

# MAKE SPACE FOR **WILD**life



Leaflet  
**4**

*'Wildlife habitat creation in small open spaces and gardens' – a series of leaflets to help manage, enhance and create areas for wildlife in the Vale of Glamorgan*

## Insects

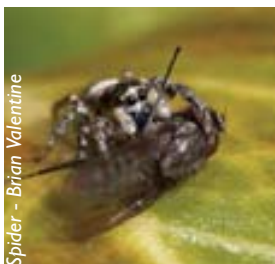
This leaflet acts as a basic guide to help you create, enhance and manage wildlife habitats for all kinds of invertebrates – from slugs and snails to bumblebees and butterflies. The strategies apply to a whole range of invertebrates: not just those mentioned here. Small open spaces and gardens can be really important havens for invertebrates as their natural homes become more rare.



Paul Roberts



Buff-Tailed Bee - Ted Benton



Spider - Brian Valentine

**The most important thing to remember is that all plants and animals in a wildlife area have a really important role to play.**

Slugs and snails prefer to clean up rotting vegetation rather than eating prize plants. Ivy is a great hibernation site and flowers late in the year providing nectar when other plants aren't. Nettles are essential for some butterflies and dead wood is brilliant for beetles.



Red Admiral - Brian Valentine



## Moths & Butterflies

All butterflies and some moths fly by day and indicate a healthy, wildlife-friendly environment. Some are incredibly colourful with iridescent scales on their wings. However, their numbers are declining rapidly:

- 5 butterfly species are extinct
- over 50 larger moth species are now highly threatened

Hundreds of different moth species may be in your area but aren't often seen because most fly at night. Many camouflage themselves during the day as twigs or dead leaves.

There are around 25 common species of butterfly, all of which have English names, largely based on their colour: small tortoiseshell, peacock and small white.

From the spring until the autumn, they need access to flowers in sunny, sheltered positions. Look at Table 2 for great flowers to plant. In the winter, some butterflies and moths hibernate; so sheltered sites

need to be provided. Plants with dense foliage such as ivy or grass tussocks are good sites as are insect boxes.

The caterpillar of each butterfly species has its own preferred food plant. Providing a range of these will ensure you attract many different butterflies (see Table 1).

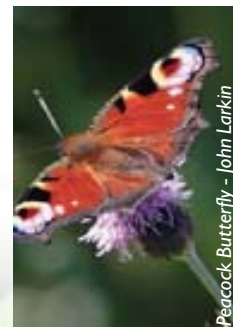


Silver-y Moth - Brian Valentine



Plume Moth - Brian Valentine

The best way to see night-flying moths is to build a moth trap. Moths use the moon to navigate so shining a bright light on a white sheet will attract them.



Peacock Butterfly - John Larkin

Wooden boxes with a little straw in are good hibernation sites for butterflies and moths (and will be used by many other insects too). Place it somewhere sheltered from extremes of temperature and too much rain.



Small Copper - Paul Roberts



Painted Lady - Matt Hamilton

**Table 1. Butterfly caterpillar food plants**

Brimstone	Buckthorn
Comma	Currant, Elm, Hop, Stinging Nettle
Common Blue	Clover, Birds-foot Trefoil, Lesser Yellow Trefoil
Gatekeeper and Meadow Brown	Various grasses
Orange Tip	Garlic Mustard, Ladies Smock
Peacock	Stinging Nettle
Red Admiral	Stinging Nettle, Hop
Small Tortoiseshell	Stinging Nettle
Small White	Crucifers, Nasturtiums, Wild Mignonette



Common Blue - Kevin Lewis

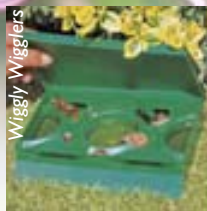
- 1 *B. hortorum*  
Garden bumblebee
- 2 *B. pratorum*  
Early nesting bumblebee,
- 3 *B. pascuorum*  
Common carder bumblebee,
- 4 *B. terrestris*  
Buff tailed bumblebee,
- 5 *B. lapidarius*  
Red tailed bumblebee,
- 6 *B. lucorum*  
White tailed bumblebee,

## Bees The 'Big Six' common bumblebees

**Bumblebees are social insects: like honeybees and social wasps, they build a nest and work together. All 22 species in the UK are really important pollinators but only 6 types are now commonly seen ('the big six').**

Solitary bees build a nest (or lots of nests) by themselves. There are almost 200 different species in the UK, many of which don't have English names. Ones you've probably seen in your garden

include leaf cutter bees, mason bees and miner bees. Bumblebees need somewhere to nest so you could provide a log pile or areas of dense tussock grass. Alternatively you could build a special nest box.



**You could try to attract more butterflies to your wildlife area by mashing up some over-ripe bananas and putting it in a dish.**

Using slug pellets can harm wildlife in your area. The poisons in them can be carried up the food chain to animals such as frogs, hedgehogs and garden birds.

You could try placing the empty skin of any fruit or vegetable out overnight and collecting the slugs and snails which are attracted to it. Alternatively you could buy a beer trap or make your own by sinking a pot filled with beer into the ground.

### INSECT FRIENDLY GARDENING

Biological control is the use of an animal, fungus, bacteria or virus to control a 'pest'. This is what many organic farmers do instead of using chemical pesticides. This means that beneficial insects like butterflies and bumblebees won't be affected and chemicals won't pass through the food chain to birds or frogs and toads.

