



WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY GARDENING

Hints and Tips for gardening in support of
nature

What is a wildlife-friendly garden?

Providing water

Providing food

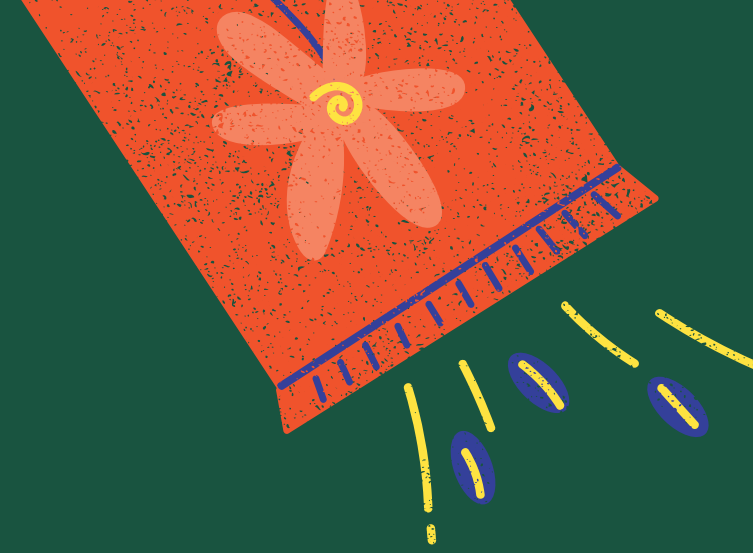
Providing shelter

Dealing with 'pests'

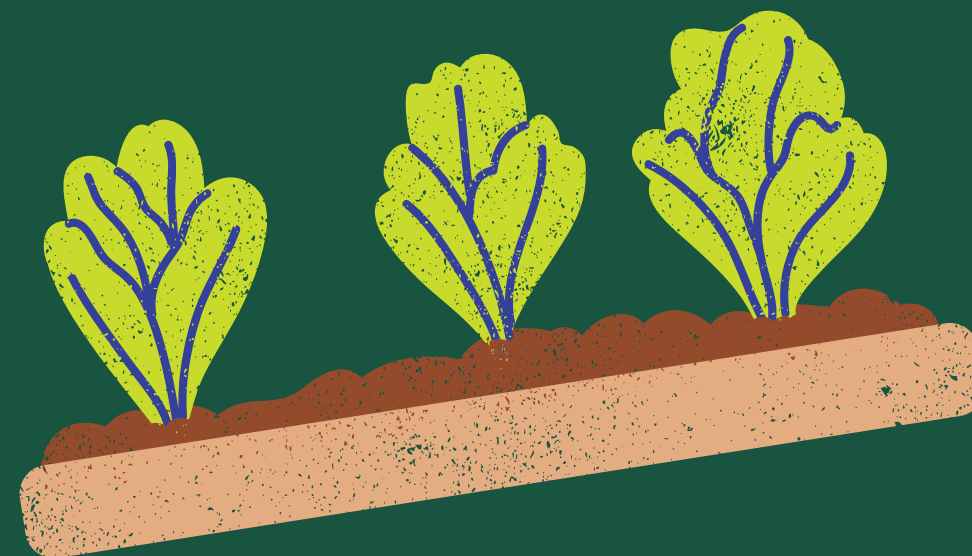
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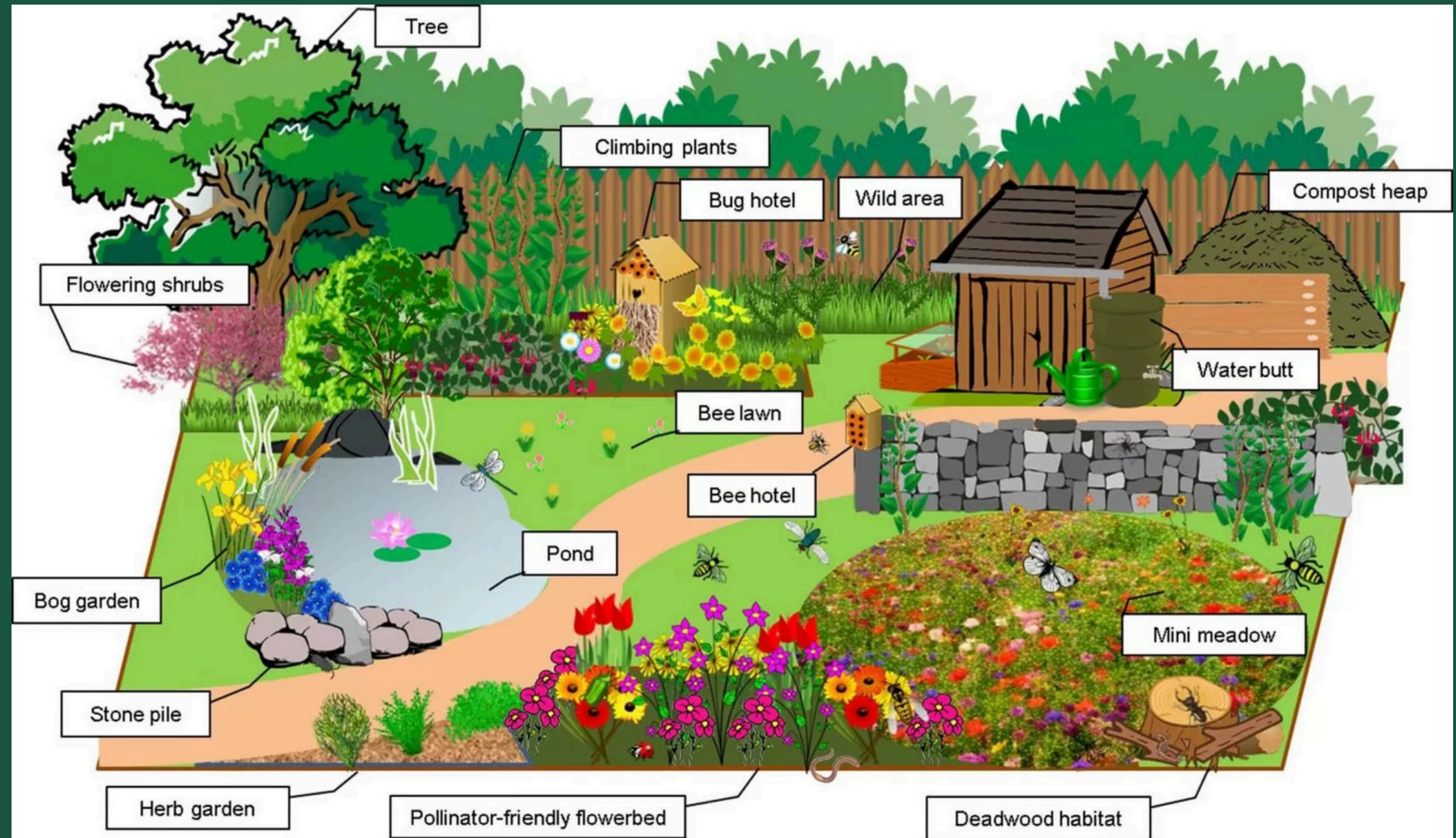


