



Wild Schools
Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland



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DISCOVER THE WONDERS OF WILDLIFE

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DID YOU KNOW?

That wildflowers grow best in infertile soil? It really couldn't get any easier to create this essential space for wildlife!

A House Martin will fly 10,000km all the way from South Africa to Ireland? Not bad for a little bird!

When a young Swift leaves the nest for the first time it will fly continuously for 2 years, never landing.

WARNING!

If you want to attract wildlife, please do not put fish in your pond. They will eat all the water creatures!

PLANT FOR POLLINATORS

Bees, butterflies, bats (yes bats are pollinators!) and other pollinators are essential to our ecosystem and food production.

You can help them with wildflower seedballs. Easy to grow and maintain, they can be scattered anywhere - even in a 30cm container on your doorstep. They can sprout in just four weeks and with around 30 seeds packed into each small ball, this simple action can create a valuable stepping stone for passing pollinators. If you have more room, a pack of 20 will transform a 1m² patch into a mini meadow and with addition of some native trees you will have a magnet for wildlife.

WHAT TO PLANT AND WHEN

SPRING

Rosemary, Broom, Wallflower, Borage, Comfrey, Spindle, Hazel, Hawthorn.

SUMMER

Allium, Verbena, Lavender, Foxglove, Stonecrop, Sneezeweed, Calamint.

AUTUMN

Aster, Salvia, Heathers, Rudbeckia, Single-flowered Dahlia.

WINTER

Crocus, Willow, Virburnum, Helleborus, Mahonia, Snowdrop.

GOLD STAR

Dandelion, Ivy, Bramble, Willow, Clover

We need to dispel some myths about the gold star entries because, let's face it, most people don't get a warm fuzzy feeling thinking about ivy or dandelions.

First and foremost, all of the above can be managed so they don't take over your garden. Birds such as chaffinches and gold finches love dandelion seeds and dandelions are a vital source of food for butterflies and bees. Ivy will be home to hibernating butterflies and a winter food source for birds. Bramble will feed and house a huge amount of wildlife and you can enjoy the blackberries too. Clover and Willow provide pollen and nectar for bees.

BIRD BOXES



A box with an open front will be used by Robins and sometimes Thrush.



A box with small entrance holes will be used by Blue-tits and Great-tits and others.

CREATING A HOME FOR WILDLIFE

Anything from a pile of old deadwood to a purpose built hedgehog house will be a welcome site for wildlife.

LOG PILE

Basically, the bigger the better. A shaded north facing spot is good, as that will mimic an environment such as a forest floor. Tuck it into an undisturbed corner. You can start by burying some of your dead wood if you want to invite underground hibernators.

BATS

Your insect friendly garden will be really great for bats. Did you know one bat will eat over 2,000 insects every night? A bat box, bought or made, can be placed as high as possible from the ground, at least 4 metres. It should be south facing and sheltered from wind. There are lots of websites with bat box instructions if you fancy having a go at making one.

BIRDS

Once you've planted trees and/or hedging, birds will make their homes there. Blackbirds and other members of the Thrush family particularly like hedges for nesting. Tree creepers and Wrens among others will nest in ivy. Blue-tits nest in cavities and so will use holes in tree trunks but they are also the most regular users of nest boxes. Nest boxes can be bought pretty much everywhere but making your own bird house is also very easy. Just make sure they are secure, sheltered and out of reach of cats.

Ireland is lucky to receive migratory birds during the spring and summer months and it is good to be able to help them out when they arrive. Having flown thousands of miles, House Martins and Swifts would definitely welcome a ready-made nest box. These are quite different to the basic bird house so you will need to buy houses specific to these birds. It is advisable to erect a number of House Martin boxes together because they nest in small colonies.

PONDS

A pond doesn't have to be a big or daunting project, a small pool will work just as well and is so easy to create. It will be a source of drinking and bathing water for wildlife as well as a home to some very interesting creatures.

FOX TRACKS



Fox tracks will display four toes and long claws. Fur may be noticeable in the track. Fox tracks are very similar to dog tracks. However, dog tracks are shorter while fox tracks follow a diamond shape.

BADGER TRACKS



Badger tracks can be identified by being very broad. Easily tell them apart from fox or dog prints by counting the toe pads ...

5 for a Badger

4 for a fox

HEDGEHOG TRACKS



Hedgehog have 5 toes, but only 4 tend to show up in tracks. Their front feet are wide and back feet slim. They resemble small hands.

You can dig a hole, throw some sand into the base and line it with pond liner or you can simply sink a large basin and fill it with water. Placing rocks around the edges of your liner will prevent it from moving. The important thing is to ensure you put the right plants into it so that you won't need a filtration system. Oxygenating plants such as Hornwort are good as well as floating plants like Water Lily and emerging plants such as Marsh Marigold. Feel free to plant around the perimeter of your pool for decoration and of course, to attract more biodiversity.

