

Wildlife Garden Monitoring and Management – Leisure & Environment Committee Work Party Schedule

September/October	December/ January	March/April	June/July
Check condition of seating	Check condition of seating	Check condition of seating	Check condition of seating
Check all pathways are accessible – cut back overgrowth if necessary	Clean out bird boxes	Pruning work party – cut back shrubs, curtail over dominating growth.	Check for invasive species
Arrange mowing of grass	Clean out Bee Houses	Assess tree condition – lop lower branches to maintain light levels	Deadhead flowers?
Clear away all arisings	Create a deadwood habitat – logpile/stumpery?	Check bug hotel	Water any new planting
Create composting pile		Decide on additional planting Appendix A	
Plant spring bulbs		Feed the birds?	
Monitor wildlife – Make list of species, keep records, note dates of first sightings.		Monitor wildlife – list of species, keep records, note dates of first sightings.	
Engage with the community		Engage with the community	
Raise awareness of the biodiversity enhancement		Raise awareness of the biodiversity enhancement	

Appendix A

Best plants to grow for butterflies, bees and other pollinators

Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) Yellow rattle is known as the ‘meadow maker’. © Creative Nature NL/Getty

At the height of summer, the tiny seeds rattling in their brown pods give this wildflower its name. Because yellow rattle is a hemiparasite which feeds off the nutrients in the roots of nearby grasses, it is used to turn grassland back to meadow. Yellow rattle is found widely in the northern hemisphere, and flowers between May to September, attracting pollinators such as bumblebees. It is also the foodplant for the larvae of two rare moths, including the grass rivulet.

Where to plant: grassland of low to medium fertility; full sun; well-drained/moist but well-drained soil; chalk, clay, sand, loam

Viper’s bugloss (*Echium vulgare*)lossom of Viper's bugloss. © Bildagentur-online/Universal Images Group/Getty

Viper's bugloss is a hairy plant with dense spikes of bright blue, funnel-shaped flowers. It is found in Europe, with a scattered distribution in the UK where it is most common in the south. It flowers between June and August, and attracts a range of pollinators including buff-tailed and red-tailed bumblebees, large skipper and painted lady butterflies, honeybees and red mason bees.

Where to plant: full sun; well-drained soil; loam, chalk, sandy

Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*)Comfrey is an important plant for organic gardeners. © Michael Meijer/Getty

Comfrey is perhaps the single best plant you can grow for bumblebees – they absolutely love it. Comfrey is found across Europe and temperate Asia. It is widespread in the UK, but most common in England. It flowers between May and July, with purple, pink or cream flowers. It also makes a great liquid manure!

Where to plant: full sun or partial shade; moist but well-drained or poorly drained soil; sand, chalk, loam, clay

Meadow crane’s-bill (*Geranium pratense*)Meadow crane's-bill is a herbaceous perennial. ©Getty

Almost all of the perennial hardy geraniums available for gardens are great plants for pollinators but Dave Goulson’s favourite is the meadow crane’s-bill. This plant is native from Europe to Himalaya, and attracts many species of bee, including buff-tailed and red-tailed bumblebees, and honeybees. It flowers between June to September, with blue-purple flowers.

Where to plant: full sun or partial shade; moist but well-drained/well-drained soil; sand, chalk, loam, clay

Catmint (*Nepeta*)Honeybee on catmint flowers. © Ivanoal/Getty

Catmint is alive with bees all summer long, and extremely easy to grow. The different varieties have different coloured flowers (*Nepeta cataria* has white-purple flowers), which bloom between June to September. It is found in Southern Europe and attracts a wide range of pollinators including bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Its leaves are used as a caterpillar foodplant. If you have a cat (or there are local ones), you'll find that this plant will soon become a favourite of theirs – as catnip is made from catmint!

Where to plant: full sun or partial shade; well-drained soil; sand, chalk, loam

Wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*) Common blue butterfly on wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*). © Ian West/Oxford Scientific/Getty

The pink flowers of wild marjoram are very attractive to a broad range of insects, including butterflies, moths, bees, beetles and hoverflies. Wild marjoram is native to Europe and North Africa. It is quite common in the south of England, but largely absent from central, northern and western Scotland. It flowers between June and September.

Where to plant: full sun; well-drained soil; sand, loam, chalk

Garden angelica (*Angelica archangelica*) Garden angelica (*Angelica archangelica*) flower buds. © Daniela White Images/Moment/Getty

Garden angelica is a tall plant with giant, plate-like, green flowers that are enjoyed by numerous small solitary bees, wasps, beetles and hoverflies. It is native to Europe and Asia, and flowers between June and July. After flowering, its seeds are eaten by birds.

Where to plant: partial shade; moist but well-drained/poorly drained soil; clay, chalk, loam

Field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*) Painted lady butterfly on field scabious. © Carolos Rodriguez/Getty

Field scabious is a beautiful native wildflower, with mauve powder-puff flowers in the summer months, attractive to many different insects including bees and butterflies. It is native to Europe and Asia, and flowers between July to September.

