



Wildlife Gardening Online Survey Plant, Shrub and Tree List

This list supports the online survey and is by no means extensive. Common names are used, and the family name is added but there are often many different varieties available.



Aster (Asteraceae)

Also known as Michaelmas Daisy, Asters straddle late summer and autumn, making them valuable food sources for late flying insects. They will grow in semi-shady areas in a border, or will do well in pots. They are available in a variety of colours

Birds Foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)

Sometimes called 'Eggs & Bacon' due to colour of the flowers, Birds Foot Trefoil has a deep tap root so it can thrive in poor dry soils and is very drought resistant. It flowers from June onwards and deadheading the bird foot shaped seed pods will keep it flowering. It is visited by bumblebees, honeybees and solitary bees.



Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)

Blackthorn's beautiful white flowers appear on the leafless boughs very early in the year. It is a common hedgerow shrub and its leaves feed the caterpillars of many moths and butterflies. Birds nest in the dense growth and will eat caterpillars and other insects from the leaves, and the sloes in autumn.

Borage (*Borago officinalis*)

An easy to grow annual herb, that can self seed prolifically. Its flowers are often added to summer drinks and ice cubes and proves just as popular to honeybees, bumblebees and solitary bees as it is to people. Bumblebees use buzz pollination to release the pollen from the anthers.





Buddleja (*Buddleja species*)

Buddleja is also known as the butterfly bush as it is a beacon for a number of species. It's also loved by hoverflies. The common colours are white through to deep purple. It can spread easily and is seen as invasive in some areas. It can take a hard prune and the stems can be used to make willow type fencing or dead hedges while still malleable.

Bugle and Self Heal (*Ajuga sp* and *Prunella vulgaris*)

The spikes of Bugle can add a flash of colour to a shady area. It comes in various leaf colours and is great ground cover, although it can spread. Bumblebees particularly like it. Self heal often appears in lawns that are left uncut, or cut on a high setting and flowers between June and October so offers food for bees and wasps over a long period of time



Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)

Pot marigolds give a real lift and can be grown in borders and pots. It is often still flowering right into winter if the weather is mild. Hoverflies in particular like pot marigold and it's a great companion plant for vegetable plots. Easy to grow from seed, it can be sown in the autumn for earlier flowering.

Campanula (*Campanula sp*)

Also called Bell Flowers and Harebells, campanulas are a wide range of plants that can offer flowering all through the year. Some are alpine plants, others are tall and willowy. The tiny harebell mason bee collects pollen almost exclusively from bellflowers. Look inside the flowers for resting bees on cold or wet days.





Campion (*Silene sp*)

Red campion is a woodland species that is good for a shady spot in the garden. Not only are they good for pollinators, the seeds are the food source of the campion moth. Leaving the seedheads over winter gives insects somewhere to shelter. White campion releases its scent at night to attract moths. Dark pink Rose Campion has attractive velvety grey leaves

Ceanothus (*Ceanothus sp*)

There are many species and varieties of Ceanothus that flower at different times of the year. They are usually evergreen, with striking blue flowers. Different shades are available depending on the species. Some varieties spread without growing too tall, others can become large shrubs which also offer shelter and nest sites to garden birds



Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*)

Like a lot of the large Allium family of plants, Chives are excellent nectar plants. They are popular with both bumblebees and honeybees. They can be grown in pots and make lovely edging to pathways or as mini hedges. Dead heading can encourage another flush of flowers.

Clematis (*Clematis sp*)

There's a huge variety of these climbing plants in many different colours and shapes. The open faced varieties offer a lot of pollen – most don't have nectar though. Depending on the type, the dense growing habit gives shelter and nest sites to garden birds, and hibernation sites for butterflies, lacewings and ladybirds.





Comfrey makes a potassium rich liquid feed...but it is very smelly!



Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale & grandiflorum*)

Perfect for shade, comfrey is a plant that just keeps giving. The early flowering ground spreading grandiflorum is a favourite of the Hairy Footed Flower Bee (*Anthorophora plumipes*). Officinale can grow very big! The long flower restricts direct access to nectar to long tongue bees, but short tongued bees often 'rob' nectar by biting a hole at the bottom of the flower

Cosmos (*Cosmos*)

With its feathery foliage and stunning open faced flowers, Cosmos is definitely an annual to invest in. With regular dead heading it'll flower right up until the frosts. It's visited by a range of bees and hoverflies and can be grown in a sunny spot in either a border or in pots. It's easy to collect the seeds and sow in spring under cover or on a windowsill



Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster sp*)

This is a large group of deciduous and evergreen shrubs which are well visited by bumble and honeybees. The resulting berries are loved by birds in the autumn and winter.. The dense foliage is also a great nesting site. Some varieties can be trained up walls and trellises, increasing the growing space available in the garden.

