



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Wildlife-Friendly Gardening

A guide to supporting wildlife
in your outdoor space



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Introduction

Nature is in crisis. England is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, with one in six species at risk of extinction. Even in areas like Westmorland and Furness, which is known for its natural beauty, wildlife has declined significantly. Habitats have become split up and many species are relying more on towns and villages for survival. In response, Westmorland and Furness Council declared biodiversity and climate crises in 2023 and are committed to helping nature to recover.

Private gardens and outdoor spaces are habitats for wildlife, as well as stepping stones and corridors, connecting habitats and helping some animals move safely through the landscape. Together, gardens cover an area greater than all the UK's National Nature Reserves combined, making them a powerful way of helping nature recover. By making small changes in our own spaces, we can help to restore and connect habitats and recover species numbers and range.

Wildlife-friendly gardening is not just about helping nature, it can also mean creating or enhancing spaces that bring joy, improve wellbeing, and strengthen our connection to the natural world. Every action, no matter how small, contributes to a bigger picture of nature recovery across Westmorland and Furness.

Purpose of this guide

This guide will:

- Introduce wildlife-friendly gardening
- Explain why wildlife-friendly gardening is important
- Describe the benefits of wildlife-friendly gardening, including benefits to people
- Provide ideas to help native wildlife in your garden, allotment, balcony or outdoor space

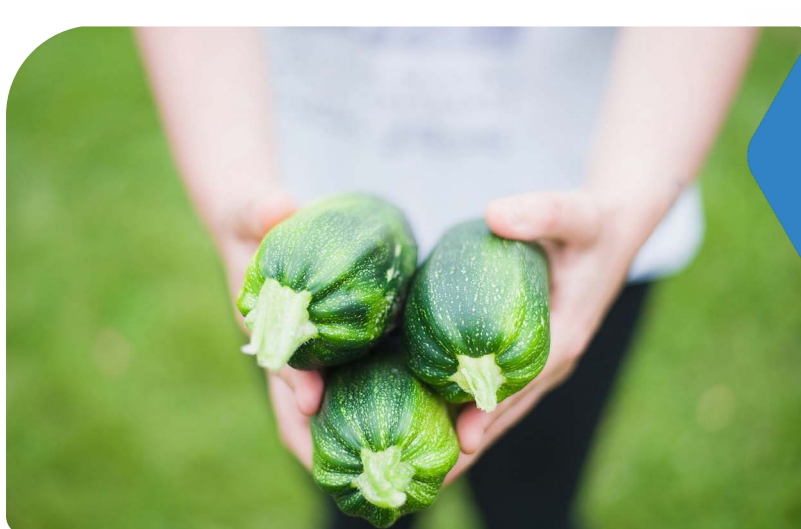
Who is it for

This guide is designed for anyone in Westmorland and Furness with some outdoor space.

There are ideas and tips for lots of different spaces. Whether your space is small or large, hardstanding or you're already doing a lot for wildlife, hopefully there is something in this guide that you can put into practice.

If you don't have access to any outdoor space, you could still make a difference in your local community through local gardening groups.

Find a local group through the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS): <https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/find-a-group>



What is wildlife-friendly gardening?

Animals and plants that have been in the UK for a long time without human involvement are our native wildlife.

Wildlife-friendly gardening means gardening in a way that will help support native wildlife, as well as creating a space for you to enjoy.

All life needs food, water and shelter to survive. In gardening, food could mean flowers, leaves, fruit or other species lower down the food chain. Shelter could mean long grass, a hedge, nest box or compost heap. Water can come from ponds or bird baths.

By carrying out some simple actions you can provide wildlife with food, water and shelter that will help them to survive and flourish.

Why is wildlife-friendly gardening important

Nature is in decline, and the UK is in the bottom 10% of countries worldwide for the amount of nature we have left. Unfortunately, Westmorland and Furness is no different and wildlife continues to decline because of pressures like loss of their natural habitat, climate change and the use of pesticides.

Our gardens and outdoor spaces connect to the wider landscape and lots of areas designated for their value to nature extend into our urban areas, letting wildlife travel into towns and villages.

