

## WILDLIFE GARDENING - TOP 10 TIPS

1. Grow a mixture of native and non-native plants to provide nectar and pollen for bees and other insects. Choose plants that flower at different times of year to ensure that pollen and nectar are available over a long period. Select trees and shrubs with berries for birds and other animals.
2. Create a water feature in your garden. A pond, ideally without fish, will enable amphibians and dragonflies to breed. If a pond is not practical, a simple bird bath or pebble fountain will provide a place for animals to drink.
3. Delay cutting back perennials until the spring. The seed heads that remain provide valuable food for birds and other animals through the winter, while the stems and foliage provide valuable shelter for hibernating insects.
4. Recycle your organic kitchen and garden waste to create compost for the garden. The compost heap will not only provide you with an excellent soil conditioner but will also be home to invertebrates and other animals, and is a rich feeding ground for birds and beetles.
5. Create additional habitats for wildlife by growing climbing plants against bare walls and fences. These provide valuable cover and food for birds, insects and mammals, as well as adding extra interest to the garden.
6. Dead wood is a valuable habitat, supporting a wide range of invertebrates. Dead wood can be used to create a simple wood pile or interesting sculptural feature.
7. Help wildlife by providing additional features such as bird and bat boxes, solitary bee nests and bird feeders. Birds can be provided with food, either bought seed or food scraps, throughout the year.
8. Consider leaving part of your lawn uncut. Long grass is an excellent habitat for grasshoppers, beetles and young amphibians, and provides roosts for insects such as damselflies. Grasses are also important food sources for the caterpillars of some butterflies.
9. Where possible, use mulches to control weeds, select disease resistant varieties of plants and use cultural or biological control methods to combat pests. Encourage a natural balance to develop by having as wide a range of plants and animals as possible.
- 10 Think carefully about the origin of anything you buy for your garden. Ensure that plants come from cultivated stock and that the use of any material, such as potting compost, does not put a habitat under threat, whether in the UK or abroad.

*Source: [www.wildaboutgardens.org](http://www.wildaboutgardens.org)*

**[gardenature.co.uk](http://gardenature.co.uk)**

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