Some species are listed as invasive non natives in the UK and planting or causing them to grow in the wild is prohibited

Dog Rose (*Rosa sp*)

Sometimes called 'wild rose' or 'briar rose', there are various varieties that are difficult to tell apart. The delicate flowers give bees a lot of pollen but it appears that they do not offer nectar. The leaves are often used by leaf cutter solitary bees to line their nests, leaving semi circular holes in the leaves.





Dead Nettle (*Lamium sp*)

Red and white deadnettle (no sting, promise!) are long flowering wild flowers, great for ground cover in shady places. The nectary is at the end of long flower tubes so is only accessible to long tongued bees; other bees may 'rob' nectar by biting a hole by the nectary. Yellow archangel and varieties with different coloured leaves make pretty alternatives.

Elephants Ears (*Bergenia*)

Although it can spread and is often confined to shady spots, having Elephants Ears in a sunny spot will reward you with very early flowers that offer pollen and nectar to queen bumblebees emerging from hibernation. It can also provide a cool, damp covering in a otherwise sunny garden for frogs and toads.



Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*)

The beautiful yellow flowers open in the evening to attract night flying moths, although bumblebees, honeybees and solitary bees will also visit to collect its large, almost fluffy looking pollen. Night flying pollinators are often overlooked – honeysuckle, night scented stocks and tobacco plants (*Nicotiana*) are a good addition to the garden for them

Foxgloves (*Digitalis sp*)

The purple foxglove is the common colour of these stately flowers, but lots of other colours are available. Only long tongued bees can access the nectar deep at the bottom of the long flower tube easily, but other species will collect pollen. The seed heads house earwigs and ladybirds overwinter so leave them in place if possible. Biennial that self seeds easily





Globe Thistle (*Echinops sp*)

Watching a Globe Thistle for a while reveals how much loved they are by bumblebees, honeybees, wasps and hoverflies . Its globe is packed with individual florets, making foraging efficient. An easy plant to grow, it adds an interesting shape and colour to the garden.

Fuchsia (*Fuchsia sp*)

Fuchsias are available as annual bedding plants and perennials. The single flowering varieties offer nectar to long tongued bees, and hoverflies feed on pollen on the long anthers. The blousey flowering fuchsias have probably lost their nectaries in favour of more petals so are of less value to pollinators. Large shrubs will be home to lots of other insects though.



Geranium (*Geranium sp – perennial*)

Also known as Cranesbill, perennial Geraniums come in a huge range of colours and flowering times. They are visited by long and short tongued bumblebees, solitary bees, hoverflies, bugs and flower beetles. A trim back will produce more flowers. They are great ground cover and tolerate shade. Not to be confused with Pelargoniums, the bedding geraniums

Hawthorn (*Crataegus sp*)

'May' is one of the most recognisable ,hedges, shrubs or small trees. Unlike earlier flowering blackthorn, its flowers appear after the leaves. The red berries in autumn are popular with migratory red wings and field fares, which can strip a hedge in a very short space of time. Lots of insects rely on hawthorn to live, giving nesting birds a good supply of food for their young.





Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)

Hazel stands in woodland where coppiced on rotation and the resulting varying regrowth supported different insects at different times. The catkins can be visited by honeybees for the profusion of pollen this wind pollinated tree produces. It doesn't produce nectar. Lots of wildlife will live on its leaves and branches and hazel hedges are great for nesting birds

Hebe (*Hebe sp*)

Hebes are evergreen shrubs that come in a range of sizes. Most flower Spring/Summer, but some flower late in the year so can be a pollen and nectar source when not much else is flowering. There is a range of colours and its attractive foliage has lots of nooks and crannies for a range of insects and spiders



Hollyhock (*Alcea rosea*)

Single flowered hollyhocks have prolific amounts of large grained pollen, very popular with bees. They often leave a flower looking like they've been dipped in icing sugar. Hollyhocks flower on long spikes that open from summer onwards, offering forage over a long period of time. They are biennials, growing leaves in the first year then flowering the next.

Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sp*)

There are many varieties and colours of this lovely scented climber. Some are evergreen, others deciduous. The flowers usually have long flower tubes that are only accessible to long tongued bees. Hoverflies feed on the easily accessible pollen and some moths visit the flowers at night. The winter flowering honeysuckle is valuable for having pollen for early flying insects





Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

Ivy flowers very late in the year and is an important nectar and pollen source for a range of insects including hoverflies, wasps and honeybees. It is the main food plant of the Ivy Mining Bee, *Colletes hederae*, a ground nesting solitary bee that looks like a very dapper honeybee, established in south UK since 2001

Knapweed (*Centaurea sp*)

Knapweeds include perennial plants and annual cornflowers. All are excellent nectar sources and are especially visited by a range of bumblebees. Leaf cutter bees also visit knapweeds for pollen, pushing it on to the special hairs on their abdomens that stick up in the air while they're foraging



