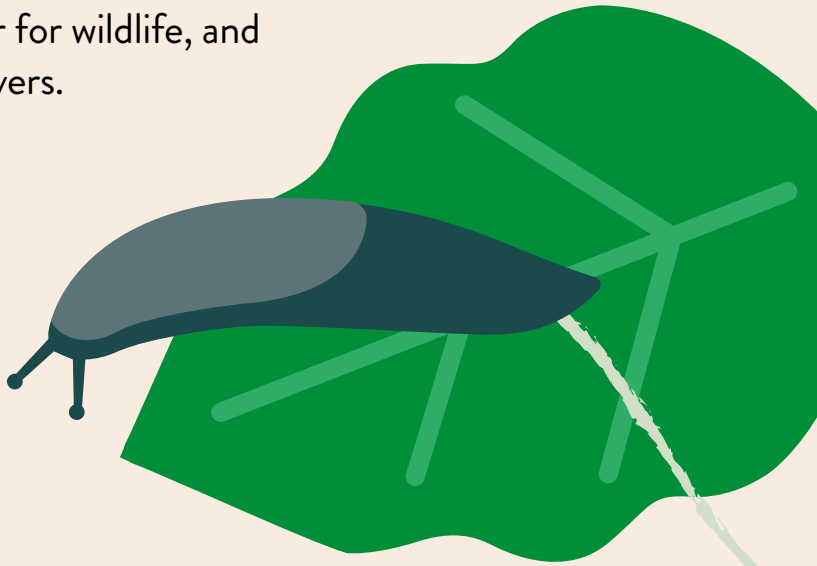
Avon Wildlife Trust

BATHSCAPE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

WILDER SCHOOLS ADVICE PACK

This pack is for anyone who wants to improve their school grounds for wildlife. It gives practical advice and ideas for managing your school grounds for wildlife and inspiring young minds. This pack has plenty of 'quick wins' as well as advice on longer term projects, and has ideas suitable for all schools, whether your schools is a concrete jungle, or already teeming with life.

Bathscape encourages more people to actively enjoy the landscape on Bath's doorstep - as families, student groups and individually. We concentrate our efforts in areas like Twerton and Whiteway, helping to make local woodlands and grasslands better managed and better for wildlife, and inspiring the next generation of nature lovers.



This pack is created by Avon Wildlife Trust -experts in outdoor learning and wildlife conservation. For more information about our work with schools, including school visits, training and nature clubs, please visit **avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/learn**

Made possible with Heritage Fund

Contents

Wildlife needs

All species need water, food, shelter and somewhere to raise their young. The more habitats in your school the better. The key habitats for schools are:

Areas of long grass

This provides food and shelter for invertebrates and small mammals. See page 11.

Flowering plants

Provide pollen, nectar and seeds. It's important to have a variety of types which flower at different times of year. Perennial, native plants are best, as more insects will use them, and their leaves, roots and dead stems provide food and shelter for caterpillars, beetle larvae etc. See pages 11 - 13.

Ponds, bird baths and other damp places

Even a small pond is a home for wildlife, including insect larvae that will metamorphose into dragonflies, hoverflies and other flying insects that are essential food for birds and bats. A bird bath provides a safe source of water for birds, whilst ditches or bog gardens are fantastic for frogs, toads, newts and damp-loving invertebrates. See pages 8 - 10.

Log piles and leaf litter

Rotting logs and piles of grass clippings or leaves are amazing for minibeasts, provide places for animals like hedgehogs to hibernate, and are the best place to find weird and wonderful fungi and slime moulds. You could also build hibernacula. See pages 20 - 23.

Trees, hedges and scrub

Provide shelter and nesting sites for birds and bats, and nuts, fruits and seeds for a wide range of wildlife. See pages 17 - 18.

Wet and dry areas create variety

Sunny, shady and marginal plants provide beauty and variety and thrive in different habitats

Short and long grass provide a range of habitats whilst meeting your needs for play areas

High, low and below– think about plants of various heights and look after your soil – no fertiliers or chemicals

Day and night– plants which flower at night are brilliant for moths, and turning out lights overnight will help bats and moths not to get confused

Horizontal and vertical– make use of your vertical spaces with climbing plants, bug hotels and bird boxes

Edges and shelter– try and keep some areas free of disturbance, so that animals and plants to thrive and reproduce

Dead and alive– leave some seed heads and dead plants in the soil where possible

A different way of thinking about what wildlife needs to survive is to think about contrasting habitats

How wildlife friendly is your school?

Surveying your school grounds with pupils and getting them involved in decision making will help foster curiosity, pride and ownership. You could do a before and after survey to see how much more wildlife you find a year after the changes are made.

	SCORE 0	SCORE 1	SCORE 2
Trees	We have no trees	We have a few trees	We have lots of different types of trees
Hedges	We don't have a hedge	We have a hedge that looks neat and is all the same type of tree	We have a hedge with different types of tree in it. It is not trimmed every year
Scrub*	We don't have any scrub	We have a small amount of scrub	We have loads of scrub!
Long grass	No grass, or all grass is mown regularly	Most of our grass is mown regularly, but a little bit grows long	We only mow the bits of our grass that we need to, the rest is left to grow long and make flowers
Flowering plants	We don't have any flowering plants	We have some flowering plants	We have lots of types of bee-friendly flowers that flower at different times of year
Log piles and leaf litter	We don't have any log piles or piles of leaves	We have either a log pile or piles of leaves	We have log piles **AND** piles of leaves!
Ponds, ditches, bird bath	We don't have anywhere for birds to drink from, or tadpoles to swim in	We have one water feature that is good for wildlife	We have more than one water feature, including a wildlife-friendly pond
Bird boxes, bat boxes, insect hotels, bee blocks	We don't have any of these things	We have one of these features	We have more than one of these **OR** we don't need these things because there are lots of natural habitats for animals to live and look after their babies
Food growing	We don't grow any of our own vegetables, fruit or herbs	We grow a couple of things	We grow lots of food!
Other wildlife-friendly features	we don't have any other wildlife-friendly features	We have a couple of other wildlife-friendly features	We have loads more wildlife-friendly features!
BEFORE SCORE			
AFTER SCORE			

Scrub = messy area with brambles, climbers and maybe small trees

How to look for wildlife

1 Identify all the habitats in your school where wildlife may be lurking.
If your school is not blessed with much wildlife you may have to look harder – wildlife always finds a way!

