

The Little Green Book

A practical guide to help our area



THE LITTLE GREEN BOOK

Tackling climate change and enhancing our local ecology and environment are issues that many individuals have raised with us when out talking to residents.

The purpose of “The Little Green Book” booklet is our starting point in presenting something that is practical and which we can all get involved in and enjoy. You can become a citizen scientist by surveying your garden and local green areas for the varieties of life that exists and find out what pollinators etc you have, also approach local schools to see if they would be interested in taking part in a survey.

We are also asking you to consider what actions however small can be taken regarding sustainable living.

The booklet is designed so you can take it with you and fill it in or do it online, paper copies can be returned (address on back page) and we will add it to the survey.

- **Don't worry you do not need to be a professional**
- **How long it takes is entirely up to you**
- **You can involve neighbours, friends or schools to help**
- **Please take photographs**

All the information collected will be added and recorded and held at the Warwickshire Biological Records Centre. All this information will help us to gain a better understanding about the biodiversity and ecology in our area and go towards what more we can do to support our local environment.

Web link to the WCC Biological Records Centre

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/environment-ecology/warwickshire-biological-records-centre



USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Warwickshire Wildlife Trust**
www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk, they are always looking for volunteers.
- **RSPB** www.rspb.org.uk
- **Friends of the Earth** www.act.friendsoftheearth.uk
- **WRAP** www.wrap.org.uk
- **Rugby Borough Council** www.rugby.gov.uk
- **Warwickshire County Council** www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ecology
- **Garden Wildlife Surveys** www.wlhf.org/garden_
- **Butterfly Conservation** www.warwickshire-butterflies.org.uk
- **Bumblebee Conservation Trust**
www.bumblebeeconservation.org/garden-advice
- **Bird Spot** www.birdspot.co.uk/bird-identification
- **Garden Nature** www.gardenature.co.uk
- **Happy Beaks Bird Food** www.happybeaks.co.uk
- **National Biodiversity Network** www.nbn.org.uk
(data, research, tools & publications)
- **Friends of Bluebell Walk** on Facebook locally



You can purchase bird food,
bird boxes and lots of other
materials from

MADDENS
RUGBY LTD

Paddox Parade
312-314 Hillmorton Road
Rugby CV22 5BP
Telephone 01788 544282

GARDEN WILDLIFE RECORD SHEET

Quarter in which you are recording (please tick)

Jan - Mar Apr - Jun Jul - Sep Oct - Dec

Is your garden small, medium or large?.....

Which of the following features do you have in your garden

(please tick): trees / pond / hedge / compost heap / flowerbed / lawn

Other please state here

Do you use any chemicals in your garden? (like pesticides or weed killers)

Do you use insect hotels instead of chemicals in an area of your garden?

If you buy compost, do you make sure it is peat-free or peat reduced?.....

Which of the following have you seen in your garden? (during this quarter)

- frogs / grass snakes / bats / newts / slow worms / hedgehogs / toads / badgers / foxes

Please list any butterflies, or other insects, that you have seen:

Other wildlife (N.B. turn over for list of birds).....

Tick any of the following that you provide for birds in your gardens

food / water / nestboxes

Are there any birds nesting in your garden? (please say which species)

Recording the wildlife you see and providing us with the information allows the continual monitoring of species found in our parish.

Species:

Number seen:.....

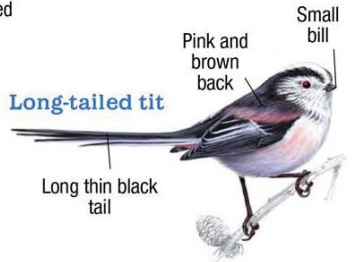
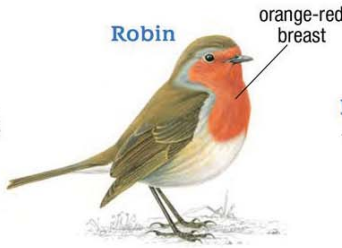
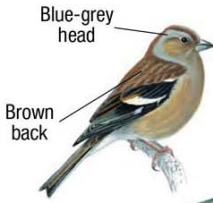
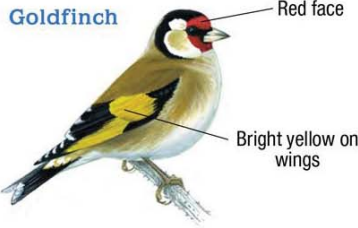
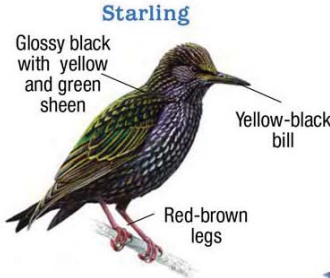
Location name:.....

