost then choose one of the peat-free alternatives such as coir that are now widely available in garden centres. This will help protect Scotland's fast disappearing peat bogs.



Protect birds during the nesting season—Only cut down bushes and prune hedges at the end of the year to avoid the nesting season, or preferably leave until February/early March.



Create a 'housing estate' for your wildlife!—Put up a mixture of bird and bat boxes on a tree or on the outside of the house or garage. Consider a hedgehog box or a bee or butterfly hibernating box.



Provide suitable nest-building materials for birds—In spring leave suitable nesting materials out in the garden for the birds to collect. This can include dog combings, short lengths of human hair, natural wools, hay, straw. Swallows and house martins will appreciate an area of damp soil they can use to construct their mud nests.



Provide wildlife habitats—By piling up dead branches and decaying leaves in a quiet corner of your garden and leaving small patches of long grass you can provide rich habitats for hedgehogs, slow worms, insects, fungi, lichens and mosses.



Include a pond or make a 'bog garden'—This will encourage amphibians such as the Common Frog and Common Toad. The provision of water is also important for birds, especially in very cold and hot conditions, for drinking as well as for bathing.



Try using organic methods to control weeds and pests—Beer traps are a good way to control slugs as is the encouragement of frogs and toads to your garden. Bark chippings or a thick layer of compost added to the soil can reduce the growth of weeds dramatically. Try companion planting to attract beneficial insects to predate on harmful ones: Interplant marigolds or chives with tomatoes or nasturtiums amongst cabbages, broccoli and apple trees.



Reduce waste and your costs by re-using empty plastic or glass tubs and bottles—Old yoghurt pots as well as margarine and ice-cream tubs make ideal trays for raising seeds—remember to pierce the bottoms for drainage holes. Empty vitamin bottles are also ideal for storing seeds.



"Every Action Counts"

The Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan can be viewed on www.angus.gov.uk or www.pk.gov.uk, or further details are available from Catherine Lloyd Tel: 01738 478481 Email: tayside.biodiversity@ukf.net