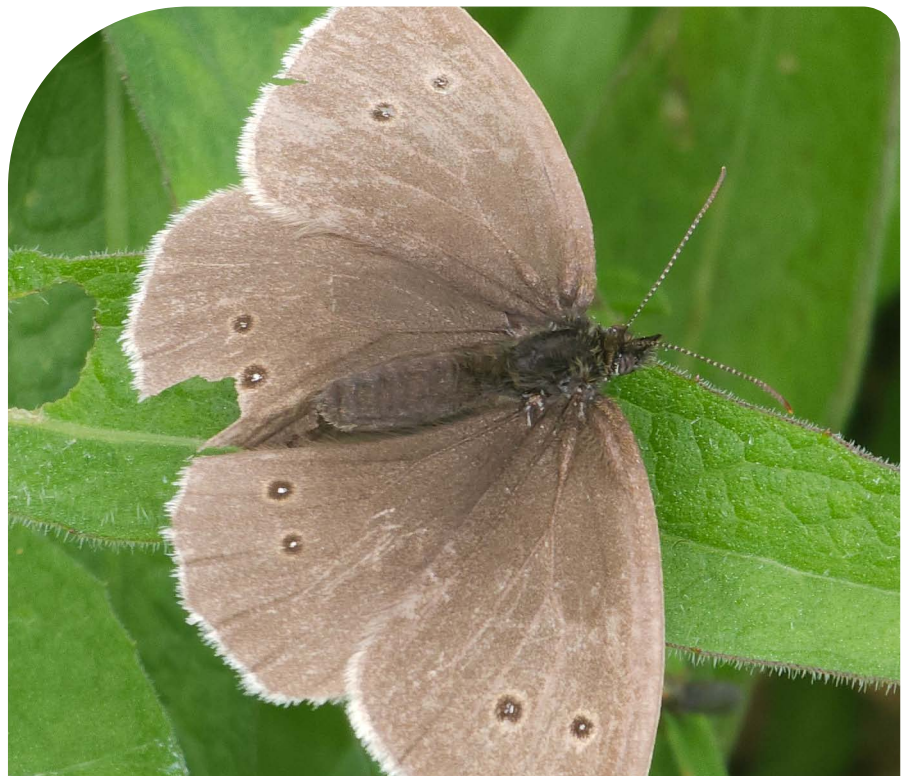
Gardens provide important habitats for lots of species including nesting birds, mammals like bats and hedgehogs, reptiles like slow worms, amphibians, and insects. Some declining species are now found more in gardens than surrounding farmland.

Around 87% of households in the UK have a garden, and the size of gardens combined is just under a quarter of the size of Wales (over 520,000 hectares).

Our outdoor spaces have huge potential for nature recovery but wildlife in gardens is also under pressure from things like increasing hard surfaces, low maintenance features such as artificial grass and paving, and pesticides. Even small actions to make gardens more wildlife friendly can help nature to survive and recover.

Cumbria's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has identified species that are threatened in Westmorland and Furness. Threatened species that can really benefit from wildlife-friendly gardening are within the LNRS's gardens and brownfield sites species assemblage. These are:

- Birds: ringed plover, swifts.
- Butterflies: small blue, dingy skipper, grayling and brown hairstreak
- Bees: moss carder, wall mason, andrena apicata, andrena ruficrus, bombus rupestris, colletes fodiens
- Plants: heath cudweed, yarrow broomrape
- Slow worm
- Microdon mutabilis hoverfly



Benefits

There are many benefits of wildlife-friendly gardening, for wildlife and people. It can help provide and connect habitats, allowing wildlife to move through the landscape which can be important for their survival. With more habitats and an easier ability to travel between them, wildlife-friendly gardening can increase species numbers and range and contribute to nature recovery.

Sharing our outdoor spaces with nature can also bring us joy. The act of gardening can help improve our wellbeing, and studies show there is a link between spending time outdoors in nature and positive mental health. It also acts as a gentle form of exercise, contributing towards physical wellbeing.

Getting started

Wildlife-friendly gardening doesn't need to be overwhelming, expensive or take over your outdoor space. You can pick one activity or several and make changes over time.

To help pick what activity or activities might be most suitable consider:

- What you use your outdoor space for
- What space you have available or what existing space(s) you could improve
- Any particular wildlife you would like to support

What can you do

Ideas for all spaces

Planting

Bees and pollinators are in decline; gardeners can help by planting flowers, shrubs and trees that provide food sources for pollinating insects.

With planting, variety is key. Plant diversity has positive effects on soil health by increasing the diversity of organisms. Having plants that flower at different times of year will help provide year-round food sources.

Different pollinators prefer different flower shapes so having a mix can boost biodiversity. Caterpillars of butterflies and moths might only have one or two plants they can live on or eat so planting a mix of species will maximise their chances.

Flowers with one layer of petals, called single flowers, are more accessible to pollinators than flowers with multiple layers, called double flowers.

Native plants like primrose, sweet violet, oxeye daisy, field scabious, common yarrow and betony are great for boosting our native biodiversity but lots of non-native plants are also brilliant for wildlife. Overall, the more planting and variety of flowering times, shapes, colours and smells the better.

The RHS have selected a range of year-round flowering plants, shrubs and trees good for pollinators. All plants on the list are widely available to buy in the UK, can be grown outdoors, and are visited by UK pollinators: www.rhs.org.uk/science/research/plants-for-pollinators



Be careful to check plants you buy aren't invasive or likely to take over your outdoor space. RHS lists some potentially troublesome plants:

www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/garden-thugs-potential-nuisance-plants

Cumbria Local Nature Partnership have developed Cumbria's Plan Bee where you can find out more about pollinators and has actions to make gardens pollinator-friendly:

www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/Cumbria-Pollinators-Strategy.pdf

By adding or increasing the amount of planting in your outdoor space, you can also get creative with cuttings and make your own floral displays or wreaths.

Borders

Connectivity of gardens is key in maintaining wildlife and biodiversity. A garden that is great for wildlife only benefits those animals if boundaries such as fences and walls allow them access.

To help wildlife travel in and out of your outdoor space, consider soft borders such as hedging, create a hedgehog hole in your fence with agreement from your neighbour, or take a few bricks out of the bottom of your wall, if safe to do so.

Having a hedge instead of a fence is great for letting wildlife travel and has extra benefits of providing shelter, nesting places and food depending on the species. Deciduous hedges can provide some colour and interest and tend to offer more value for wildlife than evergreens. Evergreens still provide value for wildlife as well as privacy year-round but may need more regular pruning than deciduous hedges.

Pick species suitable for your planting area. Some good tree species to include in your hedge include:

- Crab apple
- Field maple
- Hawthorn
- Hazel
- Rowan
- Silver birch
- Whitebeam

The Woodland Trust provide advice on how to plant and maintain native hedges:

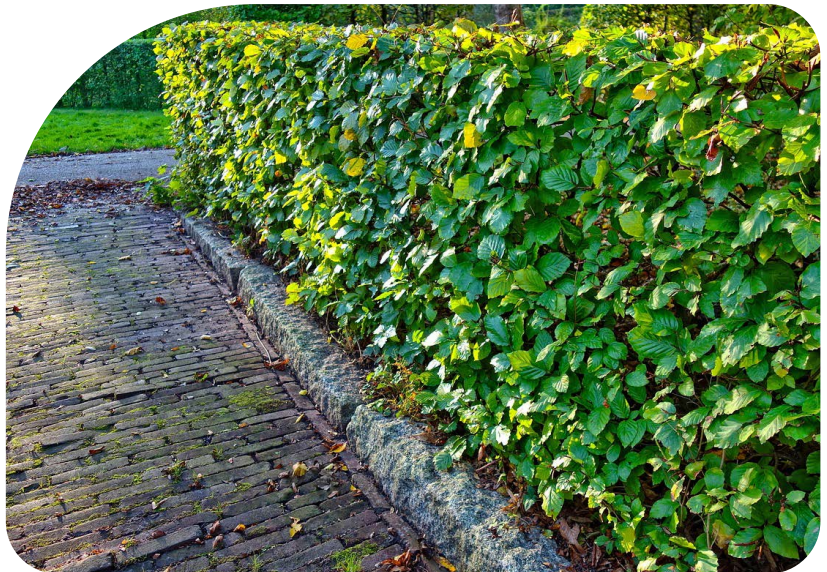
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/managing-trees-and-woods/hedge-planting-and-maintenance/

Swap hard surfaces for soft ones

Areas of low-maintenance hard paving in gardens is increasing, for example for patios and parking.

If you can, lift some paving or gravel and swap it for some planting. Even a small bed or border will help. Not only will this create a new habitat for wildlife, but it will also help reduce water run-off in times of heavy rain.

