

# Kent's Plan Bee Summer Newsletter

SUMMER 2024

## The New Kent's Plan Bee Officer!



Simon Springate will be providing advice on managing Kent's land for pollinators by creating and restoring flower rich habitat, nesting and hibernation sites. He'll also be leading on No Mow May and other campaigns and monitoring the impacts of the changes public bodies are making, to help make Kent's Plan Bee happen.

Simon has worked in horticulture, research, education and conservation, always with a passion for plants and insects, and is looking forward to building on the great work that has already been done in the County.

## What has the KPB Officer been up to?

### A walk & talk

Recently, our Kent Plan Bee officer did a talk for the Coastal Wardens anniversary walk & talk about and along the Foreness to Botany Bay Local Wildlife Site.



They revisited the chalk grassland flora that has been brought back into splendid diversity by the Making a Buzz for the Coast Project on this Local Wildlife Site (LWS) designation by [Kent Wildlife Trust](#) that is owned and managed by [Thanet District Council](#).

The Thanet Coast Project and Bumblebee Conservation Trust are pleased to have been involved in the project at this site. It is excellent to see the 10 year action plan for the site working so well - with so much increased diversity on site today under this successful grassland management programme.

### A Visit to Tenterden

The KPB officer recently visited Tenterden to see what has been happening in the town. [Tenterden Wildlife](#), a local community group, has worked with multiple bodies, including the Town Council, Ashford Borough Council and landscape managers [Aspire](#) to enhance the biodiversity of the high street and other public areas, to make best use of the 'green fingers' that extend from the countryside into the town. They have also provided advice and training to the community and local schools.

Surveys have shown that the [Kent & East Sussex Railway](#) is providing a vital corridor for nature across the landscape. Kent County Council, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and Kent Wildlife Trust, among others, have also contributed to their many projects and the town recently received a gold award at Kent Wildlife Trust's Wilder Kent Awards.



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## Windmill Community Garden Summer Fair

Kent's Plan Bee joined the vibrant atmosphere at the [Windmill Community Garden's](#) Summer Fair, which revolved around conservation and creativity. Alongside Kent's Plan Tree and the Making Space for Nature (MS4N) team, we set up a stall that was a hive of activity!

Kent's Plan Tree were promoting their voluntary tree-planting events to the local community. The MS4N team shared their progress in the [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#), offering ways for people to get involved. MS4N team also held activities for children to create a biodiverse countryside they would want to see in the future.

Our team asked children to bring bees to life through their drawings, showcasing their vision of these essential pollinators. These colourful creations were more than just art; they were conversation starters with parents about the significance of pollinator conservation.

As they sketched and coloured, we sparked curiosity with questions and facts about bees and other pollinators. As they learned about the benefits of pollinators, it was great to see them connect their drawings to a larger purpose.

We also offered suggestions for summer activities to parents that will support pollinators while discussing the vital role of pollinators like bees, wasps, butterflies, moths, and hoverflies.



## Seed Harvesting Tips of Your Garden

### Lawn Flowers:

- Collect seeds from the healthy plants to stop the spread of disease.
- Collect the seeds on a dry day
- Allow the seeds to fully ripen before harvesting.
- Pick the seeds and lay them out to dry somewhere warm, like a greenhouse, windowsill or airing cupboard.
- Depending on the seed head, they can explode. You can place them in a bag and wait for them to explode or shake them
- If pods aren't fully open, then wait until they have dried and gently release the seeds.



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## Pollinators and wildflowers that can be found in summer

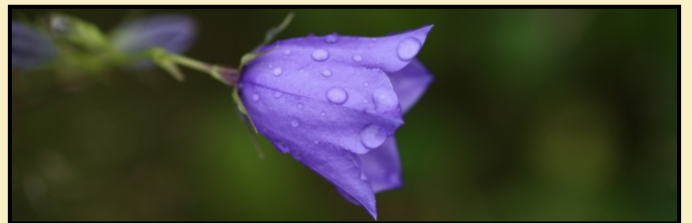
As the warm days of summer begin to give way to the cooler breezes of autumn, Kent's natural beauty is on full display. This time of year is perfect for observing the vibrant wildflowers and the diverse pollinators that play a crucial role in our ecosystem.

