

IS THERE AN ALTERNATIVE TO USING PESTICIDES ?

Yes, there are several options that you can implement as an alternative to using pesticides to control unwanted vegetation and pests.

As your garden fills with native wildflowers and as planted pollinator-friendly plants grow, these will attract ladybirds, birds and frogs and hedgehogs, all of which are fantastic allies in battling garden pests.

Rather than thinking of dandelions, brambles etc. as unwanted vegetation, bear in mind that they are a great food source for pollinator, especially in Spring when there is little else to feed on. This 'unwanted vegetation' attracts beneficial pollinators into your garden which will also help to control insect pests such as aphids.

Additional controls:



- You can hoe over bare areas of soil. If this is done in dry weather, germinating seeds will wither.



- The most effective way to control the spread of nettles is to dig out the roots. But please retain a few clumps of nettles, as they are important for biodiversity.



- As with nettles, the best way to control brambles (if you must) is to dig out the roots. Again, leave some in your garden, as their flowers and fruit are a great food source for pollinators in Autumn. Also remember that their berries make great jam.



- Use acetic acid to control 'weeds'. Acetic acid is a type of vinegar that is available at your local garden centre. While it kills unwanted vegetation, it is not as harmful to the bugs/insects that feed on the targeted plant.






- Finally you can use your hands to weed out unwanted vegetation.



I've Planted a tree & my garden is PESTICIDE FREE

A group water scheme initiative aimed at protecting local water sources, enhancing biodiversity & tackling climate action

Join our community initiative and help us to:

-  *Protect our local drinking water sources*
-  *Protect our local birds, bees, butterflies and nature*
-  *Take action against climate change*

We will give you a tree! All you have to do is plant it and agree to go pesticide free in your garden, your driveway and outside the front wall of your home.

JOIN US!

We want you to help the bees, butterflies and wildlife in your garden, protect your local water sources and do your bit for climate action in your community.

Pesticides are man made chemicals that are used to kill weeds and unwanted insects. But did you know that using pesticides can be harmful to other living things in your garden including bees, butterflies and other insects?

We want to show you that you do not have to use these chemicals, and we would like you to plant a tree and to go pesticide free.



A Group Water Scheme Initiative



Comhairle Contae Ros Comáin Roscommon County Council



Rialtas na hÉireann Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann Project Ireland 2040



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WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

You and your family can make a big difference by providing food, and a safe place for bees, butterflies and other pollinators to live. Pollinators are living things that move pollen from flower to flower to help them multiply or to produce fruits. As a first step, decide not to use pesticides. The tips in the drawing below will help you, to help the pollinators in your garden and to protect your local water source.

