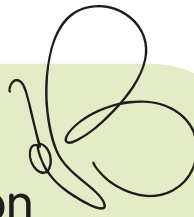


# let's get buzzing in Buriton



Buriton has been chosen as one of a handful of parishes in Hampshire for an important wildlife project – and the recent Village Show included lots of ideas and activities, including stalls with information about bees, butterflies and other mini-beasts.

Many of these creatures are vital for crops and fruit – with estimates suggesting that over a third of the food that we eat depends on these unsung little heroes. But many of them are now struggling because of the loss of habitats and use of pesticides. They need all the help we can give.

The detailed maps at the Show attracted lots of interest with red and green stickers showing individual gardens and areas of communal open spaces that might be able to provide more help for pollinators.

People also used the maps to suggest potential 'corridors' that might help creatures travel between larger habitat spaces.

These maps could help to identify a network of sites as stepping stones through the village offering food, shelter and safety for bees, birds, bats and other types of wildlife.

The project offers the potential to involve gardens throughout the parish, the village school, St Mary's church, local farmers and roadside verges as well

as Parish Council land and the existing Nature Reserves.

There have been many positive comments about the long grass on the recreation ground. But it has to be cut at least once a year (or else wildflowers suffer) and all the cuttings have to be raked away (or they alter the soil and encourage species which defeat wildflowers).

There are plans to cut in September and for a 'Community Hay-Day' soon afterwards when everyone can bring rakes and wheelbarrows to help. More details soon.

It may also be possible to plant some more native trees or shrubs, to build bug hotels, to reduce grass mowing and to increase areas of wildflowers. Simply mowing some parts of grassed areas less frequently and thinking carefully about when not to cut vegetation back can probably help to create corridors for wildlife to connect to the wider countryside.

And everyone can get a buzz out of wildlife-friendly gardening!

Autumn and winter are times to plan gardens for next year, plant bulbs to burst forth in the spring, leave flowers to turn to seeds so that birds can feed and leave ivy until after flowering as it is a top food at this time of year.

## Plan our gardens for next year

Gardening for wildlife doesn't need to spoil our garden styles or tastes. A garden doesn't need to become wild to be brilliant for nature.

There are hundreds of beautiful flowers that provide valuable resources for pollinators and other wildlife – and we can all use the next few months to plan what we'll grow in our gardens next year.

The following plants would give nourishment to pollinators almost all year round. Most are suitable for many gardens and can be left alone once sown or planted:

**Spring:** crocuses, lungwort, primroses, heathers, marjoram

**Summer:** comfrey, vipers bugloss, lavender, ox-eye daisy, foxgloves, phacelia, thyme

**Autumn / winter:** red valerian, mahonia, ivy, hebe, yarrow, honeysuckle, snowdrops.

Wildlife needs food, water, shelter and places to breed. By providing these things we'll ensure our gardens are alive.

Other things to help nature in our gardens:

1. Through winter: leave perennial plants uncut and leave some seed heads and berries
2. Don't disturb insect nests and hibernation spots
3. Build a bug hotel: this is a great way to help many important species
4. Choose a variety of proven pollinator plants to provide food all year round

5. Pollinators need water too – preferably rainwater (even just a dish with some stones)
6. Let some long grass grow for wildflowers – and consider mowing less often
7. Grow some ivy or other climbers
8. Avoid using pesticides and never spray open flowers
9. Don't feel that your space is too small – any size or shape can help
10. Explain your plans to your neighbours – they might follow your lead.

If everyone did just some of these things we would probably find lots of bees, butterflies, hoverflies and beetles would benefit.

Please use the 'Buriton Pollinators' Facebook site to share ideas, show pictures and learn from others.

Being a parish that cherishes its wildlife and its hedgerows would be a fantastic legacy to leave to future generations.