2 Collect your equipment, you will need:
- **Identification guides** (or an identification app like Seek or iNaturalist)
- **Bug pots and magnifying glasses** so you can catch and identify animals
- **Recording sheet**, such as the one in this pack, plus **clipboards and pencils**

3 Get identifying! Survey one habitat at a time, or get the whole year group/school involved and give each class a different habitat to focus on. Don't forget to look up for birds!

4 Present your findings: You could add your findings to the Seek or iNaturalist app. If you are planning to improve your school for nature, you could keep your data and do another survey in a year, to see whether any new wildlife has moved in!

5 Reflect and plan: Was there more or less wildlife than you expected? Where did you find most wildlife, and why do you think that might be? If so, why might that be? Are they really not here, or were they hiding? What can we do to make more homes for nature?

Local illustrator Marion Hill has created a beautiful range of seasonable spotter guides - see bathscape.co.uk/resources

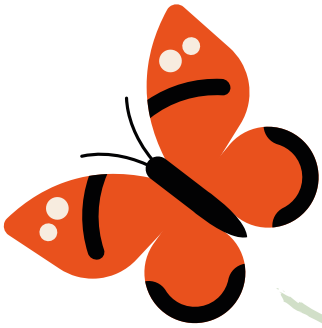
There are also great guides available on the Woodland Trust and Wildlife Watch websites.

Wildlife recording sheet

SPECIES NAME	NUMBER FOUND 𝍸 𝍸

SPECIES NAME	NUMBER FOUND 𝍸 𝍸

Making it happen



Facts to convince your school to make changes

1 Your school ground can really help wildlife!

Bats will fly miles away from their roosts to hunt for emerging insects above your school pond. Toads may overwinter in your log piles, before migrating through your school to their ancestral breeding ponds in spring. Blue tit chicks can eat 100 caterpillars a day, and their parents will explore their full territory to provide for them. There may a particularly rare species in your area that you can help!

2 Nature-rich school grounds improve playtimes

Research from Learning through Landscapes shows that improving school grounds reduces bullying, improves children's enjoyment and social interaction during playtime, and improves behaviour during formal learning time. See ltl.org.uk/school-grounds for more.

3 Spending regular time in nature supports children's physical & mental health

A wealth of research showing the benefits of regular time spent in nature for children's wellbeing and physical health. According to the National Trust 'Natural Childhood' report, fewer than 10% of children play regularly in natural spaces – your school could be a haven for them. See lotc.org.uk/category/research/ for more.

4 Wildlife rich school grounds are great for curriculum-linked outdoor learning

From outdoor storytime to bug hunting to tree maths, there is no end of real life learning that will engage students with learning.

5 It doesn't have to be expensive

Some changes, such as changing the school's mowing regime, can actually save your school money.

6 Building connection with nature creates adults who will take action for nature!

Spending regular time exploring nature is the single biggest indicator of whether a child will become an adult who cares about nature. This is vital as we try to solve global problems like biodiversity loss and climate breakdown.

7 It makes your school look great!

Your school can build a reputation as somewhere which cares about enriching children's play and learning, and making a difference to the natural world. Improving your school grounds also helps you achieve awards such as the Ecoschools Award, which you can celebrate on social media and in the press. Share what you have done with us by email, Twitter or Instagram and we will shout about it too!

@avonwt Avonwt

Bringing more nature into your school

The next section of this booklet gives practical advice and ideas for managing your school grounds for wildlife. It includes 'quick wins' as well as advice on longer term projects, and has ideas suitable for all schools, whether your school is a concrete jungle, or already teeming with life.

Ponds

Adding a pond, or rejuvenating an existing one, is one of the best things you can do for wildlife in your school. Make it safe and accessible for students and you will have a calming and educational resource for your school.

For guides on how to build your ponds visit wildlifewatch.org.uk

Larger ponds

Larger ponds are almost always richer in wildlife and are easier to maintain in a balanced state, and give fantastic opportunities for outdoor learning, as well as being a beautiful feature for your school. They can be expensive to construct, and require regular maintenance. Large ponds in schools usually have boardwalk or paving around most of the edge to give access to the water. Most will also be fenced off to control access, which adds to the cost. A good alternative is a raised pond, which is great for accessibility and safety.

Mini ponds

Mini ponds are also very valuable for wildlife, and you could have a number of them in your school. Not only that but they are cheap, easy to create and even easier to take care of. Mini ponds can be constructed from a whole range of containers! Small ponds are however more likely to get out of balance in hot weather, and of course are harder to use for pond dipping.


