



Welcome

Welcome to the 2018 Wildlife Gardening at Work Awards!

The project you are about to embark on will have numerous benefits for your company and your staff as well as local wildlife and the environment.

The aim of the awards is to inspire businesses to support local wildlife through creating wildlife friendly areas at their workplace. These areas will help promote biodiversity whilst helping employees to interact and work together on a fun and exciting project.

This guide has been designed to help you through the process of creating your wildlife garden. The fundamental aspects are easy - all you need to do is provide food, shelter and water. The more variety of these there are, the more wildlife you will attract! We've provided suggestions on how to attract wildlife to your workplace, no matter how much space is available.

Wildlife Gardening at Work Awards

We want you to enjoy creating your wildlife area and the awards celebrate the efforts our corporate members have made.

- ❖ Best employee engagement in a wildlife garden
- ❖ Best use of recycled materials in a wildlife garden
- ❖ Best wildlife sighting in a wildlife garden
- ❖ Overall Winner - Best wildlife garden

The winners will be announced in the Summer edition of Wildlife at Work.

Your Company's Wildlife Project in 7 Simple Steps

Step 1: Get your team involved

People are key - let your team know about the project and how they can get involved.

- ❖ Send an email to your staff
- ❖ Put up a poster on your notice board
- ❖ Post on your intranet to tell people how they can get involved
- ❖ Organise a meeting to discuss the project and let those who are interested know what they can do to help. It may be helpful to schedule a regular meeting to keep the momentum going.

You'll find that once people know and become excited about the project, the energy will drive it forward and innovative and creative ideas will start popping up all over the place!



Step 2: Find a location

This can be anywhere, preferably easy to access. There may be some preparation required - how much will depend on how grand your plans are! Brainstorm with the team if necessary; here are a few suggestions to get you thinking:

- ❖ Part of an existing flower bed
- ❖ A roof top or balcony
- ❖ A corner of a car park
- ❖ A windowsill or an external wall for fixing a nest box/bug box
- ❖ A dis-used area of your grounds for a log pile



Step 3: Plan your space

Whether you're contemplating a large development or a more modest installation, creating a plan for your space will be time well spent. This is when you and your team can get really creative!

Making your wildlife area attractive to birds, mammals and invertebrates can be as simple or elaborate as you want it to be. Ideas could range from a ready-made bird or bug box fixed to a wall, to clearing an area of your grounds to build an insect hotel, implement a planting scheme, build a log pile or perhaps even create a pond! The great news is that a wildlife garden can be created on even the most modest of budgets; in fact, the more resourceful you can be in creating your wildlife garden, the better. Check out our ideas list for some suggestions on how to recycle unwanted items to create a wildlife habitat. There's a category for "Best use of recycled materials" to encourage you to make your wildlife garden even greener.



Bug Boxes



Bird Boxes



Log Piles



Hedghog Houses



Ponds



Insect Hotels

Step 4: Implement your ideas

Time for you and your team to get your hands dirty! Make sure you take lots of photos before, during and after, to see what a difference you've made. Documenting the process will also be great for sharing with others. You can include photos and updates in your newsletters and social media - many of your customers and associates will be interested in the work you're doing, generating fantastic PR as well as inspiring others to do the same.



Step 5: Watch the magic happen

Now you can enjoy the fruits of your labour - it's amazing how quickly nature moves into a new habitat. But don't get despondent if your wildlife garden isn't immediately over-run with visitors - some creatures are rather shy and can take a while to feel comfortable in new surroundings. Be patient, observe and make sure you record all the things you see. Encourage your team to venture out and go wildlife spotting, not just around your premises but in the area beyond as well. There are spotting sheets available on our webpage for you to download and print off.

Step 6: Take your work home with you!

A great way to expand on the project is to encourage your staff to take their wildlife work home with them. The more wildlife habitats we create, the more benefits there will be to nature and the environment. If we can get everyone involved with the Wildlife Gardening at Work Scheme to apply just a touch of this philosophy back at home in their own gardens, then the positive effects really will be magnified.

Step 7: Continue to develop and monitor your wildlife area

Think of new ways you could grow and expand your wildlife garden, share your ideas with other organisations within your network and perhaps even with your customers. The more people we have participating in wildlife friendly gardening, the better it will be for all!