Artificial lawns have also increased in popularity because of their lower maintenance than natural lawns. However, they reduce the levels of air and water that can reach the soil which negatively impacts soil health, and limit access to the soil underneath for burrowing insects and the birds that feed on them. Not only are natural lawns better for wildlife, but artificial lawns can also release microplastics and are difficult to recycle.



Bird feeders

Providing natural sources of food is the best way of supporting wildlife where you can. Plants with fruits, berries, seeds and nuts can be great natural sources of food for birds and small mammals.

Supplementing natural food sources can help improve winter survival when natural food sources are harder to find and provide extra energy at other times of year, like when birds are feeding their young.

Feeders are also a great way to encourage wildlife into your outdoor space. Put your feeder somewhere quiet, near some shelter but out of reach of pets and predators. Putting them on poles or hanging from branches can help prevent rats from getting to them. If squirrels are a problem, you can purchase a squirrel-proof feeder.

Provide water

All animals need water to survive. A regular supply of clean water can provide wildlife with places to bathe, hibernate, breed and something to drink.

If you have the space, try to include multiple sources at different heights to suit different wildlife. For smaller spaces, even a plant saucer can help. Shallow containers work well for drinking and bathing. Add a few pebbles that are higher than the water level to give insects like butterflies somewhere to land.

Keep water supplies topped up in winter and dry spells when natural sources can be frozen or more difficult to find.

For deeper water, water barrels, or containers and ponds with steep or smooth sides, place something as a ramp so any wildlife that falls in can get out again.

Remember to clean water sources regularly to prevent build-up of things like algae and keep a healthy environment.

Avoid using pesticides

As a first choice, avoid the use of chemicals in your outdoor space. Using pesticides to deal with pests can be harmful to the animals that eat them or make them avoid your garden. This can lead to a cycle of needing to use more pesticides when pest numbers recover as there are fewer or no predators. Slug and snail pesticides can run off into surface water and are poisonous to other species of wildlife as well as to pets.



Weeds are simply plants growing in a place where they are not wanted and are an important part of the ecosystem. For example, dandelions are a good nectar source, and some caterpillars will only feed on plants like nettles and thistles. If you can, keep some in the garden, even if you only restrict them to a small area. Even slugs are nutritious food for birds like thrushes, and beetles.

Having lots of variety in your garden can make going chemical-free easier as it creates a balanced ecosystem that's more resilient. There are lots of other ways to stop animals from damaging your plants, fruit and vegetables. For example, companion planting, physical barriers and encouraging natural predators.

The loss of some plants, fruits, and vegetables to wildlife is to be expected in any garden. However, the majority of these plants, fruits, and vegetables will remain and those that get eaten benefit our native wildlife and the wider food web.

There is a lot of advice available in books or online. For example:

- www.pan-uk.org/gardening-without-pesticides/
- www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/chemicals-free-organic-gardening

Lighting

Lighting in gardens can illuminate features, create a place to sit in the evening and be used for security but it can negatively impact on wildlife like bats and nocturnal insects by changing how they feed and commute between habitats.

To reduce the impact of lighting on wildlife, think whether lighting is needed and keep some areas of your outdoor space dark. If you need lighting, some tips to reduce its impact are:

- Position lights low and aim them downwards, avoiding uplighting
- Have lights with hoods over the top to reduce light pollution
- Turn lights off when not in use or use motion sensors
- Choose low intensity warmer lighting over brighter white lights

Ideas for smaller spaces e.g. balconies, courtyards

Pots and containers

Potted plants are a versatile way of bringing some nature and adding greenery and colour into your outdoor space, particularly on balconies, windowsills, patios and courtyards.

Many plants and even some small trees are suitable to be grown in pots. You can even put layers of different bulbs in the same pot to give you multiple flowers at different times of year in a small space.

Containers are also great for plants that might need to be moved to a more sheltered area in winter, or plants that might spread too much in the ground.

Get pots or containers with small holes in the bottom for drainage so that roots avoid being damaged or rotting. Cover large drainage holes (bigger than a £1 coin) with some stones or broken pots to better allow drainage.



Herb gardens

Growing herbs at home is great for cooking and attracting pollinators like butterflies and bees. Herbs can be planted anywhere: window boxes, hanging baskets, containers, raised beds or borders.