Tom Marshall


Penny Dixie

Pond planting

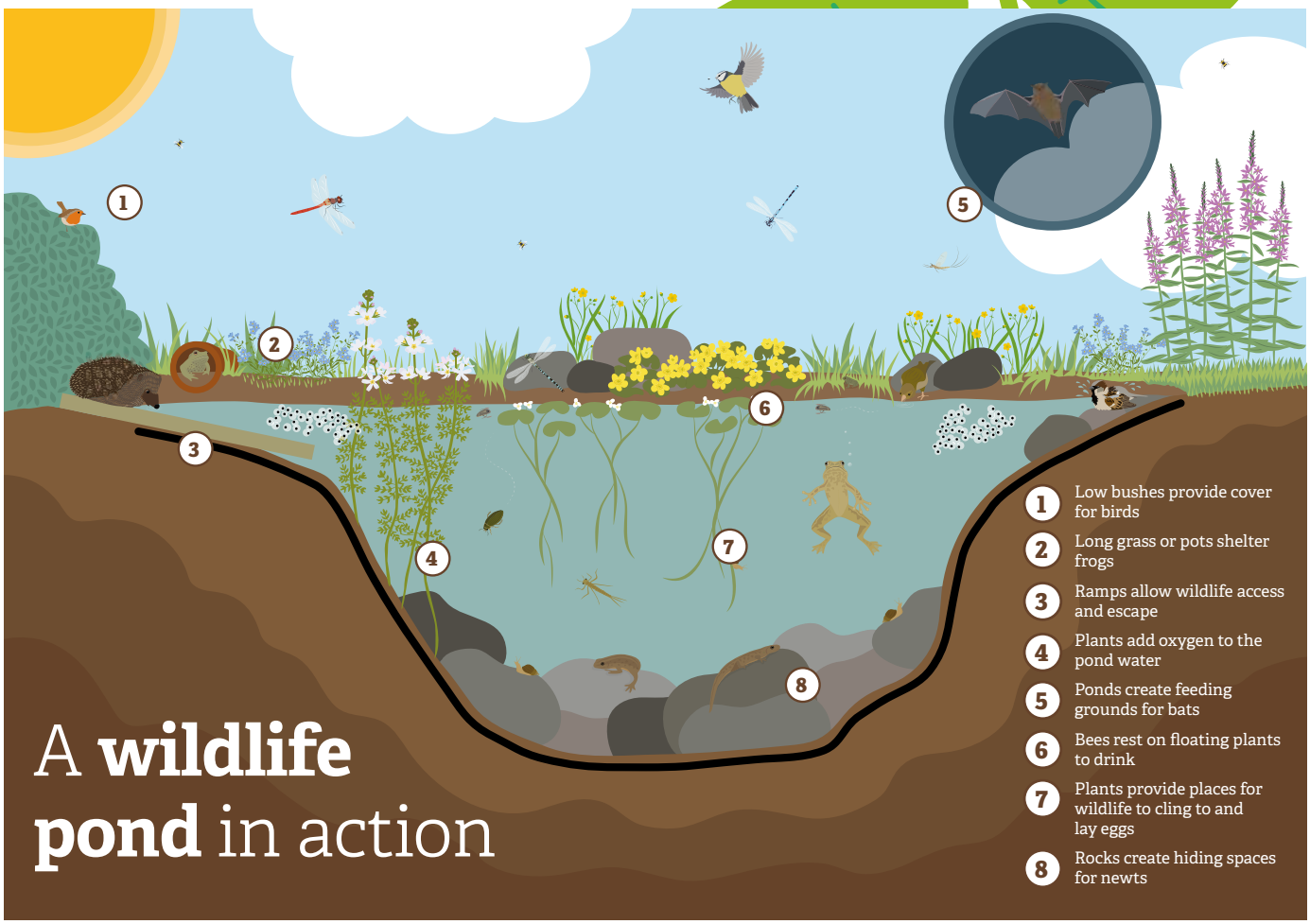
Plants are an important part of your wildlife pond, oxygenating the water and providing food and shelter. Ideally about a third of your pond will be open water, a third emergent plants, and a third floating or submerged plants. Aim for UK native species where possible, as some common pond plants are invasive and damaging to local wildlife.

For a fantastic cross-curricular project, students could research, plan, design, construct and plant ponds.

LESSON PLAN

There is a step by step guide, including suggestions of what plants to buy at

wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-pond



Pond maintenance

Spring

Put in barley straw pads to help reduce problems with algae. Try not to disturb your pond too much at this time, there is a lot of activity below the surface. Introduce any new plants where needed from mid-spring. You can divide plants and compost any excess.

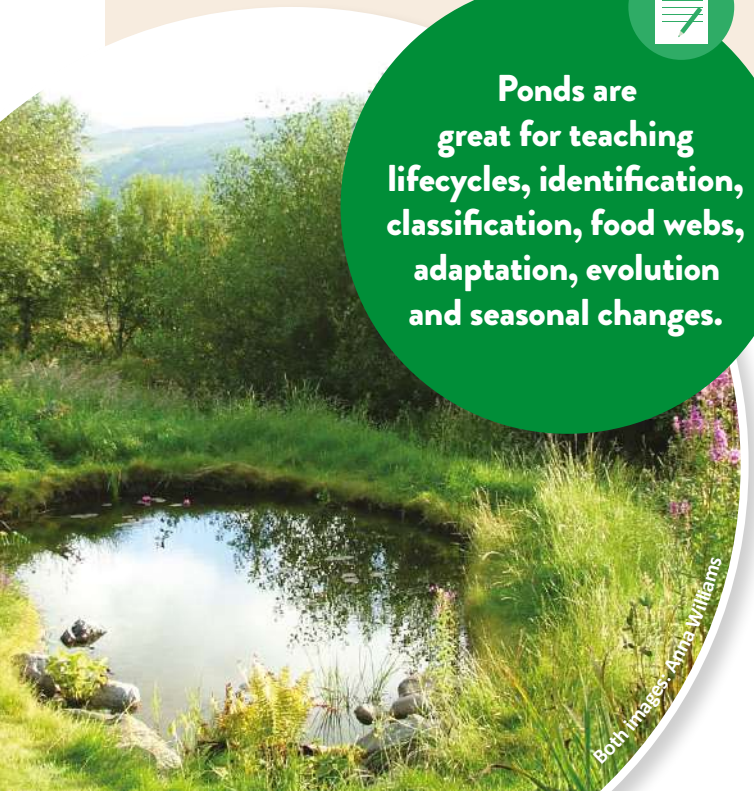
Summer

Evaporation is normal, but if water levels drop low, top it up with rain water. Keep grass around the pond long to shelter young frogs.

Cut back vigorous plants and remove duckweed. Blanketweed can also be pulled out in small amounts at a time, but be careful to check for trapped newts, water boatmen, or other creatures. If you notice this, swill the weeds in a bucket with pond water before adding the wildlife back to the pond.