Tips for a Wildlife-Friendly Garden

Attract birds to your garden by giving them one or more feeding options:

- ❖ Seed feeders are popular with most garden birds. With new feeders you may need to wait a couple of weeks before the birds become aware of it and start to use it.
- ❖ Nut feeders should have a wire mesh that stops birds getting at whole peanuts, as this can choke chicks at breeding time.
- ❖ Suet and fat balls are especially valuable in winter as a source of energy.
- ❖ Don't forget to buy your bird feeding supplies from our partner Vine House Farm - 4% of your order value will be donated back to our Trust!



Plants are vital as they are used for shelter and food. Key plants to have:

- ❖ Native trees provide lots of shelter for wildlife as well as nectar, fruit or nuts.
- ❖ Climbers such as honeysuckle and native hedges such as blackthorn or hawthorn also give shelter and an excellent food supply as well as smelling nice.
- ❖ Native flowers are the best for attracting wildlife. However, simple garden flowers can also be great food too. Lavenders and herbs like oregano can provide colour, scents and be used by your staff and wildlife.
- ❖ Lawns are great for wildlife. For areas that have to be short, try to have it around an inch in length - it will green up more and retain moisture better. Try to keep some areas long as this is perfect for butterfly and moth caterpillars and grass seeds are great food for birds, mammals and insects
- ❖ Wildflower meadows provide a wonderful source of nectar for insects. If you like the idea of a longer lawn and want to see more colour in there, consider scattering wildflower seeds onto your lawn.
- ❖ Containers of all shapes and sizes can be used for plants. So if you have a patio garden or a balcony, just add a few pots or window boxes with flowers - remember the nicer they smell the better they are for wildlife.
- ❖ Food and shelter in the winter is difficult. Poppy seed heads are perfect shelter for many invertebrates. Hawthorn makes a perfect berry source in winter.



Water is important to wildlife - as a drink and as a habitat:

- ❖ Bird baths are used by birds all year round as they help keep their feathers in good condition, aiding insulation in cold weather.
- ❖ Ponds of any size bring a new habitat to the garden. Make sure they have shallow, sloping edges allowing creatures to drink or bathe safely, and ensuring that young frogs can get out easily. You need one deep section near the middle, about 40cm deep; this is to provide shelter in the winter helping prevent aquatic invertebrates from freezing.
- ❖ A boggy area can be a good addition or an alternative to a pond. You will need some liner underneath the soil, to hold in moisture. You can then plant with moisture-loving plants.



There are many ways to garden more sustainably; here are just a few examples:

- ❖ Make your own compost - composting your garden and fresh kitchen waste does two jobs. It gives you lovely compost to use on your garden and it provides another source of shelter for wildlife.
- ❖ Go peat-free - it's easy to garden peat-free these days as there are many substitutes on the market. Peat bogs have taken thousands of years to form and are vital places for wildlife as well as acting as carbon sinks.
- ❖ Install a water butt - this is a good way to save money when watering your flower pots and can also be used to top-up your pond if it gets dry. A hose pipe connected to a water butt can be used during a water ban.
- ❖ Avoid chemicals in your garden - often, chemicals aimed at insect pests will also harm other 'friendly' insects that may be pollinators, or eat pest larvae. If these chemicals get into your pond they can have a devastating effect on the wildlife.

Enjoy your garden! Take the time to relax and enjoy the sights, sounds and scents of your beautiful surroundings.

For more ideas and advice visit www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk

To help support the Trust when buying bird food, feeders and accessories go to www.vinehousefarm.co.uk

Closing date for completed applications is 31 May 2018



Ideas List

Insect Hotels:

Wooden boxes
Pallets stacked on top of each other
Bamboo cut to length
Bricks with holes in
Holes drilled in wood (5-10mm)
Fir cones
Roof tiles
Bundles of sticks
Tubing
Anything that creates a crack or crevice

Water

A bird bath
A sunken container
A fully lined pond
A raised barrel

Ready made

Bird boxes
Bat boxes
Hedgehog house
Toad house
Bug house

Junk to recycle:

Reclaimed materials for building
Old wheel barrow for planting
Old boots for plant pots
Barrels for water storage
Plant pots
Logs
Branches
Roof tiles
Drainage pipes
Bricks
Paving slabs
Stones
Straw
Dead leaves

You can find lots of ideas for wildlife gardening projects on our website
www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk