

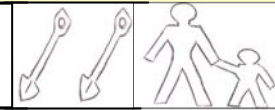
Creating Areas for Nature

4.1 Wildflower meadows

4. Habitats



Season –
Spring or
Autumn



Why?

Wildflower meadows are one of Britain's fastest-disappearing habitats, with over 95% having been lost in the last century because of agriculture. As a result, many native British wildflowers are in decline and this has gone on to affect numbers of bees, butterflies and birds.

Helpful tips

Sow seeds in March or April on heavy soil that becomes waterlogged or in autumn if you have light, well-drained soil. Be aware that the meadow's establishment is unlikely to be an immediate event, but a gradual process that may take well over a year to develop.

Tools

Trowel
Rake
Spade
Turf cutter

Materials

Seeds/ flower plugs (established plants grown in a plug of soil)

Health and safety considerations

- Take care not to strain your back or muscles if using a turf cutter, which can be strenuous.
- When using a rake, make sure that people's feet do not get in the way and that the tool is not left out as a trip hazard.

Instructions

- Choose an area of land in which to plant your wildflower meadow. Ideally this should be as large an area of land as you can use with plenty of sunlight, but don't worry if you only have an area that is shaded; this just changes the type of plants that you can use.
- Decide what type of plants you would like in your wildflower meadow. This will depend on the level of shade in your area and the type of soil. If you are unsure about this please see section 2. Most suppliers will have separated out their mixes according to shade level and soil type, so the hard work is already done for you.



Option 1 — Leave it alone!

- Try leaving the area un-mown and see what comes up. If your soil is very chalky, for example, you should find that a rich wildflower meadow will come up naturally.

As a test, try leaving a small strip of ground uncut when your grounds are being mown, and see what comes up. It may prove that you do not need to commit to seeding a large area. As well as proving an indicator of what seeds are present in the ground, un-mown edges and corners provide a buffer area for wildlife between the hedgerows where they live and shortly-cropped grass.



Option 2—sowing seed

This method is best used on an area that has very little diversity in natural flora, for example on an area that is just grass. You can choose seed that is pure wildflower mix or part wildflower and part grass.

- Remove the top layer of soil and turf as this will be predominantly grasses that will compete with your wildflowers.
- Rake the area until the soil is very fine and be careful not to tread on the newly-raked ground.
- Sow your seed forwards, walking on the sown area as you go. Mix the seed with some sand to help distribute the seed evenly and to let you know where you've already sown.

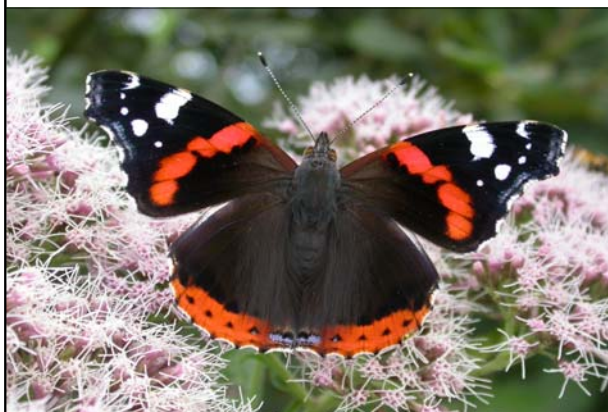
Additional Tip

If you have sown with grass seed then you will have to mow the area 3 times in the first year to stop the grass from dominating the wildflowers. From then on, for all seed mixes, cut once a year. This should be after the wildflowers have set seed which is usually around September.

Option 3— planting plugs

Plugs are plants which are already established and come grown in a small cell of soil, ready to plant. This is often more expensive than seed but can produce quicker results. Plugs are available from most wildflower suppliers and are very easy to plant.

- Make a small hole with the handle of a trowel or similar shaped tool and place the plug in the hole, firming the earth around them.
- Make sure that you spread the plugs evenly over a wide area and remember that they will be competing with the existing grasses and plants. This means that mowing three times in the first year is again necessary and once in September every year afterwards.



For information and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

Please see *Section 7.3 Structures Links* for further reading and information.