Lavender (*Lavendula sp*)

Lavender is definitely a magnet for insects that can often be heard buzzing around the plant before they are seen. It produces a lot of nectar and can be accessed by short and long tongued bees. It's an easily managed shrub that can be grown in pots, as a hedge or as part of a sunny border

Lungwort (*Pulmonaria sp*)

With its spotty leaves and pretty early flowers, lungwort is great ground cover when there's not much else in flower. It has a long flower tube so the nectar can only be accessed by long tongued bees, but other bees can access the pollen. It is a favourite of the fantastically named Hairy Footed Flower Bee *Anthophora plumipes* and the Bee Fly *Bombylius Major*





Mahonia (*Mahonia sp*)

The flash of bright yellow, heavily scented flowers on the evergreen, holly-like leaved shrub definitely lifts the spirits on winter days. The dark purple berries in the autumn are good for birds. It flowers over quite a long period of time at a time when not much else is available

Maple (*Acer sp*)

The native maple, *Acer campestre*, flowers in April and May and is visited by honeybees, bumblebees and solitary bees. Maples also provide a habitat for lots of other invertebrates, and are a great food source for garden birds feeding their young. The firework leaves can be collected to make leaf mould in the autumn



Oak (*Quercus sp*)

Average sized gardens may not have room for an oak – but some gardens may have inherited one or have one nearby. It's hard to underestimate how much wildlife an oak supports over its life, from nectar and pollen to food source for caterpillars, host for gall causers, home to bats and nest site for birds

Ox eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*)

The bright open faced flowers offers nectar to short tongued bumblebees, solitary bees, beetles and hoverflies. Deadheading regularly can extend the flowering time. Crab spiders are often seen sitting on the flower, waiting to pounce on an unsuspecting insect





Rock Rose (*Helianthemum sp*)

A lovely addition to rock gardens or slopes, the brightly coloured rock rose is a long flowering pollen source. The flowers are short lived, but quickly followed by more. It's low growing spreading habit is good ground cover. Planted close to a pond it gives shelter to newly emerging frogs or toads

Rose (*Rosa sp*)

Open faced roses in hedgerows and gardens offer a lot of pollen. The double or multi-petaled varieties have usually lost the ability to produce pollen, although they do provide a home for lots of other insects. Leafcutter bees have a particular liking for rose leaves as evidenced by semi circular discs cut out of them.



Rose of Sharon (*Hypericum*)

Good evergreen ground cover for shady spaces where not much else grows. It's long stamened bright yellow flowers make it attractive to bees. It can spread quickly so care should be taken if putting in a small garden.

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)

One of the beneficial flowering herbs, rosemary's lilac coloured flowers attract honeybees, bumblebees and some solitary bees. It can be grown in pots, in a herb garden, a border and as an evergreen hedge.





Rudbeckia (*Rudbeckia sp*)

Also known as cone flower, (and is similar to Echinacea) the pronounced centre of these flowers are easily accessible for nectar. They can be annuals or perennials and come in many different colours. They flower later in the year so are a good resource when other plants have finished flowering

Sedum (*Stonecrop sp*)

The late summer/autumn flowering sedum that looks like white or pink broccoli is very popular with butterflies, bees and hoverflies. Smaller species that flower at different times are also useful. They are reliable perennials that tolerate many different conditions and should definitely be considered for a wildlife friendly garden



Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum sp*)

Snapdragons are grown as annuals and perennials in a huge range of colours and sizes. Dwarf varieties are perfect for pots and if dead headed will keep flowering until the autumn. Large bumblebees have to learn how to open the flowers so they can get inside for the nectar. Watching one learn is very amusing – once they've cracked it they are very efficient at getting inside

Snowberry (*Symporicarpos albus*)

The shrub produces small pink flowers over a long period of time that are visited by honeybees, bumblebees and wasps. The white fruits are eaten by garden birds. It is a useful shrub for a shady area underplanted with comfrey, but it can sucker easily so can become too big for a small garden





Sunflower (*Helianthus sp*)

Short or tall, in pots or in a border, sunflowers lift our spirits as well as being good for wildlife. Bumblebees, hoverflies, solitary and bumblebees will all visit sunflowers and the resulting seed heads are a natural resource for birds in winter.

Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota carota*)

Although it's not often visited by bumblebees and honeybees, wild carrot is very popular with a range of hoverflies, beetles, parasitic wasps and solitary bees. Its seedhead curls up and can be used by ladybirds and earwigs as shelter through the winter



The plants and trees listed here are by no means an extensive list of wildlife friendly plants. For longer lists or to check if a plant is wildlife friendly, the following are excellent resources:

Plants for Bees

W D J Kirk & F N Howes

Wildlife Gardening

Fran Hill

RHS Plants for pollinators

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators>

Wild about Gardens

<https://www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk/>

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