



12 MONTH PLANNER

Garden & Wildlife





GET WILD AT HOME

CREATE A HAVEN FOR YOU, AS WELL AS WILDLIFE

Do you have access to a garden or any outdoor space? Why not turn it into a haven for wildlife!

It could be as simple as letting your grass grow or for the more adventurous creating your own mini pond. From bird boxes to butterfly friendly planting, a mini pond or log pile - there's an action for everyone.

By following our top tips for each month, you can create a wild space at home, whether that's in your garden or on your balcony.



EVERY WILDER SPACE PROVIDES A VITAL LINK FOR WILDLIFE



With an estimated 24 million gardens of all shapes and sizes in the UK, the actions you take at home can make a **big** difference for wildlife.

No matter how small the space, when linked up they create corridors to allow wildlife to move around which has a big impact on nature.

Every action you take will make a difference to declining wildlife, by creating space for nature you will not only help the nature crisis but benefit yourself and family.

So give it a go and watch as wildlife brings colour, movement and beauty to your wild space. What will your top actions be?

My To Do List

1.

2.

3.

JANUARY

- Build or put-up bird nesting boxes.
- Put out bird seed in winter.
- Provide water for birds.
- Trim straggly hedges and bushes once the birds have eaten all the berries.
- Take part in the RSPB Big Bird Watch.
- Start to grow chillies.
- Plant a wild cherry tree.



TOP TIPS FOR BIRD NESTING BOXES

Different types of box will attract different species. Think carefully about whether there is sufficient food available before putting up boxes for insect feeding birds.

Place your box in a sheltered position on a tree or wall, as close to North east as possible to avoid overheating or getting too wet.

If decorating your box, use a water-based paint and not lead-based paints or creosote, as these are toxic to birds.



FEBRUARY

- Get a water butt/barrel.
- Clean and top up bird feeders monthly.
If using peanuts, use a proper peanut feeder as whole nuts can choke young chicks.
- Build a pond to catch water and help wildlife.
If you don't have much space, make a pot in a pond.
- Put up bat boxes. They are more likely to be used during their first summer if they are put up before the bats emerge from hibernation.
- Look out for early frogspawn at this time.
- Grow broad beans and sow sweet pea seeds.



DID YOU KNOW?

The UK is home to 18 species of bat, the largest being the noctule which weighs the same as four £1 coins, and the smallest is the Pipistrelle, which weighs as little as a 2p coin. This diminutive bat has a giant appetite, however – it is known to gobble up more than 500 insects in an hour!





Make a bee hotel.

Plant summer bulbs.

Plant lavender for the bees.

As the weather starts to warm up listen out for birds starting to sing and look out for the first butterflies emerging.

Now is the time to start growing carrots and strawberries.

HOW TO MAKE A BEE HOTEL

Step 1: Use untreated wood to make a rectangular frame that the stems will sit inside.

Step 2: Using hollow stems of different diameters (2-10mm) such as bramble, reed or bamboo, snip to different lengths to fit your frame. Discard any bent or knobbly ones.

Step 3: Carefully pack your frame with stems. The whole thing will lock solid once all stems are in place.

Step 4: Add a backing board to the bee hotel and hang or stand it in your garden.





- Take part in #GrowDon'tMow.
- Plant sunflowers this month.
- Maintain water features and ponds.
Now is the time to plant pond plants.
- Sow wildflower seeds.
- Start to grow tomatoes.
- Look out for swallows.



Help the wildlife on your doorstep by locking away mower with our #GrowDon'tMow campaign!

Take part in #GrowDon'tMow to save time and enjoy visits from bees, butterflies, hedgehogs and all sorts of wonderful wildlife in your own gardens.

Your challenge can be large or small. Either turn a small patch or the whole garden wild - it is up to you! All you have to do is leave the grass and watch it grow... easy!

- #GoPottyforWildlife by planting seeds in recycled pots providing food for pollinators.
- Source peat-free compost.
- Take plants out of the green house if you have one.
- Put in your bedding plants and plant up hanging baskets. Yellow and purple flowers will attract butterflies.
- Plant summer flowering bulbs such as dahlias and lilies.
- Watch out for tadpoles in your pond.

TELL YOUR NEIGHBOURS ALL ABOUT IT!