Creating Areas for Nature

4.2 Boggy Areas

4. Habitats



Season:
Any

Why?
Natural wetlands have declined sharply in the past century because of land drainage for agriculture, reducing the habitat available for wetland plants and amphibians. A boggy area will attract similar wildlife to a pond and comes without the associated health and safety risks.

Helpful tips
This is a great way to recycle any old pond liner you might want to get rid of. Make sure to choose plants that love wet ground.

Tools
Scissors
Spades
Wheelbarrow
Rope
Shovels

Materials
Punctured or damaged pond liner

Health and safety considerations

- Take care not to strain muscles when digging.
- Do not leave tools out where they can be tripped over.

Instructions

- The bog area can be any size or shape you like, and don't worry about depths, shelves or contours.
- Mark out the area that you want to dig with a rope.
- Dig out the desired area to approximately 0.5m depth all around.
- Place a punctured liner in the hole and then place the soil back in it. Simple! The liner will help to retain much of the rainwater and therefore make the soil very moist and boggy, whilst the holes in the liner will allow some water to escape and stop it from becoming a filled in pond.
- Leave your boggy area alone for a few weeks until it has trapped enough water to make it seem boggy, and then plant it up with suitable bog plants.



For details and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

Creating Areas for Nature

4.3 Ponds

4. Habitats



Season:
May - Sept.

Why?
By 1890 land drainage for agriculture had reduced the number of ponds in England to about 1,250,000: today only around 400,000 remain. You can help to reduce this loss by creating your own haven for pond life, no matter how large or small.

Helpful tips
Before you pick up a spade, planning is absolutely vital. We recommend that you seek advice on health and safety according to the size and depth you require, as well as issues such as fencing and access to the pond area.

Tools
Spirit level; Scissors; Spades; Rake
Wheelbarrow; Shovels
Long piece of timber
Hosepipe; Rope (marking out the pond)
Nearby water supply

Materials
Pond Liner
Pond underlay

Health and safety considerations

- Schools or community groups whose pond will be used by a large number of people should fence off their pond area, making sure to leave plenty of room for people to access the pond. A dipping platform will also allow closer access.
- Make sure that underground service and cable maps are checked before any digging is started.

Instructions

- Choose the location of your pond. Ideally you want a mixture of sun and shade, but not too close to a large group of trees that will shed their leaves into the pond in the autumn.
- Next, decide on the shape and size of the pond. Ponds can be as large or small as you see fit. Larger ponds will attract more wildlife but will also need more maintenance, so find the correct balance for your site. Ponds are typically oval or kidney shaped, but the shape can actually be anything your imagination can think of, so you could ask those taking part to design something different.
- Measure the size of liner and underlay required. Use the following equation to work this out:
actual length of the pond (+ 2x maximum depth) X the width of the pond (+ 2x maximum depth)
- Mark out the shape and size of the pond using stakes and tape, rope or string.
- Now dig out the pond. Depending on your soil type, this can be very time consuming so make sure you allocate plenty of time for this task. Try and vary the depth of the pond with at least one really deep area and one shallow area that slopes down from the side (see Fig. 1). The maximum depth of the pond is up to you, but 1-1.5m is probably deep enough.

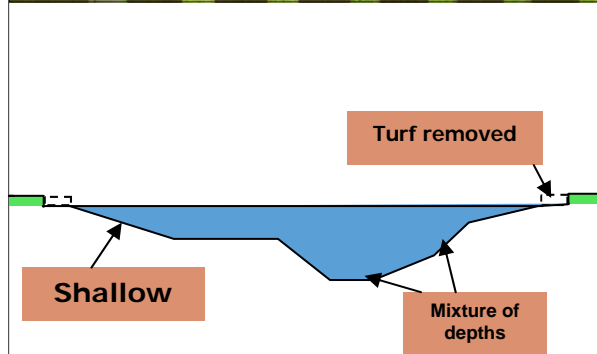


Figure 1.

- Once your pond is dug, rake out any stones or sharp objects that could puncture the liner. Next, take off a 0.5m strip of turf around the outside of the pond. This is where the liner and underlay will be tucked at the end. Put the turf to one side for later.
- It is crucial that the pond is level all around, otherwise one side of the pond will be at the water's edge and the other end will be a cliff! Put a length of timber across the pond and place a spirit level on top. Check lots of different angles across the pond and make sure they are all level.
- Now you have to place the liner in the pond. First use an underlay, which is basically a protective layer for the liner. You could also put a layer of sand down underneath.
- Put your liner over the top. Make sure there are no creases in the liner and that it moulds to the contours of the pond, then start filling the pond with water. Keep pulling the liner taut every now and again as the pond is being filled to prevent creases from occurring.
- Replace the turf into its original place around the edge of pond, tucking the liner underneath.
- Cut off any liner that is sticking out. It is useful for the turf to hang into the water by about 10cm as this will allow wildlife to get in and out of the pond easily.
- Disposing of the spoil from the pond can be a problem, but if you are also creating a raised bed or planting area then it can be used to fill these. Alternatively, try and lose it in any adjacent undergrowth. Over time, grass and other vegetation will cover it.
- Your pond is now complete! Leave it alone for approximately 2 months to allow the rainwater to naturalise the pond and then you can place some plants into it.



As an alternative to the above method, those of you whose sites lie on clay soil could try “puddling”, a process whereby the methodical compacting of clay and water forms a watertight seal—ideal for lining a pond. The puddling can be done by human feet and is great fun. More information can be found on the BTCV website—see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links*.

For details and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

For further information on ponds, their creation and their wildlife, please see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links*.

1. Every pond should contain every type of pond zone

Many people think that good ponds need to have lots of open water, a narrow fringe of attractive wetland plants around the edge, a deep bit in the middle, no trees around it and lots of sunshine, but this is just one type of pond. Lots of pond wildlife actually needs ponds that are full of plants with very little open water. It's all to do with scale - what looks like a crowded mass of plants to us is actually a wide open space to a water beetle.

2. Drying out is disastrous for pond life

A pond doesn't have to have water in it the whole year round; some ponds dry out some of the time and this can actually be good for wildlife. After hundreds to thousands of years, ponds ultimately turn into temporary or seasonal ponds, and not dry land as you might expect. These ponds are an important and highly-threatened habitat type, many of which persist for millions of years. It is really important that these ponds are kept as they are, and not made into more permanent ponds, because they have a range of specialised and rare plants and animals.

3. Ponds should be at least 2m deep

If you have really clean water in a pond it doesn't much matter what shape or depth it is – it will be have great potential as a wildlife habitat. But natural ponds have natural edges and most of the wildlife lives in the shallow water at the edges of the pond, in water no more than an inch or so (2 cm) deep. This is really shallow, half length of your little finger! The water needs to be no more than a couple of feet deep (say 50 cm) in the middle. In those shallow edges let grasses grow, or maybe low-growing marginal plants that can trail into the water. The greatest variety wildlife in ponds lives in the very shallow water and tadpoles, newt larvae, water beetles, dragonflies: all love these areas.

4. The bigger the pond, the better

Naturally-occurring ponds are often very small in size (caused, for example, by the hollow created by a fallen tree) and can attract the largest variety of wildlife. Large ponds will tend to contain more open water, which most pond wildlife will not want to inhabit.

5. Ponds should not be shaded by trees

Trees growing in, over and around ponds make a good home for wildlife, especially for newts which like to have a sheltered place to hibernate in the winter. Having a slightly shaded pond will not stop most of the other plants from growing. Shade can also help to limit the growth of some of the plants that we don't want in ponds such as introduced invasive plants. Dead wood in ponds is also great for wildlife. Woodland ponds are a rare and valuable habitat whose plants and animals are adapted to the often heavy shade in which they live. If there are good reasons for tree removal it should be done on a very small scale and the results carefully observed.

6. Ponds must have “oxygenating plants”

Ponds are still water systems, naturally low in oxygen. The animals that inhabit them are adapted to these conditions. Plants sold as having oxygenating qualities are very often invasive, non-native species that are likely to turn into a nuisance and take over your pond. If you want to buy pond plants, take care to stock it with native species only (see following page).

