



**Dorset**  
Wildlife Trust

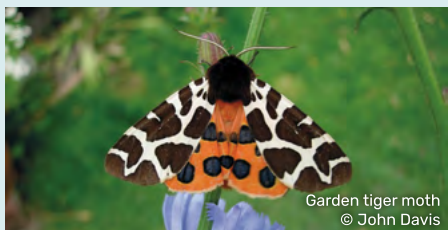
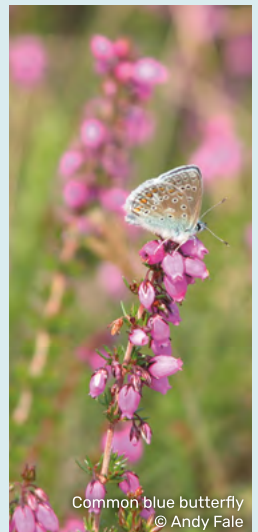
# Pollinators

**Wildlife-friendly gardening**



# FLOWER BEDS AND BORDERS

Flower beds for wildlife can be attractive to you and to pollinators. A border can be any design you like; formal or informal. It is what you grow and how you tend it that is important.



# TOP TIPS TO ATTRACT POLLINATORS

## 1 DIVERSITY IS THE BEST POLICY

Grow more flowers, shrubs and trees which are pollen and nectar-rich.

## 2 TO GROW OR NOT TO GROW

Provide both short and long grass. Both serve as potential nesting or sheltering sites for different species of pollinators. Leave dandelions, clover, plantains and bird's-foot trefoil to flower in your lawn where possible. Leave bramble and nettles to grow in a quiet corner as they are invaluable for pollinators.

## 3 NOOKS AND CRANNIES

Create nest and hibernation spots by building log piles, bug hotels, leaf piles and leaving standing dead wood to rot naturally.

## 4 NO CHEMICALS

Fertiliser, herbicides and pesticides can all have negative effects on wildlife. Instead, encourage natural predators into your garden. Log piles and compost bins are a fantastic refuge for lots of insects.

## 5 PROVIDE A WATER SOURCE

Can you create a wildlife pond? Or alternatively, how about a bucket sunk into the ground or a bird bath containing a few submerged rocks to enable bees to reach the water? Plant with native aquatic flowering plants.

## 6 PROVIDE FOOD ALL YEAR ROUND

Provide flowering plants for as many months as possible. Spring or late winter flowers are crucial for pollinators coming out of hibernation whilst autumn flowers help them to build up their reserves for winter.

## 7 CONTAINER PLANTING

If you have a small space such as a balcony you can still provide flowers for our pollinators as many nectar-rich plants are ideal for containers.

# POLLINATORS IN A NUTSHELL

## WHAT IS A POLLINATOR?

Pollinators are insects that help plants reproduce.

Pollinating insects include hoverflies, wasps, flies, beetles, butterflies, moths, bumblebees, honey bees and solitary bees. Don't forget to care about the whole lifecycle of our pollinators – butterflies and moths all develop from caterpillars which need a home too!



Humming-bird hawk-moth  
© Ken Dolbear MBE



Bumble bee on teasel  
© Tony Bates MBE



Thick-legged flower beetle  
© Ken Dolbear MBE

## WHAT IS POLLINATION?

Herbaceous plants, trees and shrubs produce pollen and nectar which these insects eat. When they are feeding, tiny pollen grains rub off on to their bodies. As they move from flower to flower to feed, these pollen grains rub off on a different flower therefore allowing it to fertilise and go on to produce seeds or fruit.

**Pollen:** Pollen is collected by some bees to feed their young. It is high in protein.

**Nectar:** A sweet liquid which attracts pollinators to the plant.

Pollinators are in decline so what you do in your garden matters!



Comma butterfly on blackberries  
© Jane Franklin

# NECTAR-RICH PLANTS FOR SUMMER THROUGH TO AUTUMN

## SUMMER

- Salvia
- Lavender
- Knapweed
- Scabious
- Phacelia
- Catmint
- Chives
- Viper's bugloss
- Wood forget-me-not
- Mint
- Borage
- Lemon balm
- Summer-flowering jasmine
- Sweet rocket
- Evening primrose
- Night-scented stock
- Tobacco plant (but only *Nicotiana glauca*)
- Bramble



## AUTUMN

- Sage
- Abelia (bee bush)
- Honeysuckle
- Sedum
- Perennial wallflower
- White deadnettle
- Yarrow
- Hyssop



## IVY - THE FACTS

Our native climbing evergreen plant, ivy, is often demonised but is a hugely valuable addition to your garden.

- It flowers and fruits late in the year (autumn) thus providing much needed late season nectar and pollen for pollinators and fruit for birds and small mammals. Mature, overgrown ivy can be pruned back in mid-spring.
- Ivy does not kill trees - it only uses the structure of a tree to climb up to reach the light.
- Ivy does not damage brickwork (unless already cracked or vulnerable). In fact, ivy grown on brickwork can regulate extreme fluctuations in temperature: keeping it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. It can also protect brickwork from frost, pollution and salt.
- Ivy provides shelter and nesting sites for small mammals, birds and insects all year round.