LESSON PLAN

Ponds are great for teaching lifecycles, identification, classification, food webs, adaptation, evolution and seasonal changes.



Both images: Anna Williams

Autumn

If you need to carry out any maintenance work, such as removing silt, do it now while the pond is less active. Plants will also die back at this time. Allow the pond enough light by removing excess fallen leaves and cutting back overhanging branches.

Winter

Freezing over is normal and unlikely to reduce oxygen levels too much in a healthy pond. A mini pond could be insulated with bubble wrap, kept close to a building, or sunk into the ground to help prevent it freezing. Avoid smashing the ice as shards could cause damage.

If your pond is the only drinking source for wildlife then leave a ball in the water to keep an ice free section near the edge. Alternatively melt a hole by holding a pan of hot water on the surface. Brush off any fallen snow from the surface of your pond to allow light to reach the water.

Wildflower meadows

Say no to the mow!

Wildflower meadows are stunning, wildlife rich habitats and 97% of them have disappeared since the 1930s as our agriculture has intensified and our use of pesticides and fertilisers has increased. If you have an area of school field you don't use for sports, it is cheap and quick to create your own meadow, just by saying NO TO THE MOW!

Leave a strip around the edge of your sports field, around a hedge or at the entrance to your school. Reduce the mowing to once a year (in September) or twice (April & Sept) and you will find buttercups, daisies, dandelions will have a chance to flower, and who knows what else! Make sure that the grass clipping are raked off to ensure the delicate wildflowers are not crowded out by coarser grasses. You may also want to dethatch or scarify ground to stop large clumps forming.

LESSON PLAN

Students could draw, identify and investigate wildflowers and the pollinators that visit them. Older students could use quadrats to compare distribution of plants between mown lawn and wildflower areas.

Mow addicts!

It is ingrained in our culture that neat and tidy lawns are best. Many wildflower meadow efforts have been thwarted by well-meaning contractors 'tidying up' your best efforts. Putting up signs or roping off your wildflower area may be a good idea.

If you don't have a lawn area, you can create a pollinator patch in containers or raised beds. See wildlifewatch.org.uk/actions/how-create-container-garden-wildlife

Blooming Whiteway

Blooming Whiteway is a group of residents in Whiteway and the surrounding community who are working to make the area greener, more wildlife friendly and improve habitat connectivity.

- We work with all sorts of people in all sorts of way - including schools - so do get in touch!
- We run a Front Garden Festival for Whiteway residents and are especially interested in helping families to get growing.
- We're really passionate about growing food and plants in a sustainable and low cost way - we grow plants to giveaway and share skills.
- We manage a local Community Tree Nursery for More Trees Banes - a project that schools across Banes are getting involved with.
- You'll catch us in our park, Whiteway Green, every third Saturday of the month, we run other events too so keep an eye on our website and social media. Bloomingwhiteway.com

Many of the following native wildflowers can be bought as plugs or pots from our wildlife friendly food growing site Grow Wilder and planted in existing grass or in your new meadow. Others are available as seed from Emorsgate Seeds.

The plants we recommend are perennials, so come back year on year and have a longer growing season. In a new meadow you may also want to sow a native annual seed mix so you get more flowers in your first year.

Starting a wildflower area from scratch?
See wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-grow-wild-patch and wildlifewatch.org.uk for advice


Selfheal


Bird's Foot Trefoil


Fox & Cubs


Common Catsear


Lady's Bedstraw


Tormentil


Yarrow


Wild Red Clover


Common Daisy


Salad Burnet


Ground Ivy


Yellow Rattle

Other fantastic wildflowers

Common Catsear, Rough Hawkbit, Autumn Hawkbit, Mouse-eared Hawkweed, Creeping Cinquefoil, Common Sorrel, Sheep's Sorrel, Oxeye Daisy, Common Knapweed, Field Scabious and Wild Marjoram.

Photo credits: Top Row L-R: Lana Huntley, Kirsten Smith, Richard Burkmarr, Tricia Haigh. Middle Row L-R: Philip Precey, Chris Lawrence, Olli Kilpi, Lee Schofield. Bottom Row L-R: Richard Burkmarr, Philip Precey. Image to the left: Ross Hoddinott

Butterfly and moth garden

There are 59 species of butterfly and 2,500 species of moth in the UK. As well as bringing beauty and wonder to your school grounds, providing homes for butterflies, moths and their caterpillars helps to feed birds, bats, hedgehogs and many other species.

These beautiful and mysterious creatures are a rich source of material for creative writing and art projects, as well as a tool to learning around change and inner growth.

See the Wildlife Watch garden butterflies spotter sheet to help identify more species

Holly blue butterfly
Caterpillar food: Holly and ivy

Peacock butterfly
Caterpillar food: Nettles

Orange-tip butterfly
Caterpillar food: Cuckooflower, garlic mustard

Comma butterfly
Caterpillar food: Nettle, currant, willow

Small tortoiseshell butterfly
Caterpillar food: Nettle

Poplar hawkmoth
Caterpillar food: Polars, aspen, willow

Burnet moth
Caterpillar food: Bird's foot trefoil

Holly blue butterfly- Amy Lewis, Peacock butterfly- Brain Mayhew, Orange-tip butterfly- Amy Lewis, Comma butterfly- Emma Lusby, Small tortoiseshell butterfly- Richard Willison, Poplar hawkmoth- Claire Burton, Burnet moth- Les Binns

Go deeper:

butterfly-conservation.org.uk has fantastic resources on the best plants to grow for year round nectar and food sources for butterflies, moths and their caterpillars.

Top Plants:

Alliums and chives
Sedums
Cranesbill
Buddleia (not native, can be invasive)
Herbs – sage, lavender, oregano/ marjoram
Fruit trees
Persicaria
Verbena
Perennial wallflower

Food growing

A healthy eating garden provides food and shelter for a wide range of wildlife. In fact, allotments make a huge contribution to supporting wildlife in urban areas! This guide gives ideas for vegetables, fruit & herbs that kids will like eating, 'that are easy to grow, can be harvested during term time, and don't require much watering during school holidays.