7. New ponds need to be planted up because natural colonisation is too slow

People often add a bucket of sludge to 'get the pond started'. But there's no need to do this if your pond is clean and natural – animals and even water plants will colonise naturally (though plants may take a year or two). And if you can resist the temptation to add things you will have that thrill of seeing animals, and maybe plants, arriving under their own steam. Remember that new ponds are not 'empty' but a special kind of habitat – the place where the plants and animals that like bare sediments and no competition can live for a short time – until the pond becomes more mature.

8. Pond water-level fluctuations must be minimised

In a natural pond, water levels will fluctuate according to the season and this allows a much wider range of wildlife to take advantage of the changing habitats. Likewise, don't be alarmed if your water level goes down a bit during drier periods—it will fill up all by itself when the rain comes and in the meantime will give other species a chance to thrive.

9. Ponds need an inflow to prevent them becoming stagnant

Ponds are still-water habitats that are naturally low or variable in oxygen levels. An inflow of water can be problematic, often bringing pollutants or large amounts of sediment. Many ponds are fed sufficiently by groundwater or run off from the surrounding area. Ponds and their management is a very complex subject not easily dealt with in a short article. If you are interested in more on ponds take a look at the back page of the two previous issues of Your Countryside.

10. Ponds need to be dredged to prevent them becoming choked up with too much vegetation

Most pond animals live amongst the vegetation in a pond and avoid open water. Dredging of ponds is an extremely damaging activity from which a pond may take years to recover and can cause permanent loss of plant and animal species. Think carefully about why you are doing it before removing plant material. If it is necessary, remove only a little at a time observing the results. The best wildlife ponds naturally have sediments, fallen leaves, twigs and branches on the bottom and plenty of plants in the water. You don't need to pull these out to keep your pond in 'good condition'. They are the habitat of animals in the pond – if you do clean them out, you pull out the animal's habitat as well.

For further information and reading on the subject, please see Section 7 Useful links.

Beware!

Garden centres sell all manner of wonderful looking plants for your pond or bog garden, but beware! Many of these are not native to the UK and can pose a real threat to British wildlife.

How can a small plant cause so much harm?

You might have thought that it doesn't matter what plants you place in the privacy of your own garden pond, but in fact it is impossible to prevent the spread of these invasive species from garden ponds into the wider natural environment. One common way in which this happens is that the exotic plants become attached to the feet of visiting birds and are transported into the wild. Even the tiniest piece of invasive plant can spread rapidly within weeks.

Once in the wild, these exotic invasive plants can cause havoc in Britain's ponds, lakes, rivers and other waterways.

Without natural predators and in our temperate climate, these plants grow rapidly often to nuisance proportions. Invasive plants out-compete native plants and pose a threat to our native invertebrates, amphibians and fish by blocking out heat and light from the water. They can also clog up water treatment works and pose a flood risk.

How to avoid their spread

The easiest way to prevent the spread of these species in the wild is not to allow them into our gardens in the first place.

- Take the list.
The following page lists the main culprits so that you can avoid them at all costs when you are choosing aquatic plants for your wildlife area. Go armed with both the common name and Latin name to avoid any confusion with the garden centre's labelling.
- Choose your aquatic plant stockist with care. Check with the stockist whether the native plants you are about to buy have been stored with non-native species. If this is the case, small parts of invasive plant are likely to escape into your pond.
- If in doubt, check with your CMP.
Your local Countryside Management Partnership (see Section 1) is there to advise you on reputable stockists. Give them a call if you need any help at all.



