

Wildlife gardening



Britain's gardens cover more land than the country's nature reserves combined – estimated to be over 10 million acres. If we all tend to our beloved gardens in a way that's sensitive to wildlife, imagine the impact we could have on the likes of pollinators, hedgehogs, and precious toads!

#30DaysWild

We've produced this guide, with some top tips from Gardeners' World's Monty Don, that we hope will help you to get started on your wildlife garden. For further help and guidance, visit wildlifetrusts.org/gardening.

Top Tips from Monty Don



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Preserving our wildlife starts at home. Gardens are not just the easiest way to watch a huge and fascinating range of wildlife but also desperately important in providing habitats for species that are otherwise under threat. Making our gardens wildlife-friendly is easy and fun - and makes a huge difference. The three most important things everyone can do are:

- Stop using any insecticides, herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, slug pellets or sprays. Instead of - fruitlessly - trying to kill so-called 'pests' encourage predators such as blackbirds, frogs and hedgehogs into your garden and they will do the work for you.
- Create plenty of cover. This includes long grass for insects and small mammals; climbers, shrubs, hedges and trees for nesting birds and piles of leaves, logs and bug 'hotels' for insects.
- Add some water to your garden. It does not have to be big or grand to make a huge difference. Just a small pond with marginal planting to provide cover, a shallow 'beach' for easy access and some stones and perhaps an old log in the water to perch on. Dragonflies, frogs, bats and birds will love it - and so will you.

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Go peat free

Peat has been a major ingredient of the compost used in gardening for many years.

This peat is dug out of wild places, damaging some of the last remaining peatlands in Europe.

This process also releases carbon into the atmosphere, accelerating climate change.

By buying peat free compost, and checking what soil has been used when buying pot plants, you're helping our precious peatlands and sending a message to manufacturers that people want peat-free products.

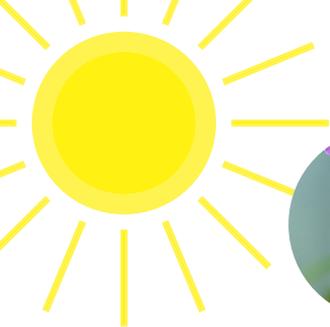
You could even try making your own compost using waste from your garden!



Share your wildlife gardens with us on social media using

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If you build it, they will come...

Take action for insects and provide homes for them in your garden! Check out our activity sheets for building [bug hotels](#), [bee homes](#), and [log shelters](#) - or go all out by following the tips in this great guide.

Not only are these great weekend projects, you'll be creating fantastic new habitats for insects! You can also help by leaving dead stems where they are in autumn and winter. They make perfect overwintering homes for insects.

As Monty has said, adding water to your garden is incredibly important. Building a wildlife pond will help a huge number of creatures, and it can be made from something as simple and small as a washing up bowl! Dragonflies, damselflies, frogs, toads, newts, birds, bees and hedgehogs all benefit from ponds in gardens.

No matter how big or small your garden is, there's a pond for you! [Download our guide](#).



Welcome worms

Having a good population of earthworms in your garden is great for your soil. They will eat dead matter in the ground such as leaves and plants, turning it into extremely nutritious poo that improves the quality of your soil, helping plants grow.

They also provide a food source for birds and other animals! To find out more, [download our guide](#).

Plant for pollinators

Get your garden buzzing with pollen and nectar rich plants!

Try planting:

- Cornflower
- Lavender
- Honeysuckle
- Foxglove
- Verbana

We've got more perfect plants for you to explore on [our guide to planting for pollinators](#).

Put your feet up...

Sometimes, the best thing you can do to make your garden more wildlife-friendly is... nothing!

Leave a patch or strip of your lawn to grow wild. Long grass peppered with flowers or 'weeds' is beloved by wildlife!

Remember to stay away from chemicals like pesticides, too, as they're really harmful to wildlife.

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