

KENT'S PLAN BEE



December 2021 Summary Newsletter

Launch of Kent Children's University Education Pack



In partnership with Kent Children's University, we are very excited to launch the new Kent's Plan Bee Pollinator Challenge 2022! Go to the [KCU website](#) to download the pack today.

Find a year's worth of activities for children to do, from keeping a pollinator diary and planting for pollinators, to a whole host of creative activities! If you are registered to Kent Children's University, then completing these challenges will earn you points towards Learning Credits. It is available to everyone though, and we would love for you all to get involved and show us what you have done from the pack. Tag us and Kent Children's University in your posts and use [#KCU Bee Challenge](#)

A Year in Review – Looking back at 2021

What a year 2021 was! From launching our Facebook page in May, to our Christmas pollinator facts in the last week of December, every week has been jam-packed full of pollinator goodness.

Some of our favourite highlights include:

- Launching our Public Perception of Pollinators survey and producing a document with the results (you can still find this on [our webpage](#))
- 30 Days Wild for Pollinators in June saw us celebrate pollinators every day for the whole month (get ahead with planning your 30 Days Wild for 2022 with the activities from last year, available to [download from our website](#))
- Bees Needs week in July – Find out how you can help Kent's bees, plus many other facts and resources, by looking at our [Resources and Information photo album](#)

There are so many more though! Make sure you follow our [Facebook page](#) to read the review for each month, plus be ready for a fun-fuelled 2022! Happy New Year!



Christmas Pollinators Blog

What have pollinating insects ever done for Christmas? As it turns out, quite a lot! Take a global trip to celebrate seven of our festive favourites, brought to us only by precious pollinating insects, that contribute to our Christmas culture and cheer. Find the blog on the [Explore Kent website](#).



Winter Gardening Tips – What to do in January?

January is a great time to dig a pond ready for the spring. We hope you will be inspired by these images of wildlife, all taken around our pond and garden.

Wildlife benefits

- Water for birds, mammals, honeybees, butterflies, and hornets.
- Butterflies get essential minerals from wet sand and soil.
- Red mason bees, excellent pollinators of fruit trees, use mud to seal their nest chambers.
- Damsel and dragonfly larvae and some beetles live in water.
- We were amazed to find that even a few moth larvae live in ponds.
- Hoverflies with aquatic larvae were also unexpected, the most common being the *Eristalis* species (in stagnant water) and *Helophilus pendulus* (in ponds). Nectar-feeding hoverflies are important pollinators.



Common Frog



Orange Tip Butterfly



Grass Snake



Eristalis pertinax



Helophilus pendulus



Red Mason Bee

Practical

- Kent Wildlife Trust has tips for making [butterfly puddling stations](#) and [wildlife ponds](#).
- The [Buzz Club](#) citizen science website has tips for making small hoverfly lagoons – great fun for children!
- Shallows at the edge ensure easy access and safe exit for wildlife.
- Provide cover such as plants and rocks at the margins.
- Avoid fish – they will eat the larvae and tadpoles in your pond.



Marsh Marigold



Lady's Smock



Meadowsweet



Flowering Rush

Plants

Plants in and around ponds provide pollen, nectar, and food for larvae especially if you use native species. A wildlife pond should include:

- Oxygenating plants such as hornwort.
- Emergent plants – damsel and dragonfly larvae leave their pond by crawling up plant stems.
- Floating leaves for shade to cool the pond and a place for insects to take a drink.
- Marginal plants for pollen and nectar from spring to autumn.



Common Blue Damselfly



European Hornet



Rare Long Horned Bee



Holly Blue

Further information:

[Kent Wildlife Trust: Gardening for a Wilder Kent](#) [Butterfly Conservation blog](#) [Garden Wildlife: Hoverflies](#)

Thank you to our friends at Kent Wildlife Trust Wild About Gardens team, in particular volunteers Penny Brook and Peter Brook, for providing the information for this month's Gardening Tips for Pollinators. Image Credits P Brook.

Events in January

Nature Friendly Gardening for Beginners

Join Kent Wildlife Trust and their Wild About Gardens team for the another of their winter online events Thursday 13th January on Nature friendly gardening. In this session, you will learn how to encourage wildlife into your garden, as well as making it appeal to people. The talk will even touch on sustainability and low carbon in gardening. This is a ticketed event with limited space so please head over to the [event webpage](#) to book your ticket and avoid disappointment.

There are lots of other online Wild About Garden events happening over the winter. Find these and other wildlife events on the [Kent Wildlife Trust's event webpage](#).

Wild About Gardens

Winter and Spring Workshops
on zoom, in your own home, only £5/session

| | |
|---|---|
| Tuesday 30 November 7.30 to 9pm Pollinator Friendly Gardening |  |
| Thursday 13 January 7.30 to 9pm Nature Friendly Gardening for Beginners |  |
| Wednesday 26 January 10.30am to 12 Managing Pests and Diseases in a Nature Friendly Way |  |
| Saturday 5 February 3pm to 5pm Building and Maintaining a Wildlife Pond |  |
| Monday 7 March 7.30 to 9pm Wildlife Lawns |  |
| Saturday 26 March 11am to 12.30pm Using Weeds and Wildflowers in a Traditional Garden to Attract Bees, Butterflies and Moths |  |

To book go to kentwildlifetrust.org.uk
or ring 01622 662012



12 Pollinators of Christmas Photo Appeal



Did you take part in our 12 Pollinators of Christmas advent calendar?

We would love to see your decorations and finished tree! They may help inspire someone else to make them. Either send them to planbee@kent.gov.uk or, when posting your pictures on Facebook, you can tag us @KentsPlanBee and use the hashtag #12PollinatorsOfXmas

Pollinators aren't just for Christmas....

These decorations are suitable for all year round! Find all the instructions on how to make them in the [12 Pollinators of Christmas Photo Album](#) on our Facebook page.

 Keep up to date with the latest news via our [Kent's Plan Bee Facebook page](#) 



If you received this email indirectly and would like to subscribe to our mailing list, please email us on the address below with the subject line "Sign Up". If you wish to unsubscribe from this mailing list, please email us on the address below with the subject line "Unsubscribe".

Do you have a Kent pollinator news story or event that you would like featured in our newsletter? Have you created a pollinator friendly community space? Got your neighbours together to create a row of pollinator friendly gardens? Or do you have an event about Kent's pollinators you would like advertised? Email it to the address below and we will be in contact about a potential space in the Newsletter.

planbee@kent.gov.uk

All the previous editions of the Newsletter have now been added to our webpage. You can download them as PDFs or share the website address on your social media. Find all the Newsletters on the [Pollinators section of Kent County Council's website](#).

Edited by Hannah Simmons, Graduate Biodiversity Officer, Kent County Council.

For a Pollinator Friendly Garden of England