Joining in local actions shows the community that you care about wildlife.





- STOP** using pesticides in your garden.
- Plant seeds outside.
- Sign up to 30 Days Wild on our website for your free downloadable kit.
- Sow hardy annuals and poppies at this time of year.
- Plant pumpkins ready for October .



- 1.** Attract wildlife to your garden to help keep insect numbers down. Hedgehogs and frogs help to keep slugs at bay.
- 2.** Plant 'companion' plants among other plants to help them grow. 
- 3.** Use crushed eggshells, coffee grounds scattered around plants or even copper to repel slugs. Salt is not recommended.
- 4.** Rotate the timing or the location of your plants to avoid recurring infestations from pests that remain dormant in the soil.





- Make a window box.
- Grow herbs such as coriander, parsley and basil.
- Plant honeysuckle, it attracts bees and smells beautiful too.
- Use a tub to create a bird bath.
- Look out for the hummingbirds, hawk-moths and swifts.

Herb gardens can be planted in raised beds, borders, containers or window boxes, any space will do.

Planting herbs will attract important pollinators such as birds and butterflies, which will, in turn, attract birds and small mammals looking for a meal.

Grouping planters together provides shelter for wildlife between them and increases your watering efficiency.



ROSEMARY

CARAWAY

HYSSOP

ENGLISH LAVENDER

COMMON SAGE

WILD THYME

FENNEL

CHIVES

COMMON MINT

WILD MARJORAM



- Make a bug hotel.
- Clean bird baths each month.
- Water plants regularly using water butt.
- Keep ponds topped up.
- Create a hedgehog highway and ask your neighbours to do the same.
- Plan a wild street party. Get your neighbours to come to together and take some wild actions with you

HOW TO MAKE A HEDGEHOG HOLE

Hedgehogs need to roam far and wide in search of food, mates and nesting sites - the average hedgehog roams 2km a night!

1. Remove a fence panel and measure and mark a 13cm x 13cm hole at the bottom of the panel.
2. Using a coping saw, cut out the marked hole. Use sandpaper to smooth any rough edges.
3. Put your fence panel back. Your hedgehog highway is now open for business!



SEPTEMBER



- Cut grass once all of the flowers have gone after #GrowDon'tMow.
- Use your grass clippings to create a habitat house.
- Leave the cutting and tidying up of the rest of your garden until the end of Winter.
- Make your own compost. using your grass clippings.
- Plant native bulbs for Spring such as crocuses, daffodils, hyacinthus and tulips.

HABITAT HOUSE CHALLENGE

- Step 1:** Once you decide to make the cut, leave the cuttings to dry out for a few days
- Step 2:** Shake the seeds out ready to sow for next year
- Step 3:** Get some woody cuttings from your shrubs ready to make a hibernation sandwich with your grass cuttings
- Step 4:** Find a nice spot, layer the grass cuttings up along with the woody shrub cuttings and keep doing this until you get a big pile of lovely natural insect habitat
- Step 5:** Get ready to start #GrowDon'tMow all over again!



POTATOES IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS
POTATOES



Growing new potatoes for Christmas dinner is easier than you might think. You just need to plant them a little later, September rather than late summer.

If you can, buy some quick-maturing varieties online or at your local plant nursery shop. You can also plant those shop bought forgotten spuds that are growing tentacle like sprouts.

Plant them in large pots or potato bags, buckets, large plant pots and even shopping bags! Raise them outdoors in the decent weather and then move indoors at the first sign of frost.



- Step 1:** Fill a potato bag or large pot (at least 40cm wide) with multi-purpose peat free compost until it's two thirds full.
- Step 2:** Lightly firm the compost then set three seed potato tubers on the surface, 20-30cm apart. Add more compost to cover.
- Step 3:** Water well and then allow to drain, place the container in a well-lit area to start sprouting. When shoots appear, add a further layer of compost to cover them. Keep repeating this until the bag or pot is full.
- Step 4:** When Christmas comes and all the foliage has died back, tip your container upside down and see what treasure you find.





Plant winter heathers. They are a lifeline for bumblebees and solitary bees, which do not store food and emerge in mild spells in winter and early spring.

Plant a winter herb garden.

Take part in the Big Wild Walk. Fundraise for the Wildlife Trusts whilst getting outdoors enjoying nature. Visit our website to sign up.