Grid reference (or postcode):

Date:

Comments/description:

GUIDE TO THE TOP 10 GARDEN BIRDS



SUSTAINABLE LIVING RECORD SHEET

How sustainable is your lifestyle?

- Have you fitted any low-energy light bulbs in your house? Yes No
- Do you have a heat pump/solar powered boiler? Yes No
- Do you leave your TV or other appliances on stand-by for long periods of time? Yes No
- Is your loft insulated? Yes No

How many cars are there belonging to your household?					
How often do you (please tick)	every day	several times a week	once or twice a week	occasionally	never
make a journey by car?					
make a journey of less than a mile by car?					
make a journey by public transport?					
make a journey on foot?					
make a journey by bike?					

Are there any changes that could be made that would encourage you to use public transport, cycle or walk more?

.....

.....

.....

Do you have a water-butts or container to collect rainwater for use in the garden? Yes No

Which of the following materials do you recycle on a regular basis? (please tick) paper glass textiles aluminium cans steel cans plastic

Do you make your own compost? Yes No

If not, is there a reason? (e.g. lack of space)

.....

.....

.....



Photo - Birdspot

10-PT PLAN FOR ENHANCING YOUR GARDEN FOR WILDLIFE

Size does not matter - even a small window box planted with herbs or night-scented flowers can provide nectar for insects.

- 1. A range of habitats** - piles of **stones and logs**, **holes in walls** and **broken plant pots** will give shelter to amphibians and reptiles. Leave **some undergrowth** for cover and retain **dead wood** where possible, leaving fallen branches and also standing dead wood which is very valuable for wildlife. Plant nectar-providing perennials in spaces in a paved area.
- 2. Make a pond with several depths** - get some **mud from an established healthy pond in good condition** to kick start the nutrient recycling process. Make sure that amphibians can get out with a **few rocks or slabs at the edge and a ramp for hedgehogs**. You will get a boost to your garden wildlife in the first year and good for children to dip in - but make a strong mesh cover for safety. Old sinks filled with water can teem with wildlife too.
- 3. In the flower beds** have a **range of plant heights** to encourage insects and **fewer double blooms** which have less nectar and are difficult to access. Grow **food plants for butterfly caterpillars** and **nectar rich flowers** for butterflies (see 4.4). **Night-scented flowers** are very attractive to moths. Leave **dead heads** over winter for seed-eating birds - you may get goldfinches.

4. **Food and water** - have several **bird baths** and **bird feeders** around the garden at different heights – keep them in service all year round and clean.
5. **Homes for wildlife** will be there already if a garden is not too tidy but add bird and bat boxes away from artificial light to avoid disturbance, hedgehog homes and insect ‘hotels’ for ladybirds, lacewings and solitary bees.
6. **Hedgehog holes** - make fencing ‘permeable’ by creating gaps in panels and bases to allow them to roam between gardens - home ranges average 10ha for females which is 50 ‘average’ (i.e. small) gardens; males need three times that.
7. **Composting** - create a **compost heap** using grass cuttings and dead flowers, ideally with three open sections for a 3-year rotation – it may attract the harmless grass snake.
8. **Trees and shrubs** - plant **native species, including berry bearers**, in addition to ornamentals. Keep **some ivy** - it provides nest sites, summer food for holly blue caterpillars, winter nectar for insects, berries for winter bird food - and does not kill trees.
9. **Wild flowers** - create a **meadow area with seed and/or plugs** - leave grass to grow from springtime and then cut at the end of Summer and remove all arisings after leaving them for at least 48 hours to shed their seeds; strimming is better than mowing. For areas of **spring flowers** leave mowing until June. Spend a couple of minutes checking for any wildlife before you cut. Less frequent mowing may allow some wild flowers to grow in the lawn.
10. **Wildlife-friendly materials** – put down **beer traps or crushed egg shells** to deter slugs instead of the old metaldehyde slug pellets, or use organic slug pellets which are safe and just as effective. Hang old CD's on wire as bird deterrents and use **sustainable peat** alternatives.

Photo - happy beaks



Photo - British Garden Birds



Photo - Birdspot





A CALENDAR TO HELP YOU TO HELP WILDLIFE IN YOUR GARDEN AND ALLOTMENT

JANUARY

- Provide water all the year round – use warm water when it is freezing. DO NOT add salt to the water.
- Clear snow off some grass and crumble fat balls for the birds, under a protecting mesh e.g. old hanging basket.
- Join the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch.
- Plan a herb bed - south facing and on poor soil - for nectar loving insects.
- Resolve to have more perfume in your garden for moths, e.g. nicotiana, night-scented stocks, evening primroses.
- Install or build a composter for garden and kitchen waste.

FEBRUARY

- Create a wildflower meadow, best sown in spring or autumn or plant wildflower plants/plugs.
- Do not mow Feb-July/August. Cut in late January/February if there has been a lot of winter growth.
- In a small garden, sow grass and wild flowers in pots.
- Plan to sow nectar-producing cottage garden flowers.
- Trim hedges after berries have been eaten but before bird nesting begins in March.
- Plant honeysuckle for nectar, berries, and nesting and roosting sites.





MARCH

- Make a pond, at least 1m deep with several depths, gently sloping sides, away from trees.
- Create some damp spots to attract amphibians.
- Amphibian counts start now - see the WART website.
- Tie some nesting materials near your bird feeders.
- Make a mini-wetland to attract new wildlife to your garden, such as dragonflies.
- Keep bird baths clean. Top up ponds with rainwater.

APRIL

- Plant red berry-bearing shrubs, e.g. holly, cotoneasters, pyracantha and skimmia.
- Avoid using herbicides - hand weed, apply mulch, and plant good ground cover instead.
- Let some grass grow longer for 'brown' butterflies.
- Plant sunflowers for finches, and blue, white and yellow flowers for bees.
- Avoid double flowers which may have no nectar and are difficult for insects to feed from.
- Plant evergreen shrubs and hedges to shelter young birds.

MAY

- Watch for swifts and send records to Swift Conservation.
- Grow caterpillar food plants for butterflies, e.g. honesty and ladies smock for orange tip, buckthorns for brimstone, bird's foot trefoil for common blue.
- Plant out nectar plant seedlings by the end of the month when frosts should be over.
- Bring a bit of countryside into the garden with pot-grown wild flowers.



JUNE

- Watching for bats at dusk and send records to the Bat Conservation Trust.
- Avoid supplying dry bird food and loose whole nuts which can choke baby birds.
- Check for nests before trimming hedges and shrubs.
- Look for orange tip and brimstone eggs, and record.
- Avoid using pesticides which will kill ladybirds and other helpful insects. Use alternatives to slug pellets.
- Encourage predatory and other insects with bunches of hollow stems in sunny spots.
- If greenfly become a problem, wash them off with a dilute solution of washing-up liquid or pinch out plant tips.

JULY

- Cut your 'field and let seeds drop before removing hay.
- Ask a neighbour to keep feeders topped up if you go away for any length of time.
- Complete the WWT Garden Wildlife Survey form and take part in National Moth Night.
- When using your compost / leaf mould – instead of peat -take care in case grass snakes or hedgehogs are nesting there.
- Dispose responsibly of old chemicals – they will not be needed if you encourage garden wildlife.

AUGUST

- Mow wildflower meadow once only between mid-Aug. and mid-Sept., always removing arisings after seed fall.
- Keep bird baths well topped up.
- Let some flowers go to seed and leave heads over winter.



- Plant some spring-flowering shrubs to give valuable early nectar for insects next year.
- If you cover soft fruit crops, use taut, 4cm netting to deter birds but make it visible by hanging old CDs on it.

SEPTEMBER

- Clear the pond of leaf debris with a sieve – watch for newts and dragonfly nymphs and put them back.
- Leave some windfall fruit for birds- they will appreciate the water and sugar.
- Leave some ivy for late nectar, also seed heads in the flower border, and let vegetation die back naturally.
- Build a rockery – the stones will provide shelter for small creatures.