Great herbs for wildlife (and for eating!) include:

- Rosemary
- Thyme
- Fennel
- Chives
- Oregano



Use vertical space

Vertical planting or hanging gardens are a space-saving way of getting more nature into your outdoor space.

Climbing plants can be a beautiful feature, provide height, privacy and enhance structures. They also can provide shelter and nesting places for wildlife. Check for species that won't cause damage to buildings. Trellises, obelisks or other structures can be added to pots or in borders to give plants a structure to climb up.

Hanging baskets are another way to add some vertical planting. Many pre-arranged hanging baskets use colourful double-flowers plants that produce less nectar and pollen for wildlife. Gardeners' World have some guidance on how to make a wildlife-friendly hanging basket, or you can use them to grow strawberries: www.gardenersworld.com/how-to-grow-plants/wildlife-friendly-hanging-basket/

Make a Metre Matter

Make a Metre Matter is a campaign about transforming 1m² of outdoor space for the good of the planet, like helping wildlife. You can do anything, the aim of the campaign is to show the collective action we can make.

Ideas for larger spaces

Wild patches and wildflower meadows

Longer grass and wildflowers create a great habitat for invertebrates, provide food sources for birds and pollinators and a place for wildlife to travel safely. The patch can be as big or small as what suits your garden, with mowed paths or smaller areas to keep a clear area for picnics and games. Having some mown areas is helpful for birds that feed on worms.

Your patch can be left to grow and see what appears, or you can sow your own mini meadow with seeds, bulbs or plug plants. If sowing your own, use native species from well-trusted sources and look for local suppliers.

Converting a lawn to a wildflower meadow can take time and needs some maintenance like mowing at the right time of year. Find more information on how to create and look after your wild patch or mini meadow at:

- www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-grow-wild-patch-or-mini-meadow
- www.rhs.org.uk/lawns/creating-wildflower-meadows

No Mow May

No Mow May is Plantlife's annual campaign asking everyone to pack away their lawnmowers to help nature in the month of May.

No lawn is too small. Leaving a mix of grass lengths from May and beyond gives nature a boost!



Ponds

Ponds that are kept topped up with water in the summer provide drinking water and a breeding ground for amphibians and are stepping stones that help animals move through the landscape. They attract a range of wildlife and create a nice feature in your garden.

Some good rules for ponds include:

- Put them where they get some light but not in full sunlight
- Include shallow sloping sides and a ramp
- Provide deeper areas (20-60cm in the middle is good)
- Plant a mix of native plants
- Have some longer grass and shrubs nearby so wildlife can move between areas more easily
- Fill with rainwater
- If you have young children or pets, consider fencing off the pond for safety



A variety of plants, submerged, floating and emerging/marginal is best. Some native species include:

- Spiked water milfoil
- Rigid hornwort
- Water lilies
- Common water-crowfoot
- Lesser spearwort
- Water-forget-me-not
- Brooklime
- Marsh marigold



Not enough space for a dug pond? You can make a mini pond in almost any sized garden using a waterproof container like ceramic pots or an old washing-up bowl.

Shelters, homes and boxes

Gardens provide valuable nesting sites and shelters for wildlife. Good shelters can be created through natural planting but you can also give wildlife a hand through more formal shelters. Ready-made shelters can be bought but you can also make them using materials you might already have.

Wood or branch piles give shelter to hedgehogs, beetles, insects and amphibians. Ideally put your log pile in the shade. Old pots can also make amphibian houses, with any broken edges sunk into the ground.

Bee hotels are made with several hollow stems in a container for solitary bees to nest in.

Bird boxes come in a range of shapes and sizes for different species. Choose a good place for boxes by considering their height and orientation to keep them sheltered and safe from predators. Birds also need clear access into the box.

Bat boxes provide artificial roosts and have various designs. Some are integrated into houses but others can be put up on the side of your house or a tree. Place boxes ideally 4m above the ground, away from artificial lights, and not above windows or doors. The Bat Conservation Trust have some guidance to putting up a bat box:

www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes/putting-up-your-box

Grow your own fruit and veg

Many fruit and vegetables are attractive to pollinators. Well managed fruit and veg gardens have been shown to have similar soil quality to forestry which is good news for wildlife. Healthy soils provide a habitat for insects and microbes in the soil, supporting the food chain and helping your veg grow well.