Parrots Feather



Canadian Pondweed



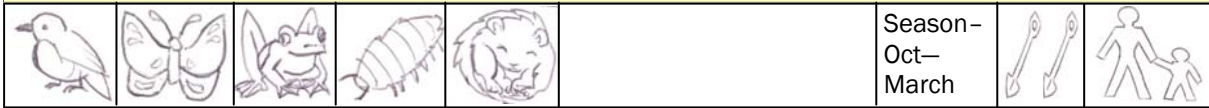
Floating pennywort

Aquatic plants to avoid		
Common name	Latin name	Characteristics
Australian Swamp Stonecrop	<i>Crassula helmsii</i>	Able to regenerate from small fragments and can spread rapidly, often becoming completely dominant in wetland habitats. Forming very dense mats, it often out-competes other aquatic plants.
Canadian Pond weed	<i>Elodea canadensis</i>	Causes problems by competing for nutrients and outgrowing many native species.
Curly Waterweed	<i>Lagarosiphon major</i> or <i>Elodea crispa</i>	Sold by garden centres as an oxygenating plant, often mis-labelled as <i>Elodea crispa</i> (there is no such plant) and will grow down to 3 m in still water, out-competing all other plants.
Duckweeds	<i>Lemna</i> species	Duckweeds are small free-floating plants often forming dense mats on the surface of still or slow flowing water, and preventing sunlight from reaching other aquatic species.
Floating Pennywort	<i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i>	Originally from North America and was first brought to the UK in the 1980s for people to put in garden ponds. It grows rapidly and makes dense mats of vegetation which alters the ecology of the pond.
Nuttall's Waterweed	<i>Elodea nuttallii</i>	Causes problems by competing for nutrients and outgrowing many native species.
Parrot's Feather	<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i> or <i>Myriophyllum brasiliensis</i>	The shoots have a characteristic feathery appearance. This vigorous plant can choke ponds and waterways and is now adapting to the UK winters by becoming more frost resistant. Unfortunately the species is widely grown in small garden ponds and sold by garden centres.
Water Hyacinth	<i>Eichornia crassipes</i>	Forms dense masses on the surface of the pond, preventing sunlight from reaching any other aquatic species.
Water Lettuce	<i>Pistia stratiotes</i>	Reproduces quickly, forming dense mats and clogging waterway.
Water Primrose	<i>Lugwigia grandiflora</i>	Forms dense rafts and out-competes native plant species. Reduced light levels below kill other waterweeds and algae and reduce water oxygenation levels killing pond fauna. Blocks water bodies and drainage systems and may lead to an increased risk of flooding.

Creating Areas for Nature

4.4 Hedgerows

4. Habitats



Season-
Oct-
March



Why?
Over 600 plant species, 1500 insects, 65 birds and 20 mammals have been recorded at some time living or feeding in hedgerows, yet 21% of England's hedgerows have been lost since 1945 because of removal for agriculture and neglect. A hedgerow will attract a huge range of butterflies, birds and small mammals to your green space and help reduce this loss of habitat.

Helpful tips
If there are grazing animals (this includes rabbits!) in the area where you have planted the hedge, it is wise to add tree guards. These are held up with wooden stakes and protect the small trees from being nibbled. You will be able to buy them from your tree supplier.

Tools
Trowel
Spade
Fork
Crowbar

Materials
Trees
Tree guards (optional)
Stakes (optional)

Health and safety considerations

- Steel toe-capped boots must be worn to protect feet when using tools such as spades and crow bars.
- Be careful not to leave tools lying where they can be tripped over.
- Thorny species should be handled with gloves.

Instructions

- Decide where the hedge is going to be and calculate how many trees you will need. Depending on how thick you want your hedge, plant between 4 and 6 trees per metre in a staggered fashion (see Figure 1).
- Choose which species of tree you would like. Remember to check the soil in the nature area (see section 2) before planting so that you can then work out which species to plant. If in doubt, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership who can advise you on species.
- Now order the trees. It is advisable to buy whips (0.5m-1m) and get them cell grown (in small sections of soil). This makes them much easier to plant, but you can also buy them bare rooted from most tree nurseries. Check with the supplier that they are of local provenance, that is, that they have been sourced from the local area and that you are not planting trees from a foreign country.

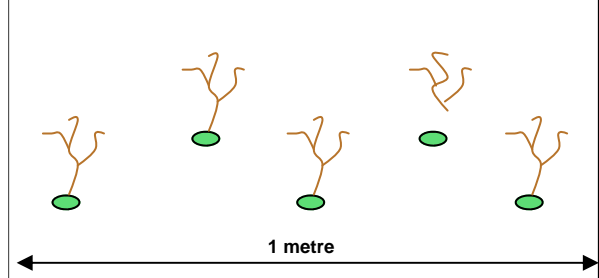


Figure 1

- Now to planting. Dig a small hole with a trowel or spade, place the roots of the tree or the cell into the ground and gently firm the soil around it. Simple! Be advised that you may need to break the soil up first with a fork if the soil is particularly hard. If you are using cell-grown trees you may find it easier to make a hole in the ground using a crowbar, and simply press the cell into the hole.
- Make sure you water the trees during the first two summers, especially if they are particularly dry.
- Some species, such as sessile oak or field maple may take a while to grow into a substantial hedge, but others such as hazel and hawthorn will grow very quickly and you'll be surprised at how soon you have a wildlife-beneficial boundary to your nature area.