Where to plant: full sun; well-drained soil; loam, sand, chalk

Dahlia (single varieties, *Dahlia*) Small tortoiseshell butterflies and bumblebees on pink Dahlias. © Lisaeleba/Getty

Overlooked as plants for pollinators, the [single-flowered dahlias](#) are hugely attractive to bees, butterflies and other pollinators because they are more accessible and have a long-flowering period. They flower between July and September/October.

Where to plant: full sun; moist but well-drained/well-drained soil; loam, clay, sand

Ivy (*Hedera*) Small tortoiseshell butterfly on ivy flowers. © Estuary Pig/Getty

According to the [RHS](#), more than 140 species of insect and 17 species of bird feed on this climber in Britain, and countless others appreciate its evergreen shelter. It flowers between September to November, with yellow-green flowers. The seeds are then eaten by birds.

Where to plant: partially shaded; well-drained/moist but well-drained soil; sand, clay, chalk, loam

Bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) Small white butterfly on bird's foot trefoil. © Erik Agar/Getty

Bird's foot trefoil is a member of the pea family with lots of interesting common names, including 'eggs and bacon' and 'hen and chickens', which refer to the yellow flowers and reddish buds. It flowers between May to September, and attracts bees and butterflies, and is the larval foodplant for some moths.

Where to plant: full sun; well-drained soil; loam, chalk, sand

Dog-rose (*Rosa canina*) Dog-rose is the most abundant of the UK's native, wild roses. © Andi Edwards/Getty

This scrambling shrub has an attractive burst of lightly scented, flowers in summer, followed by a show of bright red hips in autumn (which can be used to [make rosehip syrup](#)). Dog rose can be found in Europe, Northern Africa and Southwest Asia, and flowers between June to August with pale pink and white flowers that attract bees, butterflies, moths and birds. It also provides shelter for birds and small mammals.

Where to plant: full sun; moist to well-drained soil; chalk, clay, sand, loam.

Wild cherry tree (*Prunus avium*) Blossom of wild cherry. © Ian Lycett-King/Getty

Planted as an ornamental tree (be aware that *Prunus avium* can reach 20m in height or more so is suited to large gardens), this species also grows wild in woods and hedges. Its red fruits are edible cherries. It is found from Europe to Asia Minor, Caucasus, and Western Siberia. It flowers between March and April, attracting bees, beneficial insects, birds, butterflies/moths and other pollinators. It also has seeds for birds and mammals and is a caterpillar food plant.

Where to plant: full sun; moist but well-drained/well-drained soil; sand, clay, chalk, loam

Wild carrot (*Daucus carota*) Flowering wild carrot. © Jacky Parker Photography/Moment/Getty

Wild carrot is a widespread perennial umbellifer with white flowers of grasslands, found from Europe to India. It flowers between June and August, and attracts bees, beetles and hoverflies. After flowering, it develops a concave seedhead.

Where to plant: full sun; well-drained soil; sand, chalk, loam

Common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) Small skipper butterfly feeding on common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*). © Ian West/Oxford Scientific/Getty

The bright pink-purple flowers of common knapweed, a species native to northwest and Central Europe, are actually composite flower heads made up of many small florets. This flower blooms between June to September and attracts a range of butterflies including common blue, marbled white and meadow brown.

Where to plant: full sun/partial shade; moist but well-drained soil; chalk, clay, sand, loam

Dandelion (*Taraxacum*) Bright yellow dandelion flowers are a common sight in spring. © pechrvoy/Getty

Dandelions have bright yellow flowers, and are naturally found in grassy places and waste ground across the northern hemisphere. They are an important food source for many insects including bumblebees, solitary bees, honeybees, hoverflies and beetles; and as a larval food source for moths. Dandelions flower between April and June.

Where to plant: full sun/partial shade; clay, loam, chalk soil

Common/English bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*)

These sweet-smelling blue-violet flowers nod or droop to one side of the flowering stem (known as an inflorescence) and have creamy white-coloured pollen inside. Common bluebells are found across Western Europe and flower between April to May. They attract butterflies, bees and hoverflies.

The non-native species called the Spanish bluebell was introduced as an ornamental plant in British gardens in the 1680s and can be identified by the colour of the flowers and pollen, and the shape of inflorescence and the petals. However, the native and non-native bluebell species can hybridise, and the resulting plants can exhibit features from both species.

Where to plant: partial shade, well-drained/moist but well-drained soil; chalk, clay, sand, loam

Appendix B

Cleaning nestboxes

Future inhabitants will probably be put off from using the box if the remnants of a previous brood remain.

Any birds that do reuse the nesting box may become ill, especially susceptible chicks. Mites, fleas, and parasites linger in the dirty nest and will infect new residents.

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 should only be carried out at the end of the breeding season, from late September to February.

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.

Cleaning Bee Houses

Tube-nesting bees will not use tubes that are dirty. They get dirty either by being used by the bees or by spiders and other insects taking up residence. Any time from October to February is the ideal time clean them as it will be quite obvious which tubes are in use and which are not. The ones where you can see mud or leaves covering the end of the hole are in use and you should leave these ones alone.

Each empty tube needs to be cleaned with warm water or at least brush out any dry debris. A small bottle brush or pipe cleaner is the easiest way for fixed tubes.