The most important thing is to only use chemical pesticides and herbicides when you really need to.



Build a log-pile to provide a habitat for beetles. Place lots of big logs - it doesn't matter if they're rotting - in a sheltered area in dappled shade.

Not only will you attract lots of beetles but hedgehogs may use them to hibernate too.

**Table 2**  
Flowers to plant for moths, butterflies & bees

Preferred native species	Moths	Butterflies	Bees
Bird's-foot trefoil			
Black horehound			
Bluebells			
Bramble patches			
Bugle			
Comfrey			
Cuckooflower			
Foxglove			
Honeysuckle			
Ivy			
Kidney vetch			

## Creepy Crawlies

There are lots of other invertebrates that you'll find in your wildlife area. Creatures like woodlice and millipedes need cool, dark places to live. Make sure you build a compost heap too: another habitat guaranteed to attract lots of animals. Don't sweep up all the leaves in your wildlife area - worms feed on them and improve the soil.



Weevil - Brian Valentine



Woodlouse - Brian Valentine



Make sure there are areas of bare ground too for solitary bees to dig in. Bees hibernate during the winter and can use the same boxes again. Ivy is also a good hibernation site for all sorts of insects. Just like

butterflies and moths, bees need a supply of food throughout the year. They both like brightly coloured flowers or those that are food-rich. Some especially good flowers are included in Table 2.



Many people think that all bees and wasps sting but they only will if provoked. The great thing about bees is they won't go for your jam sandwich.



Hoverfly - Brian Valentine

























Buff Tailed Bee - Brian Valentine



House Spider - Brian Valentine

### Moths Butterflies Bees

	Moths	Butterflies	Bees
Knapweed			
Red bartsia			
Red clover			
Sainfoin			
Scabious			
Teasel			
Tufted vetch			
White clover			
White deadnettle			
Wild thyme			

### BUILD A SOLITARY BEE BOX

Use an old cardboard tube or open box filled with hollow canes or stems for the bees to build their nests in.



Wiggly Wigglers



Wiggly Wigglers

## Spiders

There are 650 species of spider in the UK: some spin beautiful and complex webs and some hunt along the ground. It's important to provide lots of different habitats along with somewhere for them to hibernate.

### BUILD A BUMBLEBEE BOX

- Use a soft wood such as pine.
- Put in some straw or an old mouse nest if you can find one.
- Put the box somewhere safe like under a log pile.



Longhorn Beetle - Karen Nichols

These leaflets are produced by

**Ecology Team**

**The Vale of Glamorgan Council**  
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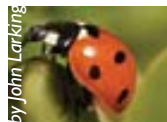
visit our website at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

## Ladybirds

Ladybirds and lacewings are both 'beneficial insects' – they feed on aphids. The best way to encourage these insects is to provide suitable shelters for them during cold weather such as a hollow tube or open box stuffed with straw or hollow stems.



7-Spot Ladybird - Brian Valentine



by John Larking

**Watch out for harlequin ladybirds: an invasive species that eats our natives.**  
For details:  
[www.harlequin-survey.org](http://www.harlequin-survey.org)



Harlequin - Michael Majerus



Garden Spider - Peter Birch

### GENERAL TIPS

- Insects are essential for a healthy wildlife area and provide pollination, pest control, waste removal and food for birds, amphibians and mammals.
- Don't panic if your plants are covered by aphids – it'll just attract even more wildlife to your area.
- Plant a wide range of flowers, trees and shrubs to cater for lots of different insects.
- Try to use native plants, as these are the ones that insects are adapted to feed from.
- Provide open boxes or tubes filled with hollow stems for insects to rest and hibernate in. Ivy and areas of tussocky grass are also really important hibernation sites.
- Leave piles of logs and leaves around for insects to nest, shelter, hibernate and feed.
- Don't keep the area too tidy - lots of insects need dead wood and vegetation.
- Provide some water - a wildlife pond would be great (see *Ponds Leaflet*).



Lesser Stag Beetle - Karen Nichols

## Beetles

Providing dead and decaying wood is really important for many beetles. Position a log-pile in an area of dappled shade to make sure they don't get too hot or cold and stay moist. Some beetles that might move in are longhorn beetles and lesser stag beetle. These lay their eggs in the wood, which the larvae then feed upon – sometimes for up to 7 years.



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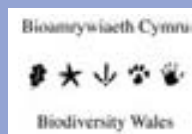
**Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)**  
Government's adviser on sustaining natural beauty, wildlife and outdoor enjoyment in Wales. The national wildlife conservation authority.  
Tel: 02920 772400



**The Welsh Assembly Government**  
A devolved government for Wales. Responsible for health, education, economic development, culture, transport and the environment.  
Tel: 0845 010 5500



**Biodiversity and Sustainability in the Vale**



**Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP)**  
WBP brings together organisations involved in biodiversity conservation in Wales and provides advice.  
Tel: 01248 385743



**Buglife** - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust.  
The only charity in Europe dedicated to conserving the small things that run the world.  
[www.buglife.org.uk](http://www.buglife.org.uk)



**Butterfly Conservation Wales**  
'Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats' (registered charity no. 254937).  
[www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)  
Tel: 0870 7706153

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