For details and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

For further information on hedges and their wildlife, please see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links*.

Creating Areas for Nature

4.5 Trees and Woodland

4. Habitats



Why?

Trees are absolutely essential for our continued existence! They are responsible for converting carbon dioxide into oxygen, and are therefore vital for combating climate change. They also reduce noise pollution, provide shade and control soil erosion.

Nevertheless, trees across the world continue to be destroyed by humans so that land can be used as pasture or to grow crops. You can help to make up for this loss by planting native species of tree in suitable areas.

Helpful tips

Be aware that mature trees need more care and attention after they have been planted than smaller hedge trees.

When choosing which species of tree to plant, make sure to take into account how big it is likely to grow (both in terms of its roots and canopy) and the ongoing maintenance that it will require.

Tools

Fork
Mell
Spade

Materials

Trees
Tree ties
Stakes

Health and safety considerations

- When using a mell, make sure that there are no near bystanders that would be hurt when swinging the tool.
- Steel toe-capped boots should be worn for digging to protect feet.

Instructions

- Identify the best place for the tree to be positioned, preferably where it will get lots of sunlight.
- Most mature trees will come with a large root ball. Dig a hole large enough for the root ball to comfortably fit in, break up the sides of the hole with a fork to loosen the soil.
- Plant the tree. Make sure you firm all of the earth down around the tree once you are finished.
- It is advisable to use stakes and tree ties to support the tree in its first year or two while it is adapting to the new location. These can be purchased with the tree. Use a mell to drive the stakes into the ground close to the tree and the use the tie to attach the tree to the stakes.
- If there are grazing animals on the site more robust protection will be required in the form of tree guards, which can be purchased from your tree supplier and range from small plastic rabbit guards to large metal versions which will protect against large livestock such as cattle and deer.



- Make sure you water the tree frequently for the first two years, especially in the summer.
- If you have sufficient space, why not create a woodland? It need not be huge and could be a valuable haven for all sorts of wildlife. Check with your local Countryside Management Partnership to make sure that your particular area will be suitable.



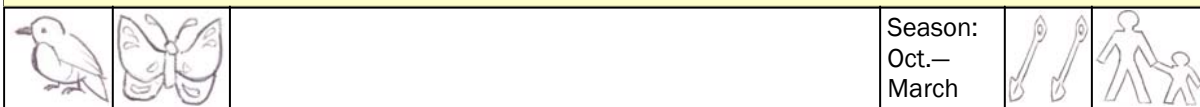
For details and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

For further information on trees and woodlands please see *Section 7.3. Habitats Links*.

Creating Areas for Nature

4.6 Orchards

4. Habitats



Why?

Planting an orchard is good way to combine both encouraging wildlife and conserving local heritage. Kent was planted with extensive apple orchards during the 16th and 17th centuries; most of the apples were used for cooked and later to produce cider. Sadly, 85% of Kent's orchards, which earned the county the nickname "Garden of England", have been lost in the last fifty years because of modern agricultural practices.

Helpful tips

Ask at your tree supplier for the varieties which do best in your area. Many exotic varieties are inviting, but the local species will produce most with the least effort.

If planting a few trees, choose varieties which will give you fruit for a longer time. With apples, for example, you can plant one early variety for summer eating, a late summer variety for autumn and a winter keeper which can be stored all winter.

Planting your orchard

- Follow the instructions in Section 4.5 Trees and Woodlands for planting a tree.
- As with planting any tree, make sure to take into account how big it is likely to grow (both in terms of its roots and canopy) and the ongoing maintenance that it will require. Also, remember to space the trees about 4 metres apart so that they will not shade each other.
- An orchard can contain any number of fruit-bearing trees such as apples, apricots, pears, cherries, figs, peaches, plums and many more. Please see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links* for further reading.