Like other planting, grow a variety of your favourite fruit and vegetables and enjoy the produce!

In a wildlife-friendly garden, animals you're helping like toads, birds and hedgehogs are your natural pest-control. You can also learn about the sorts of pest attracted to your veg and the chemical-free ways of controlling them.

Plant a tree

Trees can add height, a focal point or be a feature in your outdoor space. They are important for lots of native wildlife including birds, mammals and insects. Tree can be habitats for nesting, provide height for safety and their flowers, berries or fruit are valuable nectar and food sources. They provide shade and cool spots, which are important for wildlife and people, as well as privacy.

Pick trees suitable for your garden, considering the soil and tree size. Some are suitable for pots if managed and native tree species tend to support more wildlife than non-native.

Leave some leaves

During autumn, leave some leaves and dead plant stems to stand. These can make great hibernating places and shelter for some invertebrates, provide food for birds and enrich the soil for free.



Cost saving approaches

Reuse and repurpose

Getting resourceful when it comes to wildlife-friendly gardening is good for the planet and purses. Many materials like plant pots, propagation trays and shelters can be made out of things that would otherwise end up in the bin. The key is to get creative.

Lots of things could be turned into planters like old wellies, tins and more. Used yoghurt pots and eggs cartons are ideal to starting to grow seeds.

Bird feeders can be made from old plastic bottles, pinecones, branches and more. Shelters for insects, beetles, hedgehogs, bees, birds and bats can be made out of materials you can find in your home or garden like wood offcuts, plants stems, twigs, leaves and more. Cumbria Wildlife Trust have some instructions you can follow:

www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/wilder-gardens-shelter

There are endless possibilities for repurposing so keep it in mind each time you think of buying something for your outdoor space.

Perennials and growing from seeds

Growing plants from seeds is much cheaper than buying a mature plant and you get the satisfaction of watching them grow. You can also propagate your own plants to grow more.

Perennial plants are long-living plants that flower year after year. They can either be herbaceous, dying back in the winter and growing again in spring, or woody like trees and shrubs.

Perennials often need less maintenance than annuals once they are established and mean you don't need to buy plants each year.

Most perennial plants can be cut in half to make two plants or collect your own seed heads from your favourite plants to sow the next year.



Plant swaps

Swapping plants and seeds with neighbours or community groups can be a great free way of expanding your plant collection and your friend base!

Second hand and borrowing equipment

Borrowing equipment, community tool sheds and embracing second hand are great ways of cutting down or eliminating equipment costs. For one-off or infrequent jobs, if you can't find what you need, hiring tools may be cheaper than buying.

Make your own compost

Setting up a compost bin can help cut down on waste, save on purchasing compost and improve your soil. Composting garden waste provides excellent nutrients for the garden and is popular with invertebrates which are a food source for other wildlife.

Aim for roughly 60% green materials and 40% brown materials for a good compost. Green ingredients are things like grass cuttings, uncooked vegetable waste and coffee grounds and are rich in nitrogen. Brown materials are rich in carbon and include dried leaves and cardboard.

If you have a compost heap instead of a bin, some animals like hedgehogs may hibernate in it. If possible, avoid moving the compost about over the winter.

To avoid attracting rats, don't add things like bread, meat, dairy or cooked food. If in doubt, there is lots of guidance available on what can and shouldn't be composted.

Cumbria Master Composters have 6 sites where you can get practical advice about composting and how to use different systems. See locations and how to arrange a visit:

www.gardenorganic.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-volunteers/master-composters/cumbria-master-composters

Homemade bird food

It's generally cheaper to make your own bird food than buy pre-made mixes. You can make cakes for birds out of suet or unsalted lard, seeds and mealworms, put them in a mould and tie the set cake up with string. Get creative with moulds and use household items like used yoghurt pots or loo roll tubes.

Don't use soft fats like margarine or leftover fat from baking trays as these can stick to the birds' feathers and have high salt content.



Things to consider

Right plant, right place, right environment

When planning any new planting, the principle 'right plant, right place, right environment' should be followed to select plants that will be suitable for their new home.

Following these principles will not only help plants to do their best but minimise their maintenance needs and save you spending money on plants that may be less likely to survive.