Ensure you have an escape route should an animal fall in. This can simple be a wooden ramp or a rock pile. Now sit back and watch as a whole new world opens up!



MAMMALS

Hedgehogs will use your log pile as a place to hibernate and they will also be delighted with the assortment of resident insects to eat. Bats will drink from your pond and eat the insects that gather there. Foxes and badgers will also be grateful for a drinking pool. As will birds, who will of course, also take a bath!

Just by planting native vegetation and not mowing or tidying too often you will be supporting an abundance of life. But if you want to go one step further, you can make, or buy a hedgehog house. This would be best placed in the "wildest" part of the garden with lots of cover and no disturbance.

A hedgehog highway is another very helpful way of opening up gardens to travelling mammals. This is simply a hole in the base of your fence or gate so wildlife can pass through. If you've gone to the trouble of providing a natural bounty, it would be a shame if they couldn't reach it



INSECT IDENTIFIER CHART

ANT



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

WASP



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

HONEYBEE



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

CENTIPEDE



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

MILLIPEDE



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

LADYBIRD



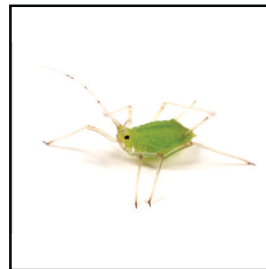
HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

CRICKET



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

APHID (GREENFLY)



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

EARWIG



HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

HAVE YOU SEEN ANY THAT AREN'T LISTED?
WRITE THEM DOWN HERE.

PLANT IDENTIFIER CHART

DAISY



BUTTERCUP



DANDELION



NETTLE



PLANTAIN



THISTLE



ROSEBAY WILLOWHERB



COW PARSELY



CLOVER



CRANESBILL



FORGET-ME-NOT



LICHEN*



HAVE YOU SEEN ANY THAT AREN'T LISTED?
WRITE THEM DOWN HERE.

*Lichen are not actually plants but are made up of Fungi & Algae

BIRD IDENTIFIER CHART

STARLING



HOUSE SPARROW



BLUE-TIT



GREAT-TIT



ROBIN



WREN



WOOD PIGEON



ROOK



COLLARED DOVE



CHAFFINCH



MAGPIE



JACKDAW



DUNNOCK



SONG THRUSH



BLACKBIRD



*Some of the Birds pictured are the Male of the Species, Can you guess which ones?

QUESTION 1

Name 3 Plants that attract Wildlife.

QUESTION 2

What animals are not protected under the Irish Wildlife Act?

QUESTION 3

What is a habitat?

QUESTION 4

What does NPWS stand for?

QUESTION 5

Nocturnal means active at night. Name 4 nocturnal animals.

QUESTION 6

How many species of bat do we have in Ireland? Can you name any?

QUESTION 7

What do you call an animal that is active during the day?

- A. Nocturnal
- B. Matutinal
- C. Diurnal
- D. Vespertine

QUESTION 8

Badgers are part of the mustelid family along with which of the following mammals?

- A. Otter
- B. Hedgehog
- C. Fox
- D. Pine Marten

QUESTION 9

What food product is the Hedgehog Intolerant to?

- A. Chicken
- B. Milk
- C. Orange Juice
- D. Apple

QUESTION 10

Which of these is a wildlife crime?

- A. Feeding ducks
- B. Photographing nests
- C. Fox Hunting
- D. Horse Racing



A BADGER SETT WILL BE DESTROYED TO MAKE WAY FOR A HOUSING ESTATE, PEOPLE NEED HOMES MORE THAN BADGERS.

- PROTECTED SPECIES
- ANIMALS V HUMANS
- BIODIVERSITY



IT IS A CRIME TO DISTURB ACTIVE NESTS.

- PHOTOGRAPHY
- EDUCATION
- MAINTAINING BIRD NUMBERS



FOX HUNTING IS JUST A HARMLESS SPORT TO BE ENJOYED BY ALL.

- THE WILDLIFE ACT
- FOX NUMBERS IN IRELAND
- THE PART OF HORSES IN HUNTING

ASSESSMENT SHEET

NAME

CLASS

DATE

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Watch the WRI Video
- Read the Booklet
- Discuss the Existing Habitat
- Decide on the area you will use
- Assess the route to the area

THE AREA

- Is it sunny or shady?
- What plants and grasses already exist there?
- Is the soil dry or boggy?
- Is the site near a roadside or passers by?
- Observe the birds and insects

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS



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information visit
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