WHY IS BIODIVERSITY IMPORTANT

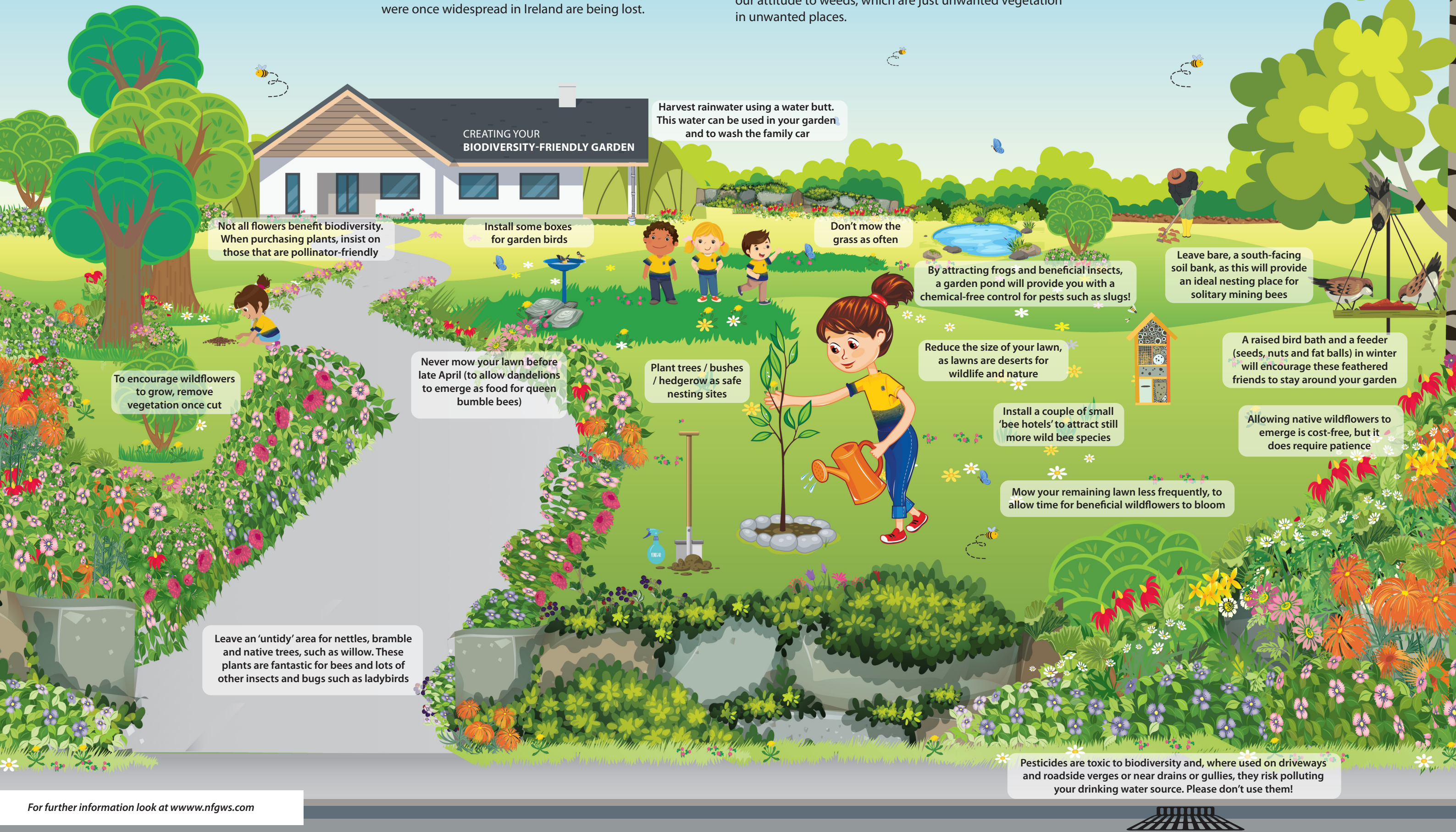
Your garden has a wide range of living plants, insects, birds, bees, even hedgehogs if you are lucky! All of these living things together are called an ecosystems. A hedge has its own ecosystem, a tree has its own ecosystem, all of these ecosystems added together are known as biodiversity. The more different types of ecosystems we have, the healthier our biodiversity is. Ireland is losing plants, insects, bugs and bees and ecosystems. Trees and hedgerows that were once widespread in Ireland are being lost.

While we can't bring back plants, insects, bugs, or bees that are extinct, we can halt the decline and even reverse it by creating habitats in our gardens for as many native species and ecosystems as possible. Better still, this can be done at little or no cost.

YOUR OBJECTIVE

To let nature flourish in your garden and to stop using pesticides. We all have a role to play. We all need to change our attitude to weeds, which are just unwanted vegetation in unwanted places.

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Not all flowers benefit biodiversity. When purchasing plants, insist on those that are pollinator-friendly

Install some boxes for garden birds

Harvest rainwater using a water butt. This water can be used in your garden and to wash the family car

Don't mow the grass as often

By attracting frogs and beneficial insects, a garden pond will provide you with a chemical-free control for pests such as slugs!

Leave bare, a south-facing soil bank, as this will provide an ideal nesting place for solitary mining bees

To encourage wildflowers to grow, remove vegetation once cut

Never mow your lawn before late April (to allow dandelions to emerge as food for queen bumble bees)

Plant trees / bushes / hedgerow as safe nesting sites

Reduce the size of your lawn, as lawns are deserts for wildlife and nature

A raised bird bath and a feeder (seeds, nuts and fat balls) in winter will encourage these feathered friends to stay around your garden

Install a couple of small 'bee hotels' to attract still more wild bee species

Allowing native wildflowers to emerge is cost-free, but it does require patience

Mow your remaining lawn less frequently, to allow time for beneficial wildflowers to bloom

Leave an 'untidy' area for nettles, bramble and native trees, such as willow. These plants are fantastic for bees and lots of other insects and bugs such as ladybirds

Pesticides are toxic to biodiversity and, where used on driveways and roadside verges or near drains or gullies, they risk polluting your drinking water source. Please don't use them!