The RHS Campaign for School Gardening has a wealth of free resources to help you at all stages. schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk

Curriculum links are endless. Food connects us across cultures and continents, through recipes and storytelling.

Plant	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July
FAST GROWING (can be planted and harvested within one (long) term											
Beetroot							☀	▼	▼ 🌿 🥕	🥕 🌿	🥕
Cucumber							▼	🌿		🥒	
Lettuce	▼	▼ 🥬	🥬	🥬		▼ 🥬	☀ 🥬	☀ 🥬	☀ 🥬	☀ 🥬	🥬
Peas							☀ ▼	☀ ▼	🌿 🫛	🌿 🫛	🫛
Edible Flowers							▼	▼	☀ 🥬 🌿	☀ 🥬 🌿	🥬
Spinach	🥬	🥬	🥬	🥬	🥬	🥬		☀ ▼	☀ 🌿	🌿 🥬	🥬
Potatoes (first early)	🥔							🌿	🌿	🌿	🥔
MEDIUM GROWING (plant in one term to harvest in the next)											
Broadbeans	☀	☀				☀	☀	☀	🫘	🫘	🫘
Onions	☀	☀	☀				☀	☀		🧅	🧅
Potatoes (main crop)	🥔	🥔						🌿	🌿		
Tomatoes							▼	🌿	🌿	🍅	
Strawberries (from runners)	🌿 🍓	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿 🍓	🌿 🍓
SLOW GROWING (six months or more)											
Leeks	🥬	🥬	🥬	🥬	🥬	🥬	☀ 🥬	☀ 🥬			
Onion	☀ 🧅	☀					☀		🧅	🧅	
CONTINUAL CROPS											
Rhubarb							🥬	🥬	🥬	🥬	
Fruit bushes and trees	🍓	🍓							🍓	🍓	
Herbs- mint, chives, thyme, oregano	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿	🌿

☀ **Sow outdoors** ▼ **Sow indoors** 🌿 **Plant out** 🥬 **Harvest**

Wildlife friendly garden management

One big step towards growing vegetables with wildlife in mind is to stop using chemical pesticides. These upset the natural balance of the environment and tend to kill everything off: 'pests' (which are wildlife too!) and their predators alike. Afterwards, pests may even recover much quicker without their natural predators to keep their numbers in check. So, try to be a bit more pest-tolerant, and allow their natural predators to do the work for you.

Given good soil conditions and no water stress, crops will grow strong and healthy, and will be more resistant to pests and diseases. High-nitrogen fertilisers can encourage sappy, leafy growth that's more vulnerable to attack, so make sure you have a compost heap to provide plenty of animal-friendly, all-purpose soil improver. See wildlifewatch.org.uk/how-make-compost for inspiration.

If you have already created a wildlife-friendly garden, all those creatures you have made a home for, such as toads, hedgehogs and birds, are your frontline in pest control.

Planning your wildlife-friendly vegetable garden:

Research pest control. Try and learn as much as possible about the sort of pests which are attracted to your crops and the natural ways of controlling them. These include physical intervention like picking off slugs and aphids by hand, putting up barriers like crushed eggshells to prevent unwelcome intruders, and encouraging natural predators.

Prepare your soil. It's always good to prepare your soil by adding soil improvers like compost and green manure. Finding out what type of soil you have (for instance, its acidity, whether it's clay or sandy, and how well it holds moisture) provides clues to what is likely to grow best. A plant grown in the wrong conditions will be stressed and more likely to succumb to pests or disease.

LESSON PLAN

Students could create persuasive posters about healthy diets, plan and cook a healthy seasonal meal, or investigate the effectiveness of different pest control methods.

Establishing your vegetable garden:

Provide a decent environment for your veg to grow in – dig plenty of compost or leaf mould into your plot as fertiliser, and make sure it's well watered.

A barrier of coarse bark or sharp gravel around the veg beds helps deter slugs and snails. If you have raised beds, try running some copper wire around the sides to form a slug- and snail-proof ring.

There isn't any conclusive scientific evidence about why companion planting works, but it is used with some success. The principle is that certain plants either attract insects away from your crops or actually deter them.

Maintaining your vegetable garden:

Pick off the pests: Keep an eye out for caterpillars, aphids, slugs and other vegetable chompers and hand pick what the birds and hedgehogs don't get first.

Wrap up your veg: Use horticultural fleece to cover newly planted vegetables as a non-toxic means of pest control. Don't forget to provide plenty of other feeding opportunities for the more welcome visitors to your garden who would have eaten the pests you've deterred.

Protect your crop: The birds that you have tempted into your garden might not differentiate between what's meant for them and what's meant for your table. As long as there is plenty for them to eat, don't feel bad about protecting your fruit with netting and jangly items like strung-up tin cans and CDs.

Our wildflower nursery is open most days for browsing and buying. To find out more or to arrange a visit with your colleagues or class, visit growwilder.co.uk.

Grow Wilder

Grow Wilder is our bustling wildlife-friendly food growing and gardening site in North Bristol.

At Grow Wilder you can see practical examples of wildlife-friendly gardening, food growing and habitat management to inspire your school.

Top tips!

- Carrot flowers, like all umbellifers, are a big hit with many insects, especially aphid-eating hoverflies, so leave a few to flower.
- A nearby patch of weeds can be a bonus. It is unlikely to harbour the pests which are detrimental to the veg plot, but may well host many of their predators.

Trees, hedges and scrub

Trees

Trees are like all-inclusive hotels for wildlife – nectar, seeds, fruit, nuts, leaves, sap, bark and roots are all food for a wide range of species. Birds and bats nest in holes, branches and ivy, and insects take shelter in cracks of bark and in leaf litter on the ground.