WHAT IS A WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY GARDEN?

Gardens can provide vital habitats and connectivity for nature and can contribute towards a healthy planet.

Gardening with wildlife in mind involves thinking about how your space can be designed and managed to support wildlife, like in the garden pictured here.

Gardening in a wildlife-friendly way not only provides a welcome place for an array of plants, animals, and fungi to live, but can also bring joy and wonder to every day of the year.

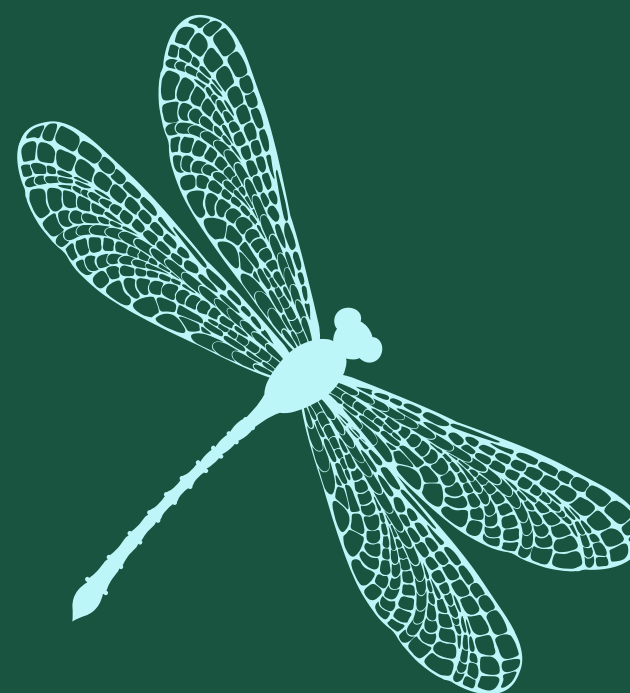


Credit: Dr Kate Moore

WATER

Providing a source of water in your garden is important to help nature thrive. No matter how large or small your space, you can usually find ways to bring water into your garden. Click on each idea to find out more.

