Garden design solutions:

CREATING A WILDLIFE FRIENDLY GARDEN THIS AUTUMN AND WINTER



by Ian McBain

We are increasingly aware of the important role our gardens can play in encouraging and protecting wildlife. With a very hot and dry spring and summer, 2026 has been a challenging year for people and wildlife alike, so anything we can do to support insects, birds and small mammals over the coming months has got to be a good thing.

Here are three easy ways to help ensure our gardens are more wildlife-friendly this autumn and winter:



1. Creating habitat
I've mentioned habitat many times in previous columns, but it really is key if we want to support wildlife. The most important thing we can do is to be less tidy in our gardens, so let's not cut plants back in the autumn, and let's leave some of the fallen leaves in piles. We might also consider building a few log stacks or creating a 'dead hedge'.

2. More 'natural' food sources
I know lots of people like to feed the birds, but there is increasing evidence that providing natural food sources can be healthier in the long run. Having lots of plants with berries (e.g. viburnum, hawthorn, holly and ivy) is important, as is allowing seedheads to stand rather than removing them when the flowers fade. Angelica, rudbeckia, phlomis and many ornamental grasses look good and will be very popular with small birds.

3. Time for a drink?
We don't have to have a pond if we want to provide drinking opportunities for birds, insects and small mammals. Sinking shallow bowls of water in the ground around our garden is a wonderful way to provide safe and easy drinking points. A few stones or a substantial twig can provide a means of escape if an unsuspecting creature falls into the water. We'll need to remember to top it up regularly (if it hasn't rained), and to melt a hole in any ice that forms on colder days.

TYTHORNE
GARDEN DESIGN

Tythorne Garden Design provides professional fixed-fee garden design solutions for customers in Grantham, Stamford, Newark and surrounding areas. Book your initial garden design consultation today by calling 01529 455 355 or 07900 224 239.

www.tythorne.com