Trees also have a vital role to play in protecting the environment. Six native trees will absorb and store about a tonne of carbon dioxide over their lifetimes. Planting trees also helps to guard against soil erosion, reduces the effects of flooding, and absorbs air pollution.

The Woodland Trust offers free trees to schools, including packs suitable for growing hedges and orchards. More Trees BANES is a community group that has planted over 8,000 trees in the local area.

Planting trees

- Planting trees is easy, keeping them alive and thriving is harder! Think carefully about where to plant and what the trees will look like in 10 to 20 years. Seek advice from whoever you get your trees from.
- Fruit trees may be a good option – they tend to grow smaller and will start bearing fruit in around 4 years – a great resource for learning as well as food for hungry animals in autumn and winter.
- Trees should be planted between November and March.
- You may be able to get free trees from a local campaign or community group, or from the Woodland Trust.
- Consider creating a living willow structure – surprising easy to create, fantastic for outdoor learning and an attractive wildlife habitat.

Enhancing the wildlife value of existing trees:

- Erect bird and bat boxes in your trees.
- Don't mow underneath trees – leave the grass to grow long for wildlife, or plant native woodland wildflowers like snowdrops and primroses.
- Avoid cutting ivy – it is a ladder for wildlife to travel between ground and canopy and is unlikely to harm a healthy tree.
- If branches are cut, use them to make log piles or seating for outdoor play & learning.
- If fallen leaves need to be raked up, leave them in large piles to create hibernation sites for species like hedgehogs, toads and invertebrates.
- If you have a larger woodland area, consider coppicing – this can improve light levels to the woodland floor and provide a sustainable source of wood which you can use for many projects, from den building to sculptures.

Hedges

Old hedges are great wildlife habitats. To keep your hedges at their best for wildlife aim to:

- Trim the hedge less frequently – wildlife value is increased if they are cut every 2 or 3 years rather than annually.
- Trim hedges outside of nesting season which is March to August to avoid killing or disturbing eggs or chicks. It is an offence to damage or destroy a nest that is being built or is in use.
- Leave a strip of uncut grass at the base of the hedge for wildlife.
- Infill gaps in hedges with native shrubs, wildflowers such as honeysuckle or climbers like ivy. Evergreen climbers provide shelter for overwintering butterflies and other insects, nesting for birds in spring and the berries provide food in the autumn and winter.

Creating a new hedge can be an attractive barrier to wind, sound and unslightly features. They are also wildlife corridors, helping species move safely between habitats. Aim for a mix of native hedgerow plants such as holly, juniper, hawthorn and hazel.

For more information see wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-make-hedge-wildlife

There is no limit to learning that can be done with trees. Woodland Trust's Tree Tools for Schools is an extensive collection of resources and lesson plans for learning about trees.

treetoolsforschools.org.uk

Scrub

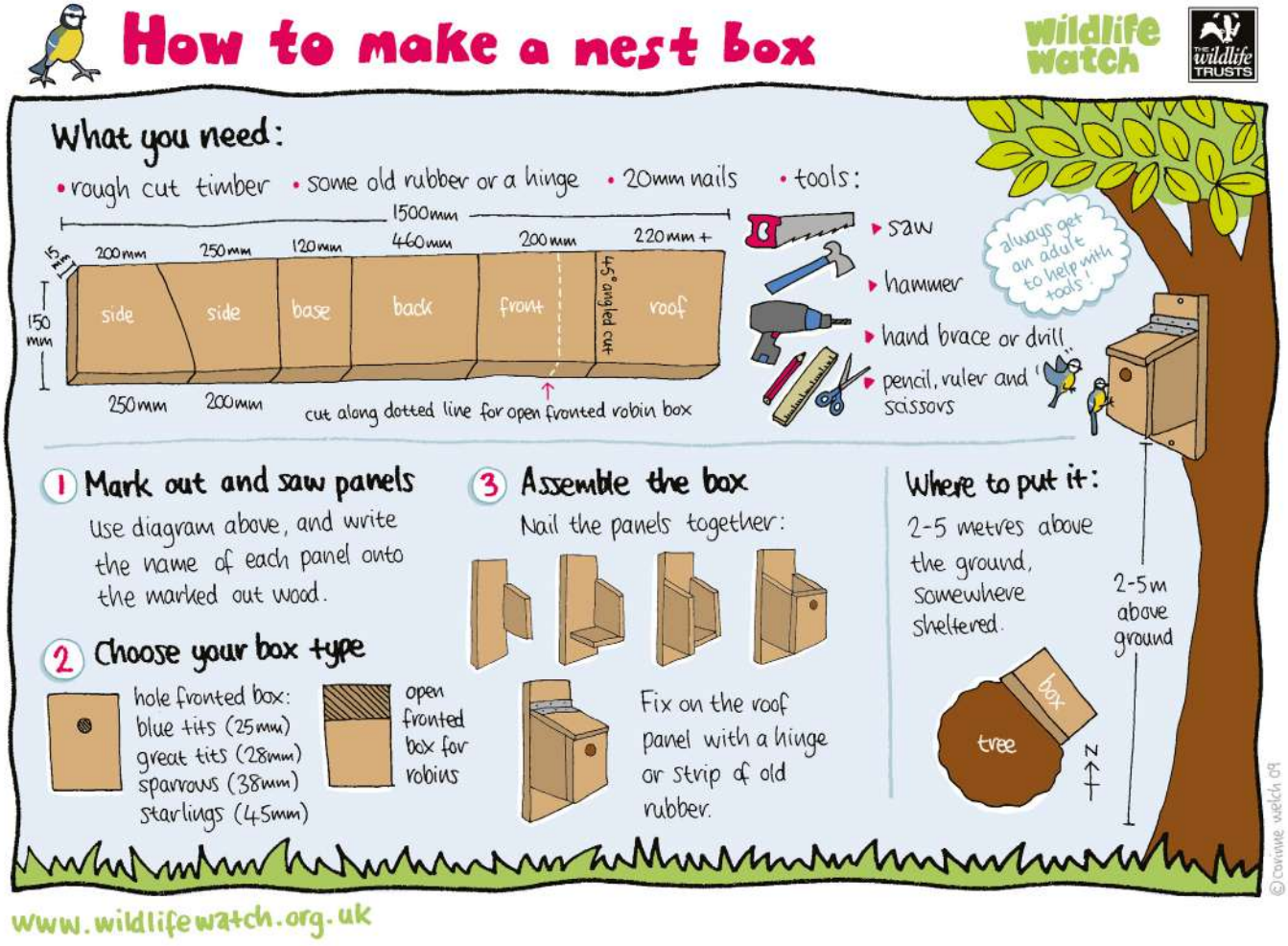
Scrub is a magnificent mess of small trees or shrubs, brambles, long grasses and tall or rambling flowering plants. It is what grassland turns into if it isn't mowed or grazed, on its way towards becoming a woodland. Birds of prey use scrub to roost and hunt from in winter, and its dense, spiky structure protects nesting birds and mammals from predators. It is a great place to put out a trail camera over night to try and see nocturnal visitors!