OCTOBER

- Leave the lawn slightly longer over winter and avoid chemicals to provide all-year bird feeding.
- Grow fruit-bearing native shrubs and trees, e.g. crab apple, holly, elder, birch, rowan or hawthorn, for a winter supply of bird food.
- Clean out the bird feeders and make sure they are in cat proof places in the garden.
- Press fat balls or mealworms into holes in hanging logs for the insect eaters like tree creepers and goldcrests which need soft food rather than seed. Fat balls are fun for children to make and are better than shop bought ones.

NOVEMBER

- If you have space, plant a hazel for the nut supply and insects, and a fruiting hedge as a wild food supply. You may have room to plant a mini-woodland.
- Make a few holes in your fences for hedgehogs to roam - they need a big territory.



- Review the year's wildlife records and plan for more.
- Check bonfire piles for hedgehogs – or instead of having a bonfire, rake rotting branches, grass clippings, fallen leaves into heaps and leave them to rot down naturally for hibernation homes.
- Leave dried stems and seed heads to provide shelter for overwintering insects.

DECEMBER

- Cover bare areas with ground cover such as periwinkle.
- Take care when tidying up greenhouses – some of our butterflies and lace wings overwinter as adults.
- Put up bird or bat boxes on a building or tree.
- Plant a rugosa rose to provide hips - finches love them.
- Buy a present for the garden such as a wildlife camera, wormery or hedgehog home – though a log pile will suit hedgehogs just as well and provide insect food.

Sources: BBC Gardening Guides, RSPB A-Z of a Wildlife Garden, and The Wildlife Trust's Guide to Wildlife Gardening