Factors to consider include:

- Sunlight / aspect
- Soil type
- Moisture levels

If in doubt, ask at your local garden centre or nursery for advice.

Native and non-native plants

Gardens may have both native and non-native species. Many non-native species do not cause any problems but some can spread and outcompete native species. These are called invasive non-native species.

Aim to have more plants native to Britain and the northern hemisphere in your garden than the southern hemisphere. A mix of plants is recommended, and regardless of their origin, the more the better for pollinators.

It is important to be aware of invasive non-native species and know how to identify them. Legislation protects the environment from invasive non-native species listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Invasive Alien Species Order 2019 to stop their spread into the wider landscape and make sure they are disposed of correctly. See a list of invasive non-native species and how you can control them: www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/invasive-non-native-plants

More guidance on invasive species is available on GOV.UK.

Avoiding plants that may become invasive in the future is also important. To check, you can use this horizon scan by Plantlife:

www.nonnativespecies.org/assets/Document-repository/Here_today_here_tomorrow_2010_summary.pdf

Buying plants responsibly

With many ways to buy plants and seeds, including online, it's important to consider potential risks like introducing new pathogens and invasive plant species.

Only buy plants or seeds from retailers based in the UK and from a reputable source. Don't purchase plants or seeds if you are not sure of the origin.

Find a list of suppliers on RHS:

www.rhs.org.uk/plants/search-form

Risks are lower when buying plants from your local garden centre or nursery because you can inspect leaves for signs of pests and disease, like stick residue and powdery mildew.

Organic nurseries

Organic nurseries grow some or all of their plants by avoiding the use of synthetic pesticides, fertilisers and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). By using organic practices, they encourage biodiversity and soil health.

RHS collates a list of organic nurseries in the UK: www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife/organic-nurseries

Go peat free

Peatlands are important habitats for absorbing and storing carbon from the atmosphere, supporting wildlife, filtering water and reducing flood risk.

Peat-free composts are readily available and have improved in quality in recent years. Using peat-free composts help to conserve these precious habitats and combat climate change.

Look out for 'peat-free' on compost packaging and the Responsible Sourcing Scheme traffic light system on bags and choose composts to suit the plants you will be growing in it.

Conserve water

Good water management is important for gardening sustainably, especially with increasing pressures on water from climate change and more frequent dry spells.

If you have space for a water-butt or dipping tank, storing excess water in winter that can be used in the summer not only reduces the water bill but is also good for the planet. Water butts should be cleaned once a year.

Grey water like from the kitchen or baths can also be used. Household soaps are harmless to plants but don't use water containing stronger products like bleaches or grey water on fruit and vegetables that won't be cooked before eating.



Helping nature and the planet

Many wildlife-friendly gardening activities also have benefits for the planet and mitigate against climate change.

With a changing climate, dry spells and heavy rainfall may occur more often. Warmer conditions might mean a longer growing season and a wider variety of plants that can be grown but also may help the spread of pests and diseases. Planting a diverse variety of plants can minimise disruption to pollinators.

Garden plants and trees help to cool the air in summer, provide shade and absorb carbon dioxide. In winter, trees and hedges can provide shelter, reduce energy consumption and heating costs, and slow the flow of water. In low lying or flood-prone areas, pots and raised beds can help mitigate the impacts of waterlogging.

Other sustainable practices you can consider include replacing petrol tools with electric ones and cutting down on plastic. Plastic is a common material in the garden but alternatives are readily available, including lots of home-made options. Pots can be made out of newspaper and be planted as one. When buying plants, look for ones in biodegradable pots. If plastic can't be avoided, reuse pots, trays and other equipment until they reach the end of their useful life and recycle wherever possible.

Help to monitor native wildlife

As well as supporting wildlife in your outdoor space, you can help monitor them by taking part in UK-wide citizen science surveys.

You can also submit records directly to Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre (CBDC). Find out more about what CBDC do and how to submit a record: www.cbdc.org.uk/

RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch

Take part in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch by spending one hour watching the birds in your garden, from your balcony or in your local park and record what you see.

Even if you see very few birds or none, that's still useful information.

The RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch takes place in late January. Register to take part in December.

Learn more about the survey and take part: www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch



Big Butterfly Count

Run by the Butterfly Conservation mid-July to early August, choose a place to spot butterflies for 15 minutes and record what you see.