Scrub will develop naturally in areas that are left unmown. The only management required is to cut back edges each winter with loppers to stop it getting too big, with sections of scrub being cut back every 5-15 years to prevent it getting too 'leggy' or turning into woodland.

Creature features

On the next few pages are some of our Wildlife Watch sheets. There are many more available by heading to wildlifewatch.org.uk

These helpful instructions can be easily adapted for use in teaching English, Maths, Science and DT across Key Stages 1, 2 and 3!



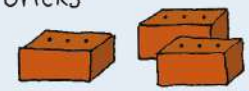
How to build a bug hotel

wildlife watch

You will need:

- Wooden pallets x4

- Bricks



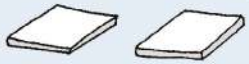
- Plastic bottles

- Bamboo canes and/or plastic straws

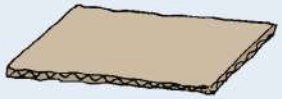
- Straw

- Leaves

- Tiles



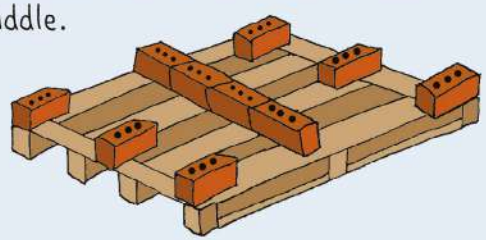
- Cardboard



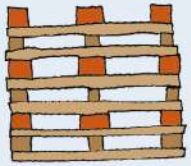
- Stones/pebbles

- Twigs/loose bark

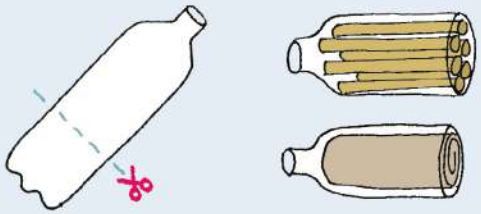
1. Place a wooden pallet in your chosen location. On top of the pallet, line bricks around the corners and across the middle.



2. Place your next pallet on top of this and repeat the process for all of your pallets.



3. Cut off the top two-thirds of your bottles. Fill up half of them with bamboo canes/plastic straws and the other half with rolled up cardboard. Place these inside the hotel.



4. Fill in the remaining spaces with bricks, leaves, pebbles, stones, tiles, loose bark and straw.

5. Add in any extra materials that you want to recycle e.g. old pipes, carpeting, toilet tubes, old plant pots. Be creative – add a welcome sign or give your hotel a name!

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How to Make an insect hotel

Wildlife Watch

the express way!

What you need:

- hollow plant stems, like bamboo canes
- twigs and sticks
- string

1. Collect handfuls of stems, twigs and sticks.
2. Tie the bundles quite tightly in two places.
3. Post into a hedge / bush or hang in a sheltered place.

the deluxe way!

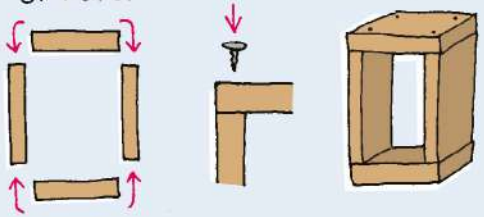
What you need:

- Small logs or untreated timber
- hollow plant stems, like bamboo canes
- twigs and sticks

An adult to help with tools:

- woodsaw
- nails and hammer or screwdriver and wood screws
- drill and 5mm wood bit

1. Make a wooden frame, fixing the wood with screws or nails.



2. Fill the frame with stems, twigs and sticks.
3. Fix a wire loop to the back of the frame and hang somewhere sheltered.

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Make a deluxe hedgehog house