- [Pond](#)
- [Hoverfly Lagoon](#)
- [Bird Bath](#)
- [Saucer](#)
- [Micro Ponds](#)
- [Bog Garden](#)
- Its also a good idea to install a [water butt](#) or other means of [collecting rain water](#) for use in the garden



FOOD

Planting for Pollinators

Pollinators such as bees, moths, butterflies, flies, and wasps are a vital part of the garden ecosystem. When planting in your garden or containers, try to plant a variety of pollinator-friendly plants. It's a good idea to try and extend the flowering season by planting a variety of species that flower at different times of the year. Click [here](#) to find out which plants can support pollinators. If you have a lawn you can leave areas of long grass for pollinators to feast on during the spring and early summer.



Nuts, Seeds, and Berries

When deciding what to plant, think about the food it might provide for wildlife. If you have the space, make room for shrubs and trees that provide fruit, nuts and berries, such as crab apple, cherry, or rowan. A small native hedge containing species such as blackthorn, hawthorn, and hazel can also provide year-round interest. Fruiting trees and shrubs will provide food for pollinators in the spring and for birds and small mammals over the autumn and winter months. Click [here](#) for a list of wildlife-loving native trees.



Supplementary Feeding

Although wildlife should ideally be self-sufficient food-wise, there are certain times of the year when additional feeding can be beneficial. The cold winter months and early spring breeding season can sometimes see birds and other animals struggling for food. There are a range of options for [supplementary feeding](#), but in summary you should try and get feed from a sustainable source and make sure that feeders are kept clean to prevent the spread of disease.

Feeding yourself

Wildlife-friendly gardens don't only need to feed wildlife! There are lots of human-edible plants that are great for wildlife too. For example, herbs such as thyme, rosemary, and chives are great for pollinators and people!



SHELTER

Just like us, wildlife needs a place to shelter and call home. Happily there are lots of ways to provide shelter for wildlife, even in the smallest of spaces. Here are a few ideas:



- Don't be too tidy! Try and resist the urge to 'clear up' dead seed heads, dying stalks, piles of twigs or logs or leaf litter. All these can provide food and shelter for invertebrates.
- Install a hibernaculum or 'toad-abode' to give space for overwintering reptiles and amphibians
- Put in a bug hotel or box. You can easily make these yourself or there are plenty available to purchase. Even a plastic bottle can be easily converted into 5 star bug accommodation!
- Put up a bird box. Bird boxes are a great way to support wild birds, but different birds have different needs. You can find out more here.



- Find space for a hedgehog home. Your wildlife-friendly garden will already provide much of what a hedgehog will need to make a comfortable home, such as leaf piles, a compost heap, or gaps under sheds and decking. You can also install a purpose-built home for hogs – find out more here.

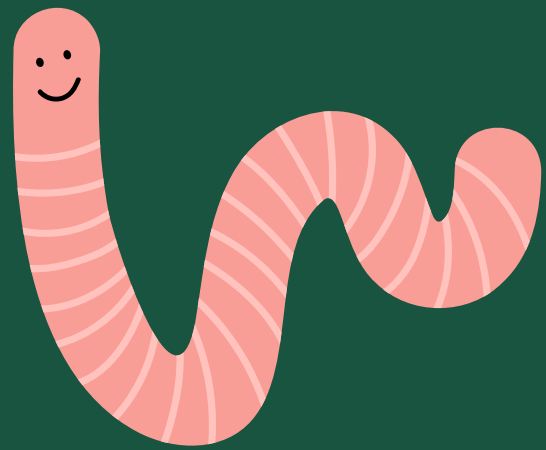


DEALING WITH 'PESTS'

Using chemicals in your garden to get rid of unwanted critters or diseases is bad for wildlife and should always be avoided in a wildlife-friendly garden. Happily, there are a number of ways to discourage those you don't want to see, like aphids and slugs, whilst feeding and encouraging those you do!



