



Your Guide To



**NO  
MOW  
MAY**<sup>TM</sup>

**Plantlife**

Let it Grow for Nature

## Plantlife's No Mow May is back for 2026 – let it grow for nature!

No Mow May is one of the easiest ways to help the environment by letting wildflowers grow in your green spaces through May and beyond.

### What is No Mow May?

No Mow May is the annual campaign calling for people to pack away their lawnmowers and let wildflowers grow, giving nature the boost it deserves.

It's a great way to help the environment - letting wildflowers like dandelions, clovers and daisies grow, supporting bees and butterflies.

No lawn is too small and even the smallest wild patch can be a buzzing lifeline for wildlife, connecting us with nature from our doorsteps.

But No Mow May is just the beginning! We think of May as the starting point, a spring board for managing your lawn for nature year round. With a simple goal: to get people cutting less, for longer. So, give May a go and then see if you can stick with it all summer - it all makes a real difference for nature.

### Why Do We Need No Mow May?

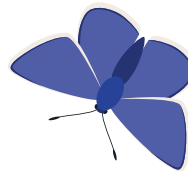
Approximately 97% of flower-rich meadows have been lost since the 1930s, and with them vital food and habitat needed by wildlife.

But gardens and green spaces can help! Leaving the grass to grow longer, even just in small areas, can make a real difference to wildlife. From bees to butterflies and amphibians to small mammals - the local wildlife will relish the longer grass and wildflowers that a No Mow May garden can offer.

With 23 million gardens in the UK, even the smallest grassy patches can add up, providing enormous gains for nature, the climate and people.

A healthy lawn with some longer grass and wildflowers helps to tackle pollution, benefits wildlife and can even lock away carbon below the ground.

**With 1 in 5 British wildflowers under threat it is more important than ever to change the way we mow our lawns.**



## What Can You Spot?



Can you find all these wildflowers in your No Mow May area?

Tick the boxes on the pictures when you spot it.



**Common Bird's-foot-trefoil**  
*Lotus corniculatus*



**Common Daisy**  
*Bellis perennis*



**Common Knapweed**  
*Centaurea nigra*



**Creeping Buttercup**  
*Ranunculus repens*



**Dandelion**  
*Taraxacum officinale*



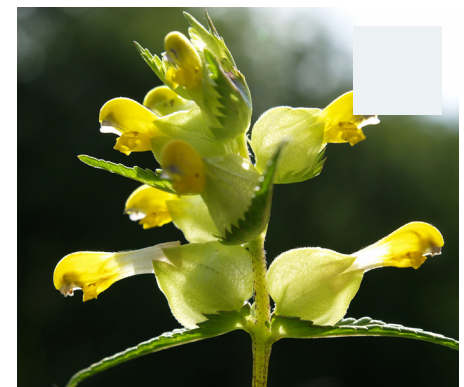
**Germander Speedwell**  
*Veronica chamaedrys*



**Red Clover**  
*Trifolium pratense*



**Selfheal**  
*Prunella vulgaris*



**Yellow Rattle**  
*Rhinanthus minor*



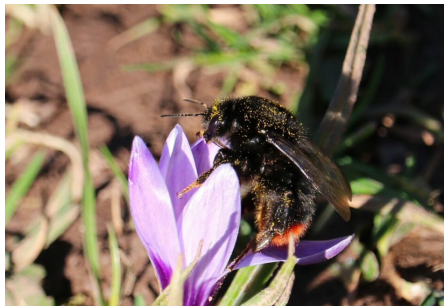
## Bursting With Wildlife

It's not just our wonderful wildflowers which benefit from not mowing our lawns this May – our pollinators and other wildlife flourish when we manage our lawns for nature!



### **Speckled Wood Butterfly** *Pararge aegeria*

Each year there's up to 2 generations of this sun-seeking butterfly – which means many hungry caterpillars. Long grasses that are a favourite for the species include False Brome, Cock's-foot and Yorkshire-fog.



### **Red-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus lapidarius*

Bumblebees like this one rely on a plentiful supply of our wonderfully wild plants such as Red Clover and Dandelion to supply them with nectar and pollen. These are food sources for the bees and their larvae – next year's buzzing bumblebees!



### **Cinnabar Moth** *Tyria jacobaeae*

The life cycle of this bright and boldly patterned moth relies entirely on one of our sunniest wildflowers – the yellow Common Ragwort. Its tiger-striped caterpillars munch on this plant before going underground for winter, ready to emerge as moths and put on another dazzling show next year.



### **Cockchafer Beetle** *Melolontha melolontha*

Commonly known as the May Bug, these chunky red/orange beetles only live for 5-6 weeks. Despite their short lives above ground, females rely on grassy areas such as lawns to lay their eggs, where the larvae develop hidden deep underground for up to 5 years.