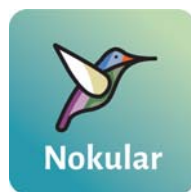
Gardens & Allotments Wildlife Calendar

Ruth Moffatt May 2015 www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

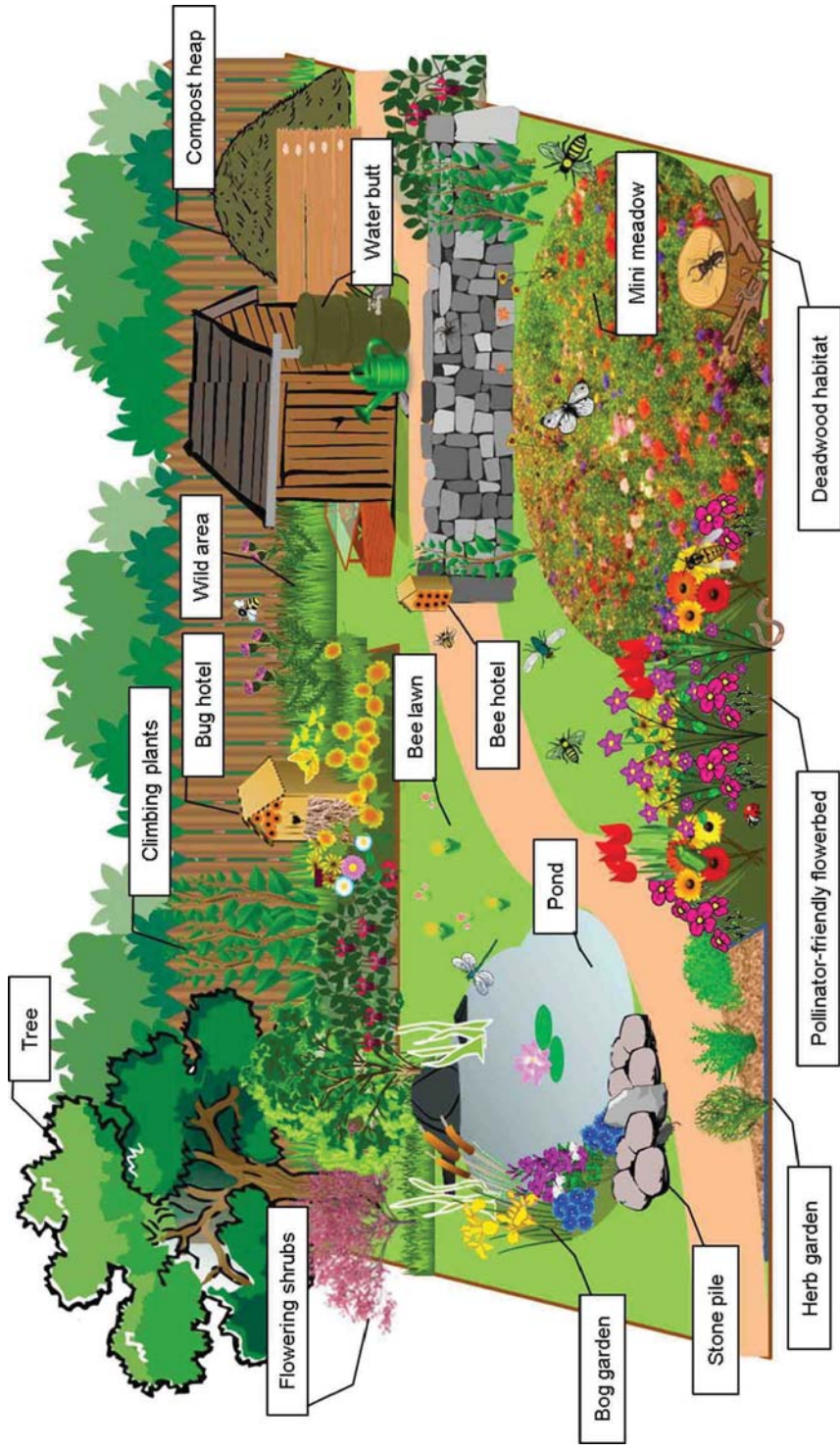
THE NOKULAR APP

The Nokular app hopes to reconnect you with nature and the outdoors. It is a place to explore new species, share and enjoy photos, and appreciate the beauty of the natural world. While the app focuses on birds, users are free to post about, and enjoy, anything nature-related. It is available for free on iOS and Android at

www.nokular.com



Check your garden, is it friendly for bees, birds and helping our local biodiversity?



Be part of the Compost Revolution

Why spend £40 a year on a green bin, when you could pay £35.00 delivered for a hot composter, the Green Johanna, pictured right, recycles all kinds of waste food – even cooked food, bones, meat and fish)



www.warwickshire.gov.uk/green-waste/composting
www.greatgreensystems.com/shop/local-council-deals?rv

We are supporting the **Love Food Hate Waste** campaign lots of helpful tips www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/

ON RECYCLING



Join **Slim Your Bin** to learn how to recycle more and waste less in order to shed pounds from your rubbish bin. By slimming your bin, you'll help to shrink your environmental footprint and save money at the same time. When you sign up, we'll set you up with a 4 week training plan to help you Slim Your Bin. Each week we'll send you emails on a new bin slimming theme: from shifting everything you can from your rubbish bin to recycling bin; getting the right thing in the right bin; cutting down on food waste and minimising waste in general.

With Slim Your Bin, you'll earn points for the bin slimming activities you take part in. Slim Your Bin www.warwickshire.slim-your-bin.com/

PRIZES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

The campaign is free to join and anyone from the Boroughs of North Warwickshire, Rugby and Nuneaton and Bedworth and the Districts of Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick can sign up.

We have £650 to give to a charity or community project and you can vote for your favourite from a shortlist. The community with the most points after 6 months will win the prize money for their favourite charity.



Our world is changing

We believe that it is the small things and the small steps we take together that matter.

We know that there is a loss of biodiversity and that Rugby and Warwickshire as a County is not performing well. The UK is a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). All of the 2020 Biodiversity Indicators for the UK are available on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee website: "Biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth"

How does ecology help the environment?

Ecology enriches our world and is crucial for human wellbeing and prosperity. It provides new knowledge of the interdependence between people and nature that is vital for food production, maintaining clean air and water, and sustaining biodiversity in a changing climate.

You can download this booklet and forms to share under the Advice heading at www.rugbylibdems.org.uk

You can return these forms by post to: **FREEPOST Rugby Lib Dems**

Thank you for taking the time in filling these forms in it all helps towards improving our environment.

Liberal Democrats
Rugby

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Email: info@rugbylibdems.org.uk
www.rugbylibdems.org.uk

Active • Caring • Effective

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