

Wildlife-friendly Gardening

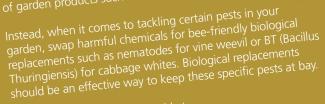
Let your garden grow on the wild side, it's called wildlife for a reason! If you want to take it slowly, dedicate an area as a wilder garden, where longer grass can shelter creatures, insects won't be damaged, homes won't be trodden and native plants can settle in.

Aim to build a diverse and balanced ecosystem. Habitat-loss is a real problem for UK wildlife so getting a variety of habitats into your garden is really important and will attract a wide range of creatures.

Finally, don't be too tidy, embrace a longer lawn and learn to love a few weeds!

Pesticides in the garden

Many garden products contain harmful chemicals that are damaging to wildlife and are contributing to the decline in numbers. In particular, bees are suffering dramatic decline which has been linked to the use of neonicotinoid insecticides which are widely used in farming (although they are banned in organic farming). They are also found in a number of garden products such as bug sprays!



Find out what products to avoid at www.soilassociation.org/householdpesticides

Take a tip from an organic farmer:

'Red and white clover are mainstays of organic farming systems for very good reasons. They are really good at helping maintain healthy soil, so they'll be great for your garden too, but the really fantastic thing about them is that bees love feasting on their pollen! Red clover is one of the bumble bees favourite foods (its traditional name 'Bee Bread' says it all) whilst White clover is particularly attractive to Honeybees because their shorter

Things to avoid

tongues are better suited to it!"

- Avoid the use of peat in your garden, it's a non-renewable resource and often it will have been extracted from a wild natural habitat, damaging that ecosystem and the wildlife depending on it.
- Slug pellets can be harmful to hedgehogs and birds so aim for a natural defence system. In particular avoid anything that contains a harmful ingredient called 'metaldehyde'.
- Uncertified wooden furniture: Make sure your wooden garden furniture is FSC certified, then you can be sure it's come from a responsibly managed woodland.

Choose organic wherever possible for wonderful wildlife

Organic farmers use many of these techniques, making their farms havens for wildlife. Studies have shown wildlife is 50% more abundant on organic farms, with up to 30% more species overall! When it comes to your food shopping you can choose to support wildlife-friendly organic farming by looking for organic products. From fruit, to bread, to milk and cotton clothing, if you choose organic you can rest assured it's been produced with respect for wildlife.



Look for the Soil Association symbol when you shop.

Help UK wildlife get back on its tiny feet by becoming an Organic Wildlife Warrior from just £2.50 a month. We're looking for 1,000 Organic Wildlife Warriors to support our work for wonderful wildlife.

Find out more and sign up at www.soilassociation.org/wildlifewarrior



