



Compost corner

As well as preventing landfill and providing you with free soil conditioner for the garden, compost heaps can be a real haven for wildlife. A well managed heap, made up of a variety of garden and kitchen waste will be home to many species of insect and may also provide a safe winter refuge for creatures such as toads and harmless grass snakes.

The value of urban habitat for wildlife

Over the past 50 years, the landscape around us has changed dramatically. Towns and cities have become larger and the countryside has become more intensively managed leading to the loss of valuable wildlife habitat.

In spite of the growth of our towns and cities, urban areas can provide real havens for wildlife. Disused industrial sites such as old colliery spoil heaps and empty buildings can provide feeding and nesting sites for all manner of wildlife and urban gardens provide ideal replacement habitat for species such as frogs, foxes and many species of bird.



Artificial homes – giving nature a helping hand

Whilst many animals can make their own home alongside ours, it is possible to give nature a hand by making or purchasing an artificial home such as a shelter or nest box. Many are very simple to make and others can be bought via mail order or from garden centres. When choosing a design, stick to something sturdy and practical rather than something ornate. Hedgehog boxes can provide an ideal hibernation spot.

Hidden dangers

If you burn garden waste, be sure to stack the material for the fire away from the fire site itself. This will prevent creatures such as hedgehogs or slowworms which may have taken up residence from being killed when the fire is lit.

Illustrations not to scale



Sick, injured and abandoned wildlife

From time to time you may notice sick or injured birds or other animals in your garden and the best solution in most cases is to leave them to sort out the problems themselves. Most wild creatures are quite robust and can get by without direct intervention from human beings. However, if you find a particularly poorly specimen and feel that the creature is in need of immediate assistance here are a few do's and don'ts

Don't call the local RSPCA animal centre in this area, as it does not have the facilities or staff to deal with sick and injured garden wildlife. Instead, to report cruelty, or a sick or injured animal, call the RSPCA's 24-hour national cruelty and advice line on 0870 5555 999.

Do try one of the specialist Animal Rescue centres in the County such as Animal Accident Rescue on 0115 932 1555 but remember that they are small charities and may not necessarily be able to take the animal in. If you find an injured bat please call the Bat Conservation Trust Helpline on 0845 1300 228 or visit the Nottinghamshire Bat Rescue website www.nottsbatrescue.org.uk

Don't be tempted to take in young fledglings in spring – even if they have fallen from the nest or become lost, their mother will usually find them and continue to feed them. If they are in immediate danger from predators you could simply place them under a dense shrub or in the base of a hedge nearby.

Do check out the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's website www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/nottinghamshire where you will find a range of useful fact sheets and other information about garden wildlife.

Help and advice

If you have any specific queries about wildlife gardening please visit the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's website www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/nottinghamshire or call 0115 958 8242

Rushcliffe Borough Council Environmental Sustainability Officer - offer advice and information on wildlife and 'green' issues tel: 0115 914 8595 email: environmentalissues@rushcliffe.gov.uk web: www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/environment

Environmental Health – can provide help and advice with problem animals including rats, wasps and fleas and other pest species tel: 0115 981 9911 email: envhealth@rushcliffe.gov.uk web: www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/doc.asp?catid=1643

Native plants, shrubs and seeds available from:

Naturescape
Lapwing Meadows
Coach Gap Lane
Langar
Nottinghamshire NG13 9HP
tel: 01949 860592

www.naturescape.co.uk
Open daily 11am–5.30pm
(1 April to 30 Sept)

Further reading
Wildlife Gardening by Fran Hill, from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust tel: 01773 881188 – £7.95 inc p+p (cheques made payable to Derbyshire Wildlife Resources)

This leaflet has been produced as part of The Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy. The Strategy shows how nature conservation organisations, including Rushcliffe Borough Council, and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust will protect and enhance Rushcliffe's wildlife for future generations.

The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, formed in 1963, is the main conservation body in the County and owns or manages over 60 nature reserves. Joining the Trust is a major contribution towards conserving wildlife and the quiet places of the County. The Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust is part of a nationwide network of local Trusts working to protect wildlife in town and country – The Wildlife Trusts. Membership of The Wildlife Trusts gives you:

- The opportunity to get involved in many activities and events, and access to spectacular nature reserves around the UK.
- The knowledge that your support is crucial in helping to keep the UK's wildlife safe for the future.