Now is the time of year to gather seeds, fruits and nuts and to try and plant for the future. Growing trees from seed is easier than you might think – and it's lots of fun!



DID YOU KNOW?

Halloween costumes are often made up of **90%** plastic. An incredible **7 million Halloween costumes** are thrown away each year in the UK.

HOW TO BAKE A PUMPKIN PIE



STEP 1

Place the pumpkin in a large saucepan, cover with water, simmer for 15 mins.

Drain pumpkin; let cool.



STEP 2

Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Roll out the pastry and use it to line a 22cm loose-bottomed tart tin. Line the pastry with baking parchment and baking beans, bake for 15 mins. Remove the beans and paper and cook for a further 10 mins until the base is pale golden.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly.

STEP 3

Increase oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Push the cooled pumpkin through a sieve. In a separate bowl, combine the sugar, salt, nutmeg and half the cinnamon. Mix in the beaten eggs, melted butter and milk, then add to the pumpkin purée and stir. Pour into the tart shell and cook for 10 mins, then reduce the temperature to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Continue to bake for 35-40 mins until the filling has just set.

INGREDIENTS

- 750g pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled, deseeded & cut into chunks
- 350g sweet shortcrust pastry
- plain flour, for dusting
- 140g caster sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp fresh nutmeg, grated
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 25g butter, melted
- 175ml milk
- 1 tbsp icing sugar



Cool & enjoy



TO DO
LIST

NOVEMBER

- Plant native snowdrops.
- Plant a tree whilst the the roots are dormant.
- Clean out nest boxes.



TIPS FOR CLEANING YOUR NESTBOX:



After the end of each breeding season, all nestboxes should be taken down, old nesting materials removed, and the box should be scalded with boiling water to kill any parasites. Do not use insecticides or flea-powders – boiling water is adequate. Annual cleaning is best carried out in October or November.

Under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, if unhatched eggs are found in the box, they can only legally be removed from October to January inclusive, and they must be destroyed – it is illegal to keep them.

TOP TIP

Before you light your bonfire check for hedgehogs. Lift parts of the bonfire section by section using a broom. Do not use a fork, spade or rake as this may injure a hedgehog.



TO DO
LIST

DECEMBER

- Make a wreath for birds.
- Make a homemade bird feeder.
- Plant holly & ivy.

TOP TIPS FOR AN ECO-FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS

Use brown paper or a reusable wrapping option instead of shiny, glittery wrapping paper which is not recyclable.

Sellotape is made of plastic – use brown paper tape or get creative with some ribbon or string

Avoid tinsel (it's plastic) and make your own - bunting, origami, pinecone decorations, holly leaves

Turn off your Christmas lights overnight and when you are out the house to save energy

Opt for secondhand gifts and support charity shops or for gifts with minimum or recyclable packaging

Adopt an animal as a gift or Give the gift of Wildlife Trust membership

Opt for a Christmas tree in a pot that can be reused each year



WILD AT HOME

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JANUARY



- Build or put up nesting boxes
- Put out bird seed in winter
- Grow chillies



FEBRUARY



- Get a water butt/barrel
- Build a pond
- Put up bat boxes



MAY

- #GoPottyForWildlife
- Source peat-free compost
- Create a hedgehog highway



JUNE

- Stop using pesticides
- Take part in 30 Days Wild
- Plant pumpkins ready for October



SEPTEMBER

- Cut your grass
- Make a habitat house
- Plant bulbs for Spring



OCTOBER

- Have an eco-friendly Halloween
- Join in the Big Wild Walk
- Plant winter heather





MARCH



- Make a bee hotel
- Plant lavender for the bees
- Grow carrots and strawberries



APRIL

- Take part in #GrowDon'tMow
- Leave a wild patch
- Grow sunflowers and tomatoes



JULY

- Grow herbs
- Make a window box
- Use a tub to create a bird bath



AUGUST

- Make a bug hotel
- Create a hedgehog highway
- Water plants regularly using water butt



NOVEMBER

- Plant trees
- Clean nest boxes
- Plant native snowdrops



DECEMBER

- Make a wreath for birds
- Have an eco-friendly Christmas
- Plant holly & ivy





small local **actions** for big global **impact**



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