# NECTAR-RICH PLANTS FOR WINTER THROUGH TO SPRING

## WINTER

- Hellebore
- Michaelmas daisies
- Snowdrops
- Winter aconite
- Evergreen clematis
- Lungwort (*Pulmonaria*)
- Mahonia (but not aquifolium)
- Winter flowering heather
- Winter flowering honeysuckle
- Winter jasmine
- Perennial wallflower 'Erysimum'
- Native ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Rosemary
- Lesser celandine



## SPRING

- Crocus
- Apple/crab apple
- Cowslip
- Cuckoo flower
- Marjoram (oregano)
- Native primrose (*Pulmonaria vulgaris*)
- Native bluebell
- Crocus
- Grape hyacinth
- Willow
- Pussy willow
- Common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) is an important food plant of many caterpillars

## DANDELIONS AND MORE

If you can bear to leave a few dandelions in the lawn or a quiet corner, they are a reliable source of nectar for a range of insects. The same applies to the humble daisy, plantain, clover and primrose.

## HERBS

Cutting herb plants back hard in midsummer means you gain more fresh herbs and they will flower much later in autumn, providing extra nectar supplies. Try to resist the urge to tidy plants away at the end of the season as they provide vital hibernation sites for many insects throughout the winter.



Marbled white butterfly on daisies  
© Tony Bates



Primrose  
© Nigel Brooks

# HOMES FOR POLLINATORS

Pollinators need nooks, crannies and crevices to shelter and hibernate in. You can provide this in your garden in several ways:

- **Long grass:** Leave areas of long grass for moths and other insects to shelter in.
- **Bug hotel:** Build a bug hotel using natural and manmade materials such as old plant pots, bricks, sticks, leaves, bamboo canes. Bug hotels are best placed in shady, damp areas.
- **Bee home:** Can be made from bamboo canes set into a wooden frame. Or drill holes 15cm in depth, with no bigger than 1cm wide holes in logs or pieces of wood. Best placed in direct sunlight next to flowering plants.
- **Standing dead wood:** Leave safe, standing dead wood to rot naturally.
- **Log pile:** Use logs to create a log pile in a shady corner.
- **Compost heap:** Make your own compost - it's a great hiding place for all sorts of insects.
- **Make a bumblebee home:** Fill a terracotta plant pot with hay, turn it upside down and bury it.
- **Seed heads:** Leave seed heads over winter for insects to shelter.
- **Leaf litter:** Leave some leaves to provide cover for overwintering insects. Earthworms will save you a job recycling them in the soil.
- **Bird boxes:** Old boxes can become good insect homes. Tree bumblebees may even take up residence.



Bug hotel  
© Katharine Davies



Collecting logs  
© Katharine Davies

## DORSET WILDLIFE TRUST

Our vision is to create a 'Wilder Dorset', rich in wildlife, valued and nurtured by everyone. By 2030, we want to see 30% of land and sea managed for the benefits of nature and we want to help more people take action for nature. A 'Wilder Dorset' will safeguard our natural world for future generations and enable people to live healthier and more fulfilling lives.

With the support of our 27,000 members, our volunteers, supporters, and partners, we champion wildlife and natural places on our 40 nature reserves and work to deliver nature's recovery throughout Dorset.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

[wildlifetrusts.org/action-for-insects](http://wildlifetrusts.org/action-for-insects)  
[wildaboutgardens.org](http://wildaboutgardens.org)  
[rhs.org.uk](http://rhs.org.uk)

## take ACTION #WilderDorset

There are lots of ways to encourage wildlife in your garden. Plant flowers to attract pollinators, make a hedgehog doorway in your fence or simply create different habitats such as hedges, flowering trees or long grass. Large or small, your garden will be a stepping stone, helping wildlife to travel from place to place, to breed, feed and shelter.



Make space for nature in your green space and apply for your wildlife-friendly plaque. Visit [dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/gardenscheme](http://dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/gardenscheme) to find out how to qualify.

## Our thanks to The Gardens Group for sponsoring this leaflet



The Gardens Group is made up of three garden centres, each as unique as the plants within them,

located in Sherborne (Castle Gardens), Yeovil (Brimsmore Gardens) and Poundbury (Poundbury Gardens).

United by a commitment to green spaces and the wider community, The Gardens Group's team of experts includes

indoor and outdoor plant enthusiasts, lepidopterists and wildlife warriors, all ready to inspire, educate and engage with gardeners of all ages and levels of expertise.

The garden centres are also home to three award-winning restaurants and a farm shop, built on people and place, as well as The Gardens Group's hugely popular and multi award-winning Christmas displays.

To find out more, go to [www.thegardensgroup.co.uk](http://www.thegardensgroup.co.uk).