For further details, contact:

Rushcliffe Borough Council Civic Centre, Pavilion Road West Bridgford Nottingham NG2 5FE Tel: 0115 981 9911 e-mail: info@rushcliffe.gov.uk www.rushcliffe.gov.uk	Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust The Old Ragged School Brook Street Nottingham NG1 1EA Tel: 0115 958 8242 e-mail: nottswt.cix.co.uk www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/Nottinghamshire
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Protecting Wildlife for the Future



The Wildlife Trusts' Guide to

Attracting Wildlife to your Garden



Published on behalf of the Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy Implementation Group

Urban wildlife havens



With natural habitats such as wildflower meadows and ancient woodlands disappearing at an alarming rate, habitats in and around our towns and cities are quickly becoming important havens for a wide range of birds, mammals, amphibians and invertebrates. Private gardens are amongst the most valuable urban habitats and it is estimated that the 15 million gardens in the UK cover a greater area than all of the designated National Nature Reserves put together.

Gardens provide an ideal place where people can connect with wildlife on an emotional level. We feel affection for creatures that enhance our own enjoyment of the outdoors. Animals that are pretty, colourful and entertaining add quality to our lives, but to live in harmony with wildlife there has to be give and take.

By providing for the needs of wildlife and tackling gardening problems in a wildlife friendly way we can create havens for both people and wildlife.



Keeping problems in perspective

All creatures need to eat to survive. Occasionally this natural instinct can put certain creatures on a collision course with even the most wildlife friendly gardener. There is nothing more soul destroying than seeing a favourite plant destroyed by slugs or having your crop of cabbages devoured by caterpillars but there are ways to keep problems in check without resorting to the use of chemical pesticides.

Caterpillars can be removed from prized specimens by hand or simply washed away with a simple detergent solution or even plain water and larger creatures such as birds can be kept off fruit and vegetable with special nets and cages.

Slugs and snails can be controlled by encouraging creatures such as frogs, thrushes and hedgehogs which are all partial to snacking on them and more traditional remedies such as placing copper wire around the rim of pot plants can be effective, as can specially designed beer traps.

Remember that without caterpillars we would have no beautiful butterflies and other species such as blue tits need a healthy population of caterpillars in order to feed their chicks. If there were no slugs and snails in our gardens then song thrushes would be unlikely to visit.

Feeding the birds

Supplementary bird feeding plays a vital role in maintaining healthy populations of garden birds. Grain and seed mixes are good or you can try single seeds like sunflower, niger and hemp seeds to attract specific birds. Try having a few hoppers each dedicated to a single seed and make sure to throw some on the lawn for ground feeders.

Birds also love kitchen scraps including over-ripe fruit, stale cheese, suet, bone marrow, dripping, cooked bacon rind, cake and pastry. Insects are essential for healthy chicks so try minimising pesticide use and plant native trees and plants or even a hedgerow.

Cats and wildlife

It is estimated that the average British cat will kill 14 mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians in a summer, including priority species such as water voles and dormice. You can help by fitting a bell on your cat's collar and keeping cats in at night.

Where they live

Wild creatures are incredibly adaptable and they can make their home in all manner of places in your garden—some even choose to share our homes.

House martins and swallows sometimes nest under the eaves of houses, making an amazing 'mud' nest re-enforced with feathers and other fibres. Foxes might choose to live under a shed whilst smaller creatures such as toads and newts will relish the cool shady protection afforded by a rockery or mature shrubbery.



Friend or foe – dealing with and preventing problems caused by larger mammals

Whilst most creatures are a delight to behold and cause very few problems for gardeners or wildlife enthusiasts, some do occasionally cause concern.

Squirrels, much loved by many, can actually cause damage to flower beds, especially by digging up flower bulbs. They may also damage bird nest boxes and kill young fledglings. Squirrels and other mammals can be discouraged from using certain areas of a garden through the use of harmless repellents which are available from garden centres. Some of the best contain a chemical called renardine.

To prevent damage to nest boxes you can either use special reinforced boxes made of 'woodcrete' or you can strengthen wooden boxes by nailing a thin layer of metal around the entrance hole (perhaps cut carefully from a baked bean can). Foxes and badgers can cause damage through digging and 'scent marking' by dog foxes can also be a problem but harmless chemical repellents can be an effective remedy.

Because foxes are such effective scavengers, there is probably little to be gained by feeding them – this may simply lead to problems in the future.

Slug pellets – the real story

There seems to be a lot of confusing information regarding the use of slug pellets and their likely impact upon wildlife. Used sparingly they should pose little direct danger to wildlife such as hedgehogs and frogs and thrushes, which all eat slugs and snails. However, by drastically reducing the population of slugs and snails you will deprive these creatures of a vital source of food.

