

THE WILDLIFE CALENDAR					
	THE TASK	HOW IT BENEFITS THE WILDLIFE	HOW IT BENEFITS THE ALLOTMENT	TOOLS AND/OR TRAINING NEEDED	Suitable for a working party?
OCTOBER	1. Cut 90 % of the brambles back along the stream as the weather becomes colder.	Areas of bramble are GOOD for wildlife. For example, bramble is a primary food plant for a number of moth species, its flowers provide pollen and nectar for butterflies, bees and many other insects. Birds and other animals use it for protection in spring and summer, and food in autumn. In winter, the 10 % of bramble left uncut will provide shelter for hibernating species. Managing the bramble and leaving some areas uncut in rotation will create sheltered glades that will be used by many animals, especially cold-blooded animals if the clearings face towards the south and east.	Cutting will enable access to the stream for maintenance work and will keep a tidy and kempt appearance.	Strimmers, scythes, shears, loppers and GOOD GLOVES.	YES
	2. (IF TIME) Grub up some bramble patches to create small clearing at regular intervals.	This will create sheltered glades that will be used by many animals, especially cold-blooded animals if the clearings face towards the south and east.	If regularly mown, this reduces the amount of work to keep bramble in check. Helps create room for tasks such as stream clearance or hedge cutting.	Mattock (gloves should not be worn when using the mattock)	NO – workers should be trained in this technique.
NOVEMBER	1. Coppice and pollard some of the site's trees and cut hedges back, under Alan's direction.	Even small areas of trees, even if these trees are heavily coppiced, will increase species diversity.	So we abide by the rules of the allotment and also to be "good neighbours", whilst sympathetically managing these important wildlife approaches.	Saws, rope, loppers.	YES
	2. (IF TIME) Scythe any remaining long grass (but leave some tussocks).	If cuttings are removed, wildflowers should start to flourish and dominant grasses and other nutrient "hungry" species will be reduced.	The allotment will look tidier as winter approaches.	Strimmers and scythes.	NO
	3. Empty the water tank that is on Deb's plot and compost the rushes. Allow it to fill with rain water over the winter.	See June below.	See June below.	See June below.	NO
DECEMBER	1. Stream clearance and removal of fly-tipped refuse.	This will not directly benefit wildlife, but increased water flow will prevent flooding, which cause pollution of the ponds and can adversely affect wildlife in other ways.	Looks better.	Wellies, rope, gloves, rakes and loppers.	YES
	2. (IF TIME) Put up bird boxes.	Different species of bird may use boxes, depending on the design of the bird box.	People (especially the youngsters) enjoy watching the activities of birds as they rear their young. Increasing insectivorous species may help keep down pesters.	Bird boxes, hammer, nails, ladder.	YES
JANUARY	1. Continue the stream maintenance.	As above.	As above.	As above.	YES
	2. (IF TIME) Build hedgehog house (brick design).	Hedgehogs can be persuaded to use the houses for nesting, or for hibernation.	Hedgehogs are one of the gardener's "friends" - good for pest control.	Bricks from Deb, donations of other materials may be required.	NO (but someone could to volunteer a quiet corner of their plot for the house).
FEBRUARY	1. Seed some of the bare areas with wildlife species; plant some self-seeded species in pots.	Wildflowers attract pollinating (and other) insects such as bees and hoverflies.	Wildflowers have more appeal than long grass.	Seed compost and pots.	NO
	2. (IF TIME) Start to plan a barrier in front of the wildlife pond near the Hook Walk entrance.	Choosing a climber or hedging will benefit wildlife more than pallet fencing.	Safer for people walking past the pond - important for "Health and Safety".	Post hole digger, concrete, pallets or posts and netting.	YES
MARCH	1. Frog spawn watch.	As soon as spawn is laid, monitor it. Moving some to a safe "tank" or to the sunken dustbin near the Hook Walk entrance will allow it to develop, safe from the newts.	Frogs are another of the gardener's friends.	A net.	YES – if water should be monitored - if tenants have their own ponds they should.
	2. (IF TIME) On warmer days, dig over the formal wildlife beds and start to plan colour schemes and heights, researching the plant species that will be available.	Pollinators, other insect species and a variety of other animals will benefit from species-rich flower borders.	Proves to people that wildlife gardens can have visually appealing elements - "no nettles required" style.	Forks and spades. Ask Alan for a lesson in taking cuttings.	NO
APRIL	1. Start the Balsam Bashing.	The non-native and invasive Himalayan Balsam threatens native plants along the banks of the stream, and encourages bank erosion in the winter months, after this annual plant dies and is washed away in winter, leaving exposed ground.	We are unlikely to eradicate the species entirely, so Balsam-lovers should be satisfied. Reducing Balsam is good for the 'image' of the allotment.	Good gloves to pull plants up; scythes to cut down the new plants.	POSSIBLY
	2. (IF TIME) Continue developing the formal wildlife beds.	As above.	As above.	As above.	NO
MAY	1. Continue the Balsam Bashing.	As above.	As above.	As above.	POSSIBLY
	2. (IF TIME) Start cutting back the paths and edges in the long grass areas.	Clearing within the long grass should be mown short to allow plants that support some of our rarer butterflies to thrive. It makes sense to connect these by cutting paths for ease of maintenance.	Cutting paths and maintaining edges allows for the fences to be painted and maintained, and allows people to view "nature" more closely.	Strimmers etc.	NO
JUNE	1. Grow pond plants in the tank on Deb's plot (from donations).	We will repair some of the allotment's ponds in the colder months in future years, and these plants will be ready to plant there next May.	Growing our own pond plants will save the allotment money. Excess can be sold in the shop.	Aquatic pots and compost	NO
	2. Continue the strimming tasks as for May.	As above.	As above.	As above.	NO
	3. (IF TIME - could also be done in May) Start to plant out the wildlife friendly plants potted in February, in semi-formal beds.	Good for insects (pollinators, moths, butterflies etc).	Looks pretty and well-kept.	Forks and spades.	POSSIBLY
JULY	1. Continue strimming as for May.	As above.	As above.	As above.	NO
	2. (IF TIME) Spend time weeding the semi-formal beds in the wildlife areas, especially if there is still a lot of bare soil (if the pond dries, August can be a holiday from wildlife tasks).	Weeds will strangle the flowers and can lead to poorer diversity of beneficial plants.	Weeding is therapeutic and people will appreciate the results.	Small forks, trowels and other weeding tools.	POSSIBLY
AUGUST	1. Pond dries, August can be a holiday from wildlife tasks.	/	/	/	/
	2. (IF TIME) help with the fence painting or other working parties.	/	Maintenance of communal areas and structures.	/	/
SEPTEMBER	1. One last strim of the paths before winter, scything the long grass later in the month.	As above.	As above.	As above.	NO
	2. (IF TIME) Clear some of the pond weed before autumn sets in.	Too much pond weed can lead to the pond drying out too quickly in the summer months, eventually causing it to permanently dry out. Some insect species will only colonize ponds with open water.	Open water mirrors the sky and looks more attractive.	This is a two person job, otherwise no specialised tools are needed.	POSSIBLY