



## **Jeffery's tips for eco-friendly gardening**

Vast numbers of plant and animal species live naturally side by side. By encouraging wildlife into our gardens, we can all benefit from a more balanced habitat. If you prefer to have an orderly garden with cultivated plants but still want to attract wildlife, grow nectar-rich flowers such as sedum and wallflower, seed-rich species such as sunflower, and berry-rich plants such as firethorn and cotoneaster. Try to include some rough grass, dense shrubbery and a wild patch of native plants such as nettle, elder, holly, guelder rose, hawthorn, rowan, thistle, bramble and cow parsley. Ideally, site wild flowers away from the house.

Popular plants that will attract wildlife: alyssum, aubrietia, borage, buddleia, campanula, comfrey, escallonia, honesty, lavender, lungwort, Michaelmas daisy, poppy, rose, sea holly, sedum, sunflower, sweet rocket, thyme, valerian and wallflower. Plants can provide cover and shelter as well as food.

Mixed hedges always attract more wildlife than single-species ones, especially if wild flowers grow at the base. Aromatic herbs such as lavender and rosemary are especially attractive to butterflies and other insects.

If you do not have a herb garden, grow different types of herb mixed in borders or patio pots – the wider the range of plants and flowering times, the better. Most herbs grow as well in containers with good drainage as they do in the open ground of a herb garden; the only difference is they need a little extra care. Plant herbs in the best growing medium possible using free-draining, loam-based compost, apply fertiliser about six weeks after planting and liquid feed every seven to fourteen days checking the soil is moist every day.

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