Find out more and download the butterfly ID chart or recording app: [bigbutterflycount.org/](https://www.bigbutterflycount.org/)
[butterfly-conservation.org/](https://www.butterfly-conservation.org/)

Swift Mapper

Swifts nest in holes in buildings like under roof tiles and holes in eaves. Look out for nesting swifts and record them on Swift Mapper. Learn how to use Swift Mapper and find out what records are needed: www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-we-do/protecting-species-and-habitats/swift-conservation-take-part-in-swift-mapper/how-to-use-swift-mapper



UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme

You can help gather data on the UK's bumblebees by watching a patch of flowers for 10 minutes between April and September and record what pollinating insects turn up. These are called Flower-Insect Timed Counts. Counts can be done anywhere including gardens and parks.

Find out more and how to take part: ukpoms.org.uk/fit-counts

Other recording platforms

You can also record wildlife sightings outside of structured citizen-science surveys.

There are lots of different platforms you can do this through, like iRecord or iNaturalist. Some can also help identify the species you are seeing or hearing.

Records submitted on some platforms are shared with local records centres and help track species trends over time, are used to plan projects and can influence environmental decision-making.

Further advice

Garden centres and nurseries

Visit your local garden centre or nursery for advice on the right plant, for the right place in the right environment.

For buying year-round flowering plants, visit your garden centre throughout the year and see what is in flower in different months.

Libraries

Visit or join your local library where you will find books on wildlife-friendly gardening to learn more.

Find your local library and join: www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/library-membership.

Cumbria Wildlife Trust Wildlife Gardening

E-newsletter

Cumbria Wildlife Trust release a weekly e-newsletter with tips, news, advice and what wildlife to look out for in your garden.

Sign up at: www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/wildlife-gardening-eneewsletter

Talks and events

Look out for talks, webinars and events relating to wildlife-friendly gardening on Cumbria Wildlife Trust's events page: www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/events

Other

For more information, inspiration and instructions on how to complete some of the actions suggested in this guide, there is lots of guidance available.

Helpful resources include:

- www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions
- www.gardenersworld.com/wildlife/
- www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife
- www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/planting-plan-for-wildlife-gardens
- www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/gardening-tips/how-to-build-a-wildlife-friendly-garden
- www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/garden

References and other supporting documents

- stateofnature.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/TP25999-State-of-Nature-main-report_2023_FULL-DOC-v12.pdf
- www.rhs.org.uk/about-us/pdfs/about-the-rhs/mission-and-strategy/rhs-state-of-gardening-report.pdf
- www.rhs.org.uk/science/research/plants-for-pollinators
- www.compostandgrow.com/articles/ultimate-compost-materials-green-brown-urban-gardeners
- www.wwt.org.uk/discover-wetlands/gardening-for-wetlands/a-guide-to-native-pond-plants
- www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/bat-boxes
- cumbrialhrs.org.uk/homepage-0
- www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/180907%20Wildlife%20Gardening%20Leaflet_new%20logo%20WEB.pdf
- www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/wildlife-gardening/
- garden-organic.files.svdcdn.com/production/documents/Every-Garden-Matters-report.pdf?dm=1726651537

- www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/climate-and-sustainability/urban-greening/gardening-matters-urban-greening.pdf
- www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/gardening-tips/how-to-build-a-wildlife-friendly-garden
- www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/seven-ways-to-create-a-wildlife-friendly-garden.html
- www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/rhs-gardening-in-a-changing-climate-report.pdf
- www.westcumbriarivertrust.org/news/blog-wildlife-friendly-garden
- wild-isles.cdn.prismic.io/wild-isles/a44faec3-7de4-4260-ab0a-f37727eb4c93_RSPB-WildWeekender.pdf
- www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapital/urbanaccounts.
- www.wildlifetrusts.org/habitats/towns-and-gardensgardens | The Wildlife Trusts
- assets.kingsfund.org.uk/f/256914/x/3f83d457a4/gardens_and_health_2016.pdf
- www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/bulletins/uknaturalcapital/urbanaccounts
- www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/
- www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/cumbria-plan-bee
- www.gov.uk/guidance/invasive-non-native-alien-plant-species-rules-in-england-and-wales
- www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-the-spread-of-harmful-invasive-and-non-native-plants





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