You might spot a variety of pollinators buzzing and fluttering around. For example, the Patchwork Leafcutter Bee is busy cutting leaves to line its nest, while the Yellow-faced Bee visits flowers for nectar. The striking Jersey Tiger Moth and the common Gatekeeper Butterfly are easier to spot with their size and markings.

Keep an eye out for the small but brightly coloured Small Copper Butterfly, the large European Hornet, and the distinctive Marmalade Hoverfly.

The Large White Butterfly, often seen in gardens, adds to the lively scene you may see this summer.

The wildflowers in Kent are captivating at this time of year. Common Fleabane with its bright yellow flowers attracts a variety of insects, while the delicate blue Harebell adds a touch of elegance to the landscape. Hemp Agrimony, often found near water, and Wild Carrot, with its intricate white flower heads, are favourites among pollinators. Burdock, known for its large leaves and sticky burrs, and the tall spikes of yellow Great Mullein flowers, stand out in many areas.



To know how pollinator populations are changing, we need your help. We are gathering data on a wide range of flower-visiting insects. Just 10 minutes counting insects makes a difference!

[Click here for more information!](#)



**Butterfly Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Our butterflies and moths are in crisis. The butterfly conservation is aiming to help by creating more Wild Spaces across the UK. A Wild Space is simply an area improved to help butterflies and moths thrive. For ideas, head over to butterfly conservation.

[Click here for more information!](#)



**Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway**

Developing the County's Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Dates and Tickets for the September Mapping Workshops are now live! In these workshops, to establish where in the county we should focus nature recovery action, to reap the most benefit for biodiversity.

[Click here for more information!](#)

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# Activities to do this summer to get ready for Autumn

As the long, warm days of summer start to mellow into the golden hues of late summer, it's the perfect time to get your garden buzzing with activity. Here are some tips to make your garden a haven for bees and other pollinators as we transition from summer to autumn.

## Plant Late Summer-Flowering Species

Late summer is a fantastic time to add some new blooms to your garden. By planting late summer-flowering species, you can keep your garden vibrant and full of life. Consider adding Echinacea, Rudbeckia, and Helianthus. These plants not only bring a splash of colour but also provide essential nectar and pollen for bees when other flowers are starting to fade. Plus, they can give your garden that last burst of summer beauty!

## Leave Some Garden Areas Undisturbed

Not every part of your garden needs to be perfectly manicured. Leaving some areas undisturbed can create natural habitats for bees and other wildlife. Piles of leaves, logs, and undisturbed soil can serve as cozy nesting sites for solitary bees. Think of it as creating a little wildlife sanctuary right in your backyard. Plus, it's less work for you—win-win!

## Install a Bee Hotel

Ever thought about giving bees a place to stay? A Bee Hotel is a fantastic way to support solitary bees. These structures are filled with natural materials like bamboo, wood, and straw, providing perfect nesting sites. Place your bee hotel in a sunny, sheltered spot, ideally facing south or southeast, to attract the most bees. It's like setting up a five-star resort for your buzzing buddies! There's a great guide available on our Facebook utilising a gabion cage- [click here](#) to give it a go yourself!

By following these tips, you can add a few touches to a garden that's not only beautiful but also a haven for bees throughout late summer and into the autumn. Happy gardening!



## EVENTS AND VOLUNTEERING

### Eco Fair

#### at the Sunken Garden

Sunday 6th October 12-4pm

There are some great talks happening on sustainable gardening, hedgehogs and tree diversity! Our Kent Plan Bee Officer will also be attending the Eco Fair. For more information click [here](#).



### Wildlife & Country Fair at

#### Tenterden & Bodiam Stations

14th & 15th September 2024



Trains will be running all weekend offering fun for all ages, and a host to various stalls. In the wildlife marquee you will be able to find the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Tenterden Wildlife Group, Throne Hedgehog rescue and K&ESR Forestry and Conservation Team that will all provide great advice on all things nature!

For more information [click here](#).

### Beewalk

March to October

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust has a national recording scheme to monitor the abundance of bumblebees on fixed routes across Great Britain. These transects are walked by BeeWalk volunteers, who identify and count the bumblebees on their chosen route each month. For more information [click here](#).



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