



How private residents can help biodiversity in Ealing

You might not be able to do many of these things, but just doing a couple will really help local biodiversity to thrive- private green spaces can have a major impact on improving the number and variety of insects in the environment, and therefore helping all those creatures up the food chain to survive. And if you don't have a front or back garden, even balconies and window ledges can help wildlife! Here's how..

- Make a pond -bury a bucket, put some oxygenating plants in then water and surround it with plants for shelter. Put a log in it so creatures (big and small) can climb out if they fall in.
- Have a wild corner in your garden- pile up some sticks, leaves, logs and don't disturb them-the beetles and woodlice will love them. Birds and frogs will be attracted to all the insects. Stag beetle larvae can take 7 years to mature into stag beetles!
- Fill your garden with flowers- sow wildflower seeds or pollinator friendly ornamental bushes-like Rosemary, Hebe, Lavender, Buddleia. If you only have a window ledge or a small balcony, planting flowering shrubs in pots will attract insects and birds hunting for food.
- Make your front garden a wildlife refuge too and a safe space for passing wildlife-avoid paving over your front garden -flooding is a much bigger problem now, and every open bit of green space and porous surface helps to absorb rain water and reduce localised flooding in the borough.
- Put up bird boxes in high sheltered (out of direct sunlight) corners of your garden trees or house- clean them out every year to encourage another future pair to nest.
- Make a hole under your fence and encourage your neighbours to, so wildlife can use your gardens as a corridor. Wildlife corridors are vital ways we can help creatures move between larger green spaces. Hedgehogs are often spotted in Ealing gardens.
- Compost your uncooked green waste-the worms will work their magic and turn your uncooked fruit and veg peelings into soil and worm tea- a natural fertiliser for plants.
- Feed birds all year round- mealworms and sunflower seeds are a big favourite, especially in wet Springs when it is harder for birds to find bugs to feed their young.
- Keep a close eye on your pets- dogs can disturb wildlife, especially if they move off paths. The same applies to us big humans..
- Mow your lawn less often -insects can hide in longer grass, the birds love finding them, and pollinators will enjoy your wild flowers.
- Stop using chemicals- especially slug pellets- slugs killed by slug pellets can poison frogs and other creatures that eat them.
- Leave ivy berries for the birds in winter and don't prune big walls of ivy or other climbers in the early Spring- birds will be looking for nesting sites and these are perfect sites.
- Don't tidy your garden in the Autumn- let the dead flowering heads of taller Summer flowering plants remain over winter, so ladybirds and other insects can hibernate in the stems, and birds can feed on seed heads- cut them back when the weather has warmed up in late Spring.
- Get involved in community action- volunteer litter picking and gardening are just two ways you can make a big difference to your local wildlife habitats.
- Join Ealing Wildlife Group on Facebook, and be inspired by the biodiversity on your doorstep. Enjoy nature.