



# GARDENING FOR INVERTEBRATES

## DIVERSITY

Invertebrates make up approximately 96% of all the animals on Earth, and are found in every habitat.

They have diverse needs in terms of food and shelter.

By designing a garden with different habitats, you will attract a greater range of invertebrates.

## POLLINATORS

Many bees, butterflies, moths, some flies and beetles drink nectar and eat pollen from flowers. As they do so, they transfer pollen from one flower to the next causing fertilisation and seed production. Pollinators require a variety of flower types; a mix which bloom continuously through the year; different shapes and sizes; larval food plants; and nest sites.

## FOOD SOURCES

Invertebrates such as ants, crickets, spiders, bugs, many pollinators and detritivores are an important food source for many other animals, and consequently vital in food chains/webs. They require a variety of habitats and breeding sites in order to be successful in reproducing and maintaining their important ecosystem role.

## DETRITIVORES

Lots of millipedes, slugs, snails, woodlice, earthworms, beetles and springtails help recycle decaying organic waste. They eat fallen leaves, old wood, garden and food waste, turning it into smaller particles for bacteria and fungi to break down further. Detritivores require shelter in or under wood, in compost heaps, rock piles or in cracks in walls.

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# GARDENING FOR POLLINATORS



**1. SELECT THE RIGHT PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS.** Planting mini meadows (e.g. red clover, bird's foot trefoil, knapweed), herb gardens (e.g. oregano, rosemary, marjoram) and flowering shrubs and trees (e.g. hawthorn, apple tree, pear tree) will benefit adult pollinators. Larval food plants for butterfly and moth caterpillars to feed on (e.g. common nettles) should also be considered. Pollinators love a sunny site.



**2. PLANT A CONTINUOUS SUCCESSION OF FLOWERS** from March to October. This will mean that pollinators are fed throughout the year. Ivy is important to many pollinators as it flowers in autumn when other nectar sources are absent. Snowdrop and primrose are useful early flowering plants to those pollinators who wake up on sunny, late-winter days.



**3. OFFER A MIX OF FLOWER TYPES, SHAPES AND SIZES.** Some common pollinators are generalists and use a mixture of flowers, but most are specialists. Try to attract these pollinators by offering diversity in flower structure (e.g. bell-shaped comfrey, bowl-shaped poppies, flat and open cow parsley, tubular-centred campion).



**4. PROVIDE NEST SITES** by leaving bare soil on a sunny south-facing bank for some solitary bees to bore their tunnels. Artificial nest sites can also be offered by drilling holes in blocks of wood and attaching to south-facing fence posts.

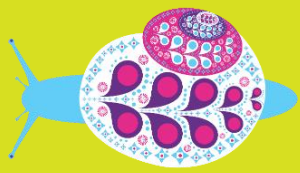
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# GARDENING FOR DETRITIVORES



**1. BUILD A COMPOST HEAP.** Pile up organic waste (e.g. grass cuttings, vegetable peelings, fruit cores) and detritivores should move in to eat the decaying matter. Place a compost heap along the garden perimeter but ensure it is in a sunny position. If using a boxed compost heap, leave an open front for wildlife to move in and out.



**2. CREATE A DEAD WOOD HABITAT.** The bigger the wood the better, but smaller branches can add value too. Build a log pile in the shade as many detritivores like it dark and damp. Try to leave stumps and fallen trees in big pieces in contact with the soil so that the wood remains wet and able to rot.



**3. MAKE A LOGGERY.** In a shaded area, plant logs from any broadleaved tree(s) vertically so that approximately half of their length is underground. This will encourage detritivores such as stag beetles, if present in your area. These beetles require decaying wood in which to lay their eggs and for their larvae to feed on.



**4. CONSTRUCT A WALL OR A ROCK PILE.** Dry stone walls with all of their nooks and crannies can support a lot of invertebrate life. Piles made up of rocks, old bricks, roof tiles, terracotta pots and concrete can also work well as a detritivore habitat.



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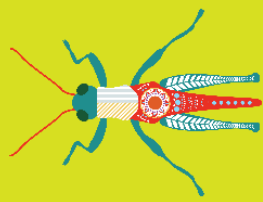


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# GARDENING FOR FOOD SOURCES



**1. CREATE A POND.** Water is life. Many invertebrates live or breed in water. Choose an area of level ground away from trees. Ponds can be dug out and lined if need be. Pre-formed plastic ponds can also be bought and sunk into the ground. Alternatively, if space is limited, ponds can be made in containers – even buckets!



**2. MAKE A BOG GARDEN.** Adapt an already existing damp area or create a new one – beside a pond is an ideal location. Choose a spot on level ground away from trees. Dig down about 20cm, lay down a liner with drainage holes, replace some of the soil then water well. Leave to settle for a week before planting up.



1.



2.



3.



4.



**3. BUILD MAN-MADE HOMES.** Select an area for a bug hotel which gets partial sun exposure through the day. A classic design involves wooden pallets stacked on top of each other, with materials such as bricks, rubble, plant pots, wood, bamboo canes, pine cones, bark and much more to fill the gaps and a waterproof roof.



**4. ALLOW GRASS TO GROW** at different heights for a range of invertebrates to use as shelter. Many invertebrates also rely on 'weeds' so it is also beneficial to leave a section completely wild.

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