



We're **buzzing** about bees

Find out more about
these fascinating
creatures and
why they need
our help!



‘Bee’ friendly to bees

There are over 200 species of bees in the UK, but populations have been declining in recent years due to factors such as loss of habitat, disease and use of pesticides.

Bees need our help. Many of their nesting sites and their wildflower food supplies have been lost due to modern farming practices and urban development. Moreover, the use of herbicides has reduced their nectar and pollen supply; while pesticides have affected the bee population directly.

Bees are good neighbours and do great work for our planet behind the scenes!



Why do we need to help bees?

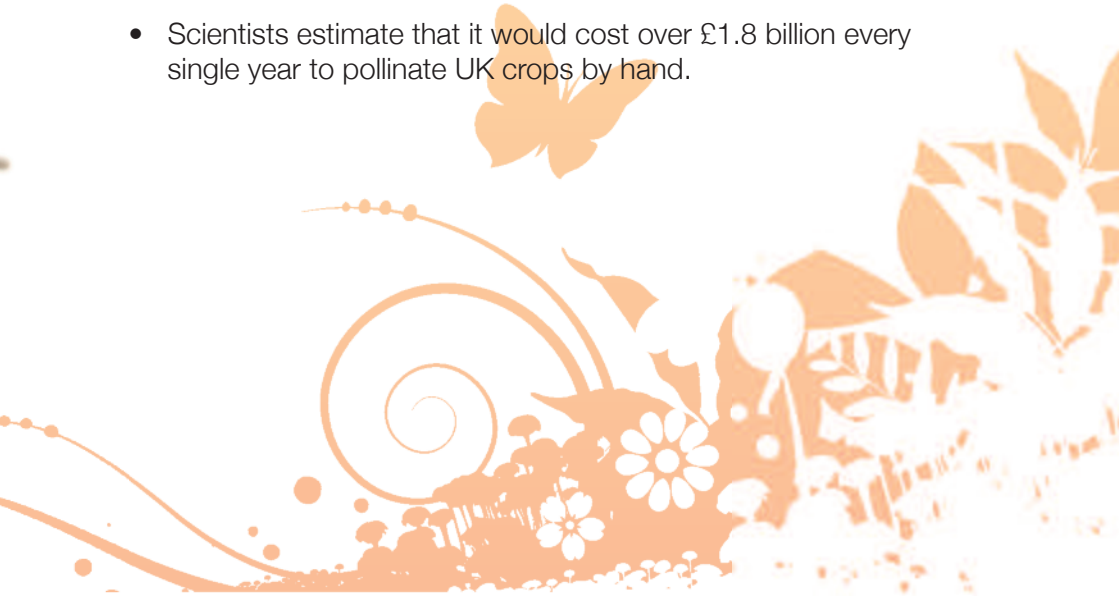


Bees pollinate flowers, plants and crops that support other species (including humans). Without bees, our entire economy and the future wellbeing of our children and grandchildren would be at risk.

That's why it's so worrying that more than twenty bee species have become extinct and a quarter of those left are on the threatened species list.

Three reasons Britain's bees need your help today:

- The loss of habitat is the most pressing problem facing British bees: 97% of our vital grasslands have been lost in the past 60 years.
- Bees pollinate 75% of our main food crops worldwide, including some of our favourite produce like apples, strawberries and tomatoes.
- Scientists estimate that it would cost over £1.8 billion every single year to pollinate UK crops by hand.



What is the council doing to help bees?

North Tyneside Council has committed through the joint Biodiversity Action Plan to conserve and increase the bee population in North Tyneside. There are a number of measures that will help deliver this commitment, proposed as follows:

Working with schools

We provide educational activities to pupils on the importance of bees for the environment and society.

Increasing wildflowers

North Tyneside Council has over seven million square metres of grass that it cuts during the growing season.

We recognise the need to have regard for nature conservation alongside maintaining formal areas of green space. Our biodiversity programme aims to establish areas for wildlife within the borough's open spaces and parks by creating wildflower meadows where there was once just cut grass.

These will help increase the bee population and they also look beautiful when in full flower during spring and summer: a place for bees to live alongside people.

Working with developers

We work closely with developers to ensure that measures such as wildflower meadow creation, bee-friendly garden plants and nesting features are incorporated into new development schemes where appropriate.

How can you help?

Bumblebees are under threat mainly due to changes in the countryside environment. Groups like the Bumblebee Conservation Trust are working with farmers to try and increase the number of wildflowers in agricultural land, as well as raising awareness with the public about the importance of bees.

I'm not a farmer though, how can I make a difference?

Did you know that gardens cover over one million acres of land in the UK? By planting your garden up with bee-friendly plants (see next page), you can get involved in making the urban landscape more friendly to bumblebees and help reverse the declines we have seen.

All of these plants are included on the RHS Perfect for Pollinators list, (available at www.rhs.org.uk) which is a great resource of over 400 plants that are beneficial to bees in the garden.

One of the cheapest ways to help is to buy some wildflower seed or annuals and sprinkle them in some bare soil in your garden. Try and buy British native mixes, available from garden centres or online.



Grow these 'star plants' in your garden!

The plants pictured opposite bring colour to your garden and are great for bees! Don't worry too much about getting the exact plants. Ask your garden centre for advice on similar varieties.