Tips on fruit trees

- Some varieties of fruit tree are self-fertile; that is, they do not need to be pollinated by another tree. This means that you can plant just one tree and expect it to bear fruit. The Home Orchard Society has produced a list of these species - see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links* for further information.
- Other species of tree have distinct male and female flowers, and you must grow both to get seed. Trees that do not self-pollinate need to be close to other similar flowering trees at the same time if they are to produce fruit. To this end, flowering groups are available to help you choose which fruit trees to plant together (again, see *Section 7.3*).
- Many fruit varieties have been specifically bred to provide resistance to common diseases and viruses. These species reduce the need for pesticides in an orchard and can make organic growing much easier.



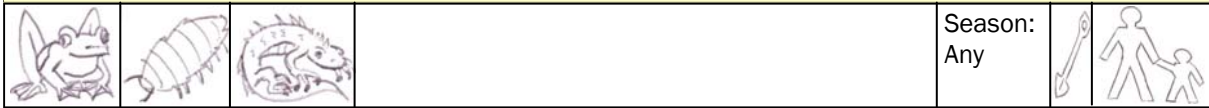
For details and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

For further information on trees and woodlands please see *Section 7.3. Habitats Links*.

Creating Areas for Nature

4.7 Wood Piles

4. Habitats



<p>Why?</p> <p>As well as interesting fungi and mosses, you will provide the perfect home for a vast range of invertebrates, and the a safe haven for frogs, toads and newts to hibernate in.</p>	<p>Helpful tips</p> <p>Different species of fungi live on different species of wood, so using a variety of logs is a good idea. Fungi help recycle the rotting wood, breaking it down for other small invertebrates.</p>
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<p>Tools</p> <p>None required, although a wheelbarrow might be useful if transporting wood across a large distance.</p>	<p>Materials</p> <p>Dead wood</p>
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Health and safety considerations

- Stack the wood neatly so that it is not likely to topple over or slip down a hill.
- Be careful when handling heavy or slippery bits of wood.

Instructions

- Choose the site of your wood pile. Dappled shade is perfect, allowing enough heat in for insects to thrive, but not so much as to dry out the wood pile.
- Pile some logs and dead branches on top of one another in a quiet corner of your nature area and leave them be.
- The wider the logs, the better, but any size of wood can be used. It is a good idea to stack the wood quite neatly, avoiding the risk of it slipping on to someone’s foot and creating lots of small crevices for wildlife.



For details and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

Creating Areas for Nature

4.8 Small Spaces

4. Habitats



Why?

Nature areas can be just as effective growing upwards as outwards, those with limited amounts of outdoor space can still create an immensely valuable area for wildlife.

Tips for small spaces

- **Window boxes and hanging baskets** require only a minimal amount of space and will attract bees, butterflies and birds.
- Use walls to encourage **climbing plants**, perhaps with the aid of a trellis.
- A **pergola or willow structure** will take up only a small amount of ground space, but allow plants to grow vertically as well as providing a green and shady spot for seats.
- A **“green roof” or “green wall”** (see picture) - that is, a roof or wall covered with soil and plants - requires no ground space at all and is a haven for bugs, butterflies, bees and birds. Specialists can install it from scratch or you could create one yourself; see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links* for more information.
- Put **animal homes** such as bird boxes, bat boxes, lacewing and ladybird houses up on your walls—they require no ground space at all!
- Replace an old fence with a **hedge**. One that contains a variety of native species will attract and sustain the most wildlife.
- The **gaps between paving slabs** can be turned into a mini habitat for wildlife by planting low-growing plants that will thrive there.
- If you don't have room for a pond, you could sink a small basin into the ground and fill it with water and some native aquatic plants to create a **mini aquatic habitat**.
- The Mayor of London's biodiversity strategy team has produced a leaflet which provides information on turning small, urban spaces into wildlife havens; please see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links* to download the leaflet.



For details and advice on which species of plants to use, and where to source local materials and contractors, contact your local Countryside Management Partnership.

For further reading and information please see *Section 7.3 Habitats Links*.