

Ways to Garden Sustainably



#LOVE THIS PLACE  *KINVARA TIDY TOWNS*



#Community

#Youth

#Environment



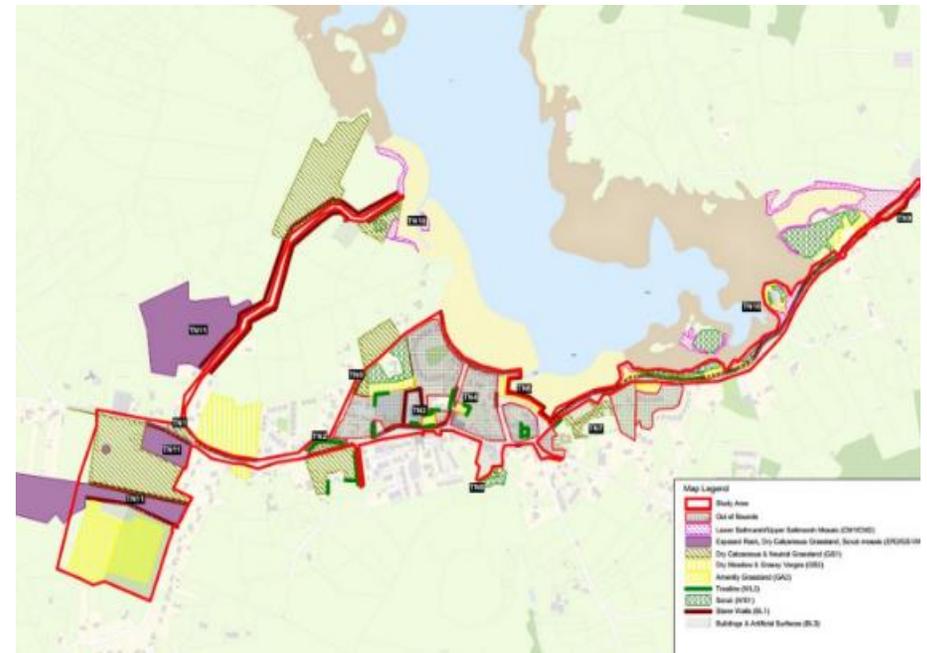
www.kinvaratidytowns.ie



Kinvara Tidy Towns Spring Talk on Biodiversity Trail & SDG Champions