wildlife watch

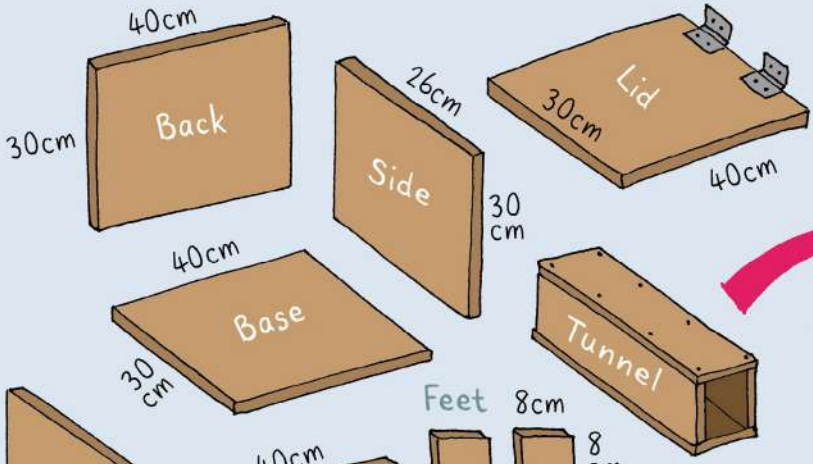
You will need

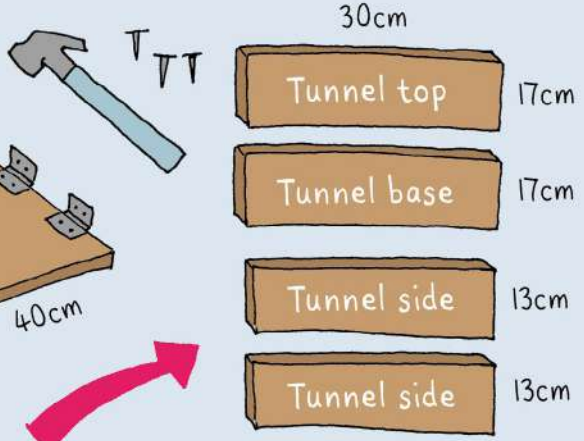
Birch is ideal

- 20mm FSC plywood boards cut to the sizes shown
- Hammer and nails
- 2 metal hinges
- Soil
- Dry leaves
- Straw or dry grass
- Newspapers
- Polythene sheeting

Do not creosote or treat the wood

1. Construct the hedgehog house from the following diagram and dimensions.





2. Put the newspaper and straw or dry grass inside, cover the house with polythene sheeting, then pack soil and dead leaves around the outside.

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www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

How to build hidey holes

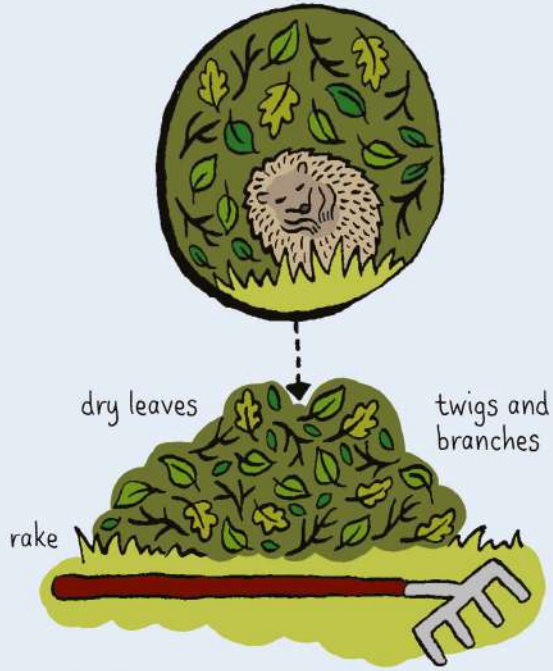
wildlife watch

For amphibians

In a damp, cool area of the garden, dig a shallow bowl in the ground and line with sand. Cover with a slab, leaving enough room for an upward sloping tunnel.

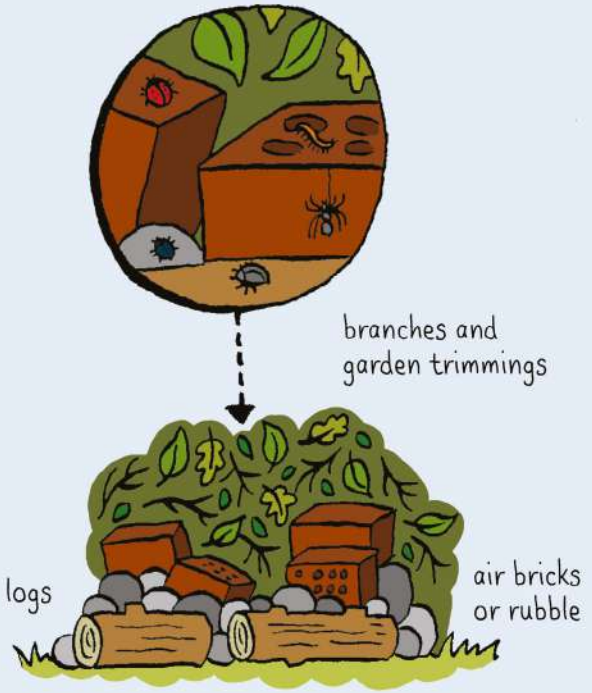
For hedgehogs

Rake a pile of dry leaves in a quiet, unused corner of the garden (under a bush is best). Build a mesh of twigs and branches around the pile, and leave an entrance space at the bottom.



For minibeasts

Stack up a log pile as the bottom layer and cover with rubble or bricks (air bricks have ready made hidey holes!) Cover the pile with branches and garden cuttings.



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More advice and information

Activity ideas & advice

- wildlifewatch.org.uk - species info, spotter guides and resources for nature clubs
- wildlifetrusts.org/action-insects-school - activity guides for supporting pollinators in your school
- avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/actions/how-help-wildlife-school - how to help wildlife at school
- treetoolsforschools.org.uk - activities, spotter guides and planting guides from the Woodland Trust
- schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk - advice on school gardening projects
- rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning
- eco-schools.org.uk - become an Eco-school!
- creativestarlearning.co.uk - resources and advice from a leading light in outdoor learning and play
- ltl.org.uk - useful outdoor play and learning resources from Learning through Landscapes
- lotc.org.uk - the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom's website

Plants

- growwilder.co.uk – for native and local wildflower plants
- wildseed.co.uk – for native wildflower seeds
- Woodland Trust – for free trees
- Community Gardening groups – ask around and look on Facebook
- The Urban Garden – New garden centre and CIC in Bath

Kit

- nhbs.com – for high quality wildlife ID and surveying kit
- muddyfaces.co.uk – for outdoor play & learning resources
- Facebook / Freecycle / children's scrapstore in Bristol
- B&Q, garden centres – may give away free plant pots and other growing resources

Funding

- Grants4schools.info
- www.ltl.org.uk/projects/local-school-nature-grants
- tescocommunitygrants.org.uk

Avon Wildlife Trust

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