### **Marmalade Hoverfly** *Episyrphus balteatus*

Despite being disguised as a wasp, this friendly pollinator relies solely on nectar from flat flower heads such as Common Ragwort and Cow Parsley.



### **Did you know?**

The UK is home to 59 different kinds of butterflies and around 270 types of wild bees – including 24 kinds of bumblebees!



## Nature-friendly Gardening

If you want to create a home for wildlife, here's how to create a nature-friendly garden. If you create the right space, nature will come.

### Build a Wildlife-friendly Pond

One of the best ways to bring wildlife into the garden is to build a pond. It doesn't have to be big – a container such as a washing bowl or old sink will do. But it needs to have at least one sloping side or ramp so that creatures can easily get in and out.

Put your pond somewhere partially sunny and wait for it to fill with rainwater for best results. Bring it to life with native plant species such as Marsh-marigold, Water Avenas and Bogbean.

In summer and during heat waves this water source will be a vital lifeline for thirsty birds, as well as a space for flies such as dragonflies and hoverflies to reproduce.

### Did you know?

The UK is home to 7 different kinds of amphibians. Frogs, toads and newts will come out of hibernation to their breeding ponds.



### Let it Grow

Be part of Plantlife's No Mow May movement and leave the lawn mower in the shed this summer – if you want to take it a step further, we recommend leaving some areas for much longer between mows. Different lengths of grass left in your garden for the whole year will welcome and provide a home for much more wildlife. Shorter grass welcomes clovers and daisies, and grass that has been left to grow all year is a paradise for butterflies and other wildlife.

### Leave the Tidying

It might be tempting to start tidying up the garden before the growing season starts, but these areas of leaf litter, twigs and longer grass along fences or hedges are perfect spots for insects, reptiles and amphibians. If you start to tidy it up too early you could be disturbing a slumbering creature that isn't ready to spring into action until the weather starts warming up.

This also goes for the dead stems and leaves of last year's plants in your borders or pots. Therefore leave the tidying if you can for when the spring days are warm enough.



## Provide Food and Shelter

You can create plenty of shelter and shade for wildlife during summer by planting native plants and shrubs. Native climbing plants like Ivy or Honeysuckle growing up a wall, fence or trellis not only provides a great habitat but are also excellent food sources for lots of insects. Plants that produce fruit, berries, seeds or nuts will be a favourite for many garden birds.

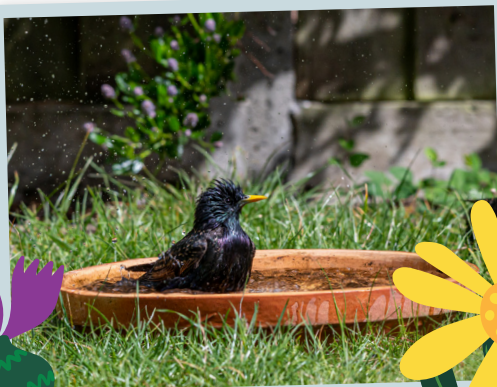
Unlike honeybees, most of our bees are actually solitary and spend their lives searching for suitable places to nest. Some species will create a nest in the ground while others look for a suitable home in existing holes like the Red Mason Bee. Try making your own bamboo bee hotel and position it on a sunny wall, sheltered from the rain.

By providing safe shelter like bee hotels, hedgehog houses and nest boxes, you're much more likely to see birds, insects, and other wildlife appear in your garden.

## Add Water

Adding a small pond to your garden is a great way to entice insects and the wildlife that eat them. You may be lucky to find you've attracted bats that will feed on the insects that gather by the water.

If you can't create a small pond, you could provide a bird bath or a shallow, sloping-sided dish filled with water in the garden for birds. Putting out fresh water is vital for drinking water and bathing when it gets hotter and natural pools dry out.



## Create a Compost Heap

Compost heaps are a great way to turn your garden and kitchen waste into compost to use in your garden. They're also great for wildlife like woodlice, centipedes, worms and amphibians. The best way of creating compost is to use a mix of green and brown materials.

Green waste can include grass clippings, garden cuttings, and even uncooked vegetable peelings. Whereas brown waste includes sticks, branches, wood chippings, and cardboard. Regularly turn the contents of your heap when you add your waste to it but be careful not to disturb any wildlife that may be living inside. This will help to speed up the decomposition, as well as using a cover or lid to keep in the heat and moisture. You'll know when your compost is ready to use when it becomes dark brown with a nice earthy smell.



Scan the QR code or visit our website for more information:

[plantlife.org.uk/nomowmay](https://plantlife.org.uk/nomowmay)