- Natural pest control. Happily for the wildlife-friendly gardener, predators that feast on 'undesirables' are often prevalent in gardens managed with wildlife in mind. For example, ladybirds love aphids while frogs, toads, and hedgehogs all love a good slug!
- Make your own. You can easily and cheaply make DIY remedies that are kind to your pocket but tough on pests and diseases.
- Companion planting. While pests love some plants, they hate others! Planted side by side they can keep pests at bay. For example, marigolds are great alongside tomatoes for keeping aphids away.
- Putting barriers in the way is a good way to stop pests from coming into contact with your precious plants. Mulches made from egg shells or gravel are good for repelling slugs and snails.
- There are lots more tips here.



CARING FOR YOUR SOIL



Healthy soils are vital for plants to grow, making it the foundation of wildlife-friendly gardening. Happy soil = happy plants = happy days!

Mulching your soil has a number of benefits. It helps keep soil moist and encourages helpful bacteria and critters in your soil to thrive. It also reduces watering and gives you healthier plants. A win-win!

Having a compost area, be it heap, container or bucket helps you to get rid of garden and other organic waste and provides thriving, rich soil for you to use in your garden. There are lots of composting options, some of which are suitable even if you don't have an outside space. Find out more [here](#).



Go peat-free. Peat production comes at huge environmental cost, destroying important habitats and releasing carbon into the atmosphere. Avoid using peat in your garden or buying plants cultivated in peat.

TENANTED OR MANAGEMENT COMPANY - CONTROLLED SPACES

Many people live in properties that are rented, or where what they are allowed to do in their gardens is restricted. Even in such spaces, there are ways to garden for wildlife which should improve your green space and without upsetting your landlord!

- Container planting can work well in tenanted spaces and pretty much anything, from old wellies to watering cans can be 'upcycled' and used as a home for plants.
- If you are limited on space, gardening 'vertically' can work well – here are some ideas as to how you might go upwards with your gardening!
- Containers can also be used to create watery environments. From purpose-built small water features to upcycled container micro ponds, sources of water will be welcomed by wildlife.
- If your landlord or management company are concerned about your space being kept 'neat and tidy', screening, either from an existing fence or hedge or created from something like willow hurdles, can help.
- A small leaf or dead wood pile will help wildlife in your garden, and can be easily removed at the end of a tenancy.



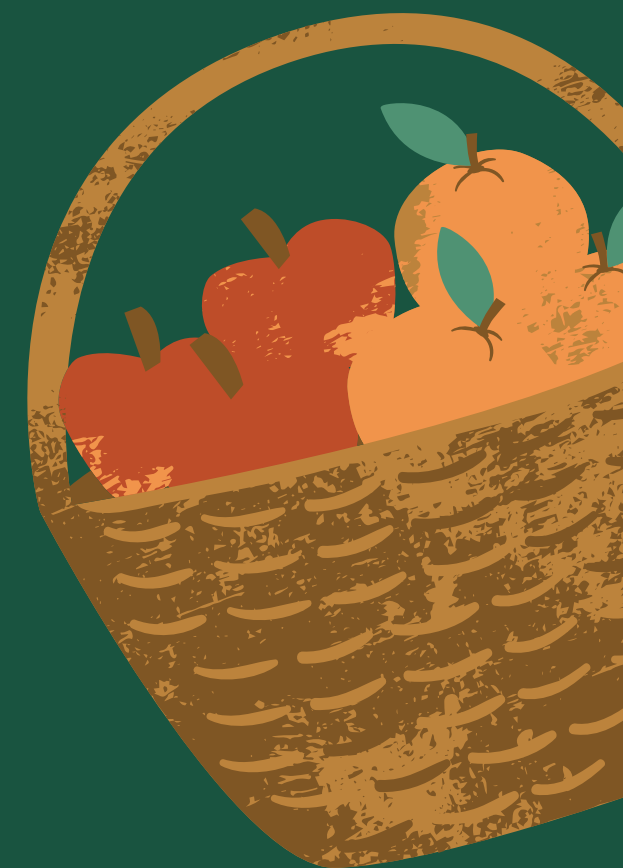


CONNECTING WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS

A lack of connectivity is one of the big challenges facing humans and wildlife. By encouraging your neighbours to follow you in making space for wildlife in their gardens, you can find new ways to connect with people and with nature.

Gaps in fences to provide 'hedgehog highways', native hedging rather than fencing between properties, or sharing plants, seeds, produce, hints and tips are all good ways to connect with your neighbours.

You can also encourage your friends and neighbours to join the Thornbury Community Nature Reserve and grow the space for nature in our town. They can scan the QR code to get involved, or visit our website at <https://www.thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk/community-nature-reserve/>



THANK YOU FOR CARING
FOR THE WILDLIFE IN OUR
TOWN

