

KENT'S PLAN BEE



November 2021 Summary Newsletter

Tree Week and Autumn Tree ID



We have had a great month celebrating trees and the relationships they have with pollinators for [Tree Week](#) 27th Nov-5th Dec.

Trees are vitally important to many pollinators, not just because the flowers offer pollen and nectar to the pollinating adults. The leaves and deadwood of many trees are important food sources for many of the larvae of pollinators. Some larvae are so tree species specific that they can only be found where those trees are. Because of this, the adults have adapted their camouflage to look like those trees to lay their eggs on the tree with reduced risk of predation.

There are loads of examples on [our Facebook page](#), why not have a look...

Christmas is coming...

The countdown to Christmas has begun, and for many that means present shopping for your loved ones. If you know someone who loves their gardening, and their pollinators, here are a few gift ideas to help you with your shopping list:

Identification Books

Wildflower seeds and bulbs

Garden Wildlife Camera Trap

Bug Hotels

Binoculars

Mini Nature Reserve Planter (food plant, shelter, and water in a pot)



12 Pollinators of Christmas

Forgot to get your advent calendar this year? Fear not, we have you covered with our "12 Pollinators of Christmas" Craft-Along advent calendar. From 13th December and every day before Christmas, head to our Facebook page to find that day's instructions to create a pollinator decoration. Then Christmas Eve, gather the whole family to decorate your own pollinator themed tree. A great activity to learn more about Kent's pollinators, and with easily sourced crafting materials, it will be fun for children and adults alike.

We will release the list of materials you will need on our Facebook page on Monday 6th December, but we would encourage you to adapt the instructions to use and recycle whatever you already have in your house.

We would love to see your decorations and finished tree! When posting your pictures on Facebook, you can tag us [@KentsPlanBee](#) and use the hashtag [#12PollinatorsOfXmas](#)



Winter Gardening Tips – What to do in December?

Pollinating insects overwinter at different stages in their lifecycle. Gardeners can help by providing shelter for them and food for the few that are active.

Food: Winter-active insects such as buff-tailed queen bumblebees need flowers for food. These 3 are great winter flowering plants to have in your garden.



Daphne bholua



Snowdrop



Hellebore

Solitary Bee Homes: Bring your bee homes into a cool, dry place over the winter (October to March) – cold is not a problem but damp is. In winter, your bee home may contain young, unanimated adult red mason bees which will emerge in the spring.

Bee home Image Credits Judith Hathrill



Later-emerging types of bee usually overwinter as pupae and the very latest as larvae. Patchwork leafcutter, wool carder and resin bees often use bee homes.



Male Red Mason Bee



Patchwork Leafcutter Bee



Wool Carder Bee



Resin Bee

Leave these natural overwintering sites undisturbed:

- Piles of leaf litter
- Log piles
- Dense vegetation
- Trees – roots, bark and hollows provide shelter
- Soil
- Rock piles and rockeries
- Plant stems and long grass



These features help create a healthy garden ecosystem supporting insects, mini-beasts, amphibians, reptiles, bats, and hedgehogs.

You will benefit many overwintering pollinators including:

- Queen bumblebees
- Solitary bees
- Butterflies and moths, their larvae, and pupae
- Adult hoverflies and their larvae



Hoverfly



Elephant Hawk Moth Caterpillar



Elephant Hawk Moth adult

Further information: Bumblebee Conservation Trust: [How to help hibernating bumblebees](#) & [Winter husbandry for solitary bees](#). Butterfly Conservation: [Where do butterflies and moths go in winter?](#) Urban Pollinators: [Where do pollinators go in winter?](#)

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 and Judith Hathrill.

Events in December and Book ahead for 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 7.00 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 Levens

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



Kent's Magnificent Moth Task Day 15th December



The Kent's Magnificent Moth Team will be at Down Bank in Godmersham on 15th December 9:30am-3:30pm to improve and conserve the habitat for the endangered Black-veined Moth.

It will involve removing and cutting back the scrub in grassland the moth is known to reside in. Everyone is welcome, there is a task suitable for everyone. It is also more than fine if you cannot stay for the whole day, any time is hugely appreciated.

Why Bother? The more people that can be available to help at these task days the better the habitat can be for these beautiful insects. Better habitat = more moths. If that doesn't entice you, Rebecca will bake her yummy species-specific biscuits!

To attend please email epestridge@butterfly-conservation.org. This is important as there is limited parking, and you can be sent specific details of the meeting place. It also helps ensure there is enough equipment and so that everyone is safe and prepared!



 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

