

12 ways to increase wildlife in your garden

from Andy Callow, Sherwood Garden Consultancy

1. **Start small** - Even leaving a small patch of nettles can make a difference – caterpillars love them
2. **Provide shelter** - Stop tidying up! Leave piles of weeds, cuttings and sticks around your garden for creatures to shelter in and around
3. **Provide protection** - Use broken pots or bits of wood to give creatures like frogs and hedgehogs somewhere to hide from predators
4. **Provide water** - Water attracts all sorts of wildlife including bees. Anything from a saucer of water to a bucket or a full pond can make a difference
5. **Provide food** - Leave seed heads on plants until the following spring so birds can feed off them throughout the winter
6. **Provide habitats** - Let the grass grow – leave areas of longer grass in your lawn making an ideal habitat for all sorts of creatures
7. **Consider a wildflower meadow** - Dedicate an area of your garden to be a wildflower meadow using seeds or plants. It could be a patch of your lawn or just a small pot or tray
8. **Plant pollinators** - The best plants for bees have open flowers and vary in height, colour and shape. Don't forget window boxes or pots and look for bee friendly plants at the garden centre
9. **Trees and Shrubs** - Look for trees and shrubs that do more than one thing e.g. ones that blossom then fruit or flower then have berries
10. **Think about your soil** – go peat free, there's no need for double digging, just provide mulch or compost to the surface
11. **Be a helping hand** – include bird houses and bug hotels in your garden. Feed the birds but make sure you clean their feeders regularly
12. **Be part of a hedgehog highway** – make a ground level hole in your fence or wall to allow hedgehogs to make their way along your street