

KENT'S PLAN BEE



April 2022 Summary Newsletter No Mow May Special



Kent's Plan Bee "No Mow May Pledge" Site

It's May, and [Plantlife's "No Mow May"](#) campaign to leave your lawn uncut for the month is well underway. There are lots of benefits to not cutting your lawn, but the main one for us is that it provides more flowers to feed more pollinators! We want to know if you are taking part in No Mow May this year. As part of raising awareness for the Plantlife campaign, a [pledge site](#) on KCC's Let's Talk website has been created for Kent residents and organisations taking part in No Mow May to say where in the county you are leaving your lawn uncut for May.

This month on [our Facebook page](#), we will also be bringing you tips for improving your lawn for wildflowers, along with what Kent County Council are doing for No Mow May. And at the end of May, don't forget to take part in Plantlife's [Every Flower Counts](#) survey to see which flowers are growing in your lawn!



Make the [No Mow May Pledge](#) today and show your support for Kent's wildflowers and pollinators.

Downswood Parish's New Bee Corridors



Works taking place in March

We love these recently installed Bee Corridors in Downswood Parish. Back in March, Downswood Parish Council arranged for [Medway Valley Countryside Partnership](#) and their team of volunteers to lay 40 square metres of native, pre-established wildflower turf. By using turf with existing wildflowers, it will give the sites a head-start in growing and can provide for pollinators sooner. The bee corridors can be found at two locations on Deringwood Drive: adjacent to Reinden Grove and opposite Bournemouth Close, by the Downswood Stone. We can't wait to see how these have progressed later in the year!



How it looks a month on

Wildflower Favours "Rewild your World" Animation

MAY 1
REWILD YOUR WORLD
SAVE OUR POLLINATORS
NARRATED BY MEGAN MCCUBBIN



Have you seen this beautiful animation raising awareness for growing wildflowers in our urban spaces for pollinators?

[Wildflower Favours](#) and Ben Sinclair (soon to be Fire Lily Studio) released a 2-minute animated film at the beginning of May. 'Rewild Your World - Save our Pollinators' aims to encourage people across the country to grow wildflowers and let their lawns, communities and homes become wilder. Narrated by Megan McCubbin, hopefully this film will make a big difference for our precious bees and butterflies!

If you haven't already, head over to [YouTube](#) to give it a watch and make sure to share it with your friends and family.

Garden mini-meadows – a practical guide

As part of our No Mow May special, our friends from the Wild About Gardens team have put together a great summary on how to create a garden mini-meadow and what you may find when it starts growing.

Benefits of mini-meadows

- Pollen and nectar food for pollinators
- Nest and over-wintering sites for bumblebees and other insects
- Food plants for butterfly and moth larvae

How to create a wildflower meadow in your lawn – repeat yearly

- Never use chemicals
- Cut grass between January and March to neaten it
- Don't mow the mini-meadow except to create a path or a clean edge around it
- Wildflower seeds already there will bloom naturally
- Mow late summer/early autumn when seed has set
- Leave grass cuttings a few days to shed seed, then rake and remove cuttings



A beautiful meadow of self-sewn buttercups



Orchids appearing in the mini-meadow

Increase biodiversity and flowering period

- In autumn, sow fresh Yellow Rattle seed on bare patches of earth. This 'meadow-maker' restrains grass, enabling more wildflowers to flourish.
- Add small plug plants in autumn or spring. Toughen them up outside before planting – they will be less appealing to slugs! Water them while they settle in.
- With Spring flowers, make your early cut before their leaves appear or mow round them.
- In late summer to autumn, deadhead ragwort to prevent seeds spreading to fields with livestock.

Right plant, right place

For a thriving meadow, choose plants that like your growing conditions. The wildflowers in your area can be your guide.

Flowers by season

Spring



Snowdrop Dandelion



Crocus

Late spring to early summer



Oxeye Daisy White Clover



Buttercup

Late summer to autumn



Knapweed Ragwort



Vetch

Flowers by Area

Lawn Flowers



Red Clover Daisy



Hawkweed

Lush Meadow Flowers



Tufted Vetch Meadowsweet



Meadow Crane's-bill

Damp Meadow Flowers



Lady's Smock Purple Loosestrife



Ragged Robin

Further information: [Gardening for a Wilder Kent](#) [Kent Wildlife Trust: How to grow a wild patch or mini-meadow](#)
[Bumblebee Conservation Trust: information about bumblebee-friendly gardening](#) [Adding Wildflowers to your lawn](#)

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 article. Image Credits P Brook.

What to see in May

It's May and the emergence of spring pollinators is in full swing. One **bee species** emerging is the Shriill Carder Bumblebee.

The best place to find this is on the North Kent coast.

Adult moths to look for include the Cinnabar, Muslin Moth and Speckled Yellow Moth, plus the first of the White-spotted Sable by the end of the month in woodland glades and margins.

Butterflies include Common Blue, Green Hairstreak, Small Copper and Green-veined. **Beetle** pollinators are also starting to emerge in May, such as the Thick-Legged Beetle.

Flies to see in May include Dark-edged and Dotted Bee Flies, Greenbottle flies, Sun Fly, Drone Fly, and many hoverfly species such as Marmalade, Bumblebee, Batman and Pellucid. Many of the hoverfly species are excellent bumblebee or wasp mimics.

Wildflowers to spot this month include Bluebells, Buttercups, Common Vetch, Cowslips, Cow Parsley, Garlic Mustard, Ground Ivy, Oxeye Daisy, and Speedwells.

Spotted any of these or any other pollinators and wildflowers? Post them on our Facebook page or tag us in your photos @KentsPlanBee

POLLINATORS TO SEE IN MAY



Shriill Carder Bumblebee
Bombus sylvarum



Green Hairstreak
Callophrys rubi



Common Blue
Polyommatus icarus



Cinnabar
Tyria jacobaeae



Thick-Legged Beetle
Oedemera nobilis

Others to See
Small Copper Butterfly - *Lycena phlaeas*
Green-veined White Butterfly - *Pieris napi*
Muslin Moth - *Diaphora mendica*
Speckled Yellow Moth - *Pseudopanthera macularia*

Spotted any of these? Why not share them on our Facebook page @KentsPlanBee



Events in May

Wild About Gardens

The next Open Gardens events are on the 8th May in [Gravesend](#) and 29th May in [Shorne](#). Take these opportunities to gain ideas for your own wildlife-friendly gardens, plus talk to the Kent Wildlife Trust volunteers about how they achieved their gardens. You can book onto these Open Days on the [Kent Wildlife Trust website](#) and select a time slot which allows plenty of time for visitors to speak to the volunteers.

Brockhill Country Park Queen Bees

Head to Brockhill Country Park on 31st May and 1st June to create a queen bee crown and plant flowers for bees at the forest school site. [Book your tickets now!](#)



Queen Bees at Brockhill
Tuesday 31st May & Wednesday 1st June 2022

Create a queen bee crown before setting off on a fact finding trail. Then gather in our forest school to plant a bee garden to take home. Receive tips from our rangers before setting off to explore the wildflower meadows and see what you can spot!

£8 per child

Book at: kent.gov.uk/countryparks
Use phone to scan QR code



Wild About Gardens
OPEN GARDENS IN GRAVESHAM

Sunday 8 May: Gravesend
Sunday 29 May: Shorne

For more details see [KWT website](#) or phone 01622 662012

Scan to find out more and to book your open garden ticket

Or book here:
01622 662012
kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/wilder-gardens

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

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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