- 1 ***Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna'**
Flowers from June to October
- 2 ***Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Goldsturm'**
Flowers from June to October
- 3 ***Helleborus niger***
Flowers from January to March
- 4 ***Sedum spectabile* 'Autumn Joy'**
Flowers from August and October
- 5 ***Euphorbia characias* subsp. 'Wulfenii'**
Flowers from March to May
- 6 ***Achillea millefolium* 'Red Velvet'**
Flowers from June to September
- 7 ***Geranium rozanne* 'Gerwat'**
Flowers from June to October
- 8 ***Lonicera periclymenum* 'Belgica'**
Red-flushed white flowers turn to yellow in May and June, followed by red berries
- 9 ***Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote'**
Flowers from June to September
- 10 ***Viburnum tinus* 'French White'**
Flowers from December to March, followed by blue-black berries



Create a nectar border

A nectar border is also a great way to help. Pick a sheltered, sunny spot and plant groups of the same species in threes or fives; this provides a much stronger scent and visual signal to bees. Choose a selection to flower in different seasons, providing a continuous nectar supply – for example:

Spring flowering:

Winter Heather, Aubretia, Primrose, Lungwort, English Bluebell.

Summer flowering:

Marjoram, Lavender, Buddleia, Thyme, Honeysuckle.

Autumn flowering:

Michaelmas Daisy, Fuschia, Delphinium, Golden Rod, Globe Thistle.



What else can you do?

Learn more about this fascinating insect

Bees truly are fascinating! Bees have been on this earth for about 25 million years and are ideally adapted to their natural environment. Without bees the environment would be dramatically diminished as plants would struggle to pollinate and the biodiversity of our green spaces would suffer. Why not find out a bit more about bees and tell your family, friends, classmates or teacher what you have learnt? Good nature books for all ages will be available from your local bookshop or library and to buy online.

Bee friendly

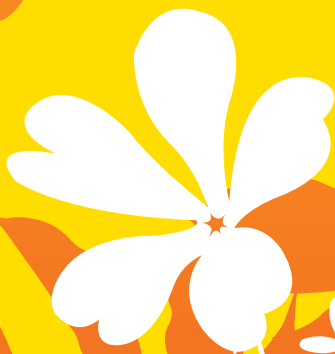
With the right reactions, bees are good neighbours and only sting people when provoked. Try and stay calm and move slowly away when bees are around you and help them fly free of the incorrect labelling as a 'harmful' insect. Bees do so much great work for our planet behind the scenes and therefore actually do much more good than harm!

Make a palace fit for a Queen!



Queen bees emerge from hibernation in spring to establish their new nests and raise their young. You can help by buying a bee hotel from a garden centre, or making your own in a quiet, sunny spot!

Fill a nine-inch flowerpot two-thirds full of old animal bedding or furniture stuffing and bury the pot at an angle in a bank of soil, with a piece of hosepipe acting as a tunnel. Then wait for the queen to arrive!



Keep your eyes open!

In Britain we have around 270 species of bee, just under 250 of which are solitary bees.

Solitary bees can be amazingly effective pollinators and, as the name suggests, tend not to live in colonies like bumblebees and honey bees. They include Mason Bees, Leafcutter Bees and Mining Bees.

Bumblebees live in nests in the wild, making small amounts of honey to eat themselves.

Honeybees are smaller than bumblebees and there is only one species of honeybee in the UK, compared to 24 different species of bumblebee. Honeybees live in hives of up to 50,000-60,000 bees and most are looked after by beekeepers, although there are some wild colonies.



Here are some of the more common bees you might see when out and about.

Images courtesy of:



www.bumblebeeconservation.org



Buff tailed bumblebee
Bombus terrestris
Queen and worker



Common carder bee
Bombus pascuorum



Red-tailed bumblebee
Bombus lapidarius
 Queen and male



Tree bumblebee
Bombus hypnorum



Early bumblebee
Bombus pratorum
 Queen and male



Garden Bumblebee
Bombus hortorum



White tailed bumblebee
Bombus lucorum



Heath bumblebee
Bombus jonellus

Rising Sun Country Park, Whitley Road, Benton, NE12 9SS

Telephone: (0191) 643 8115

Email: outdoorlearning@northtyneside.gov.uk

A large green oasis of 162 hectares featuring a nature reserve with dipping ponds, woodlands and grasslands. The Countryside Centre has beautiful views from the café and terrace over Swallow Pond, children's play areas and an exhibition room. This site has a deep industrial past to learn from, as well as an Iron Age Celtic village with fire pits, Giants Garden and Woodland Quarry.



WALLSEND PARKS

Wallsend Parks, Richardson Dees Park Lodge

North Road, Wallsend, NE28 8RH

Telephone: (0191) 643 7797/7897

Email: wallsendparks@northtyneside.gov.uk

Three connected sites covering over 16 hectares of public parkland. The parks include woodland walks, sculpture trail, flower beds, streams and bridges, a lake and kitchen garden with orchard. Each park has a distinct character mixing wildlife with Victorian history alongside modern activities.



**NORTHUMBERLAND
PARK**
NORTH SHIELDS

Northumberland Park Visitors Centre and Tea Room

King Edward Road, North Shields, NE30 2ES

Email: northumberlandpark@northtyneside.gov.uk

A beautiful green space of 12 hectares situated within a natural dene with bridges and a lake. The park was once the site of the medieval hospital which has been explored using archaeological digs. Today it hosts a vibrant herb garden, sculpture trail, children's play area and dirt bike track.



North Tyneside Council cares for 17 parks across the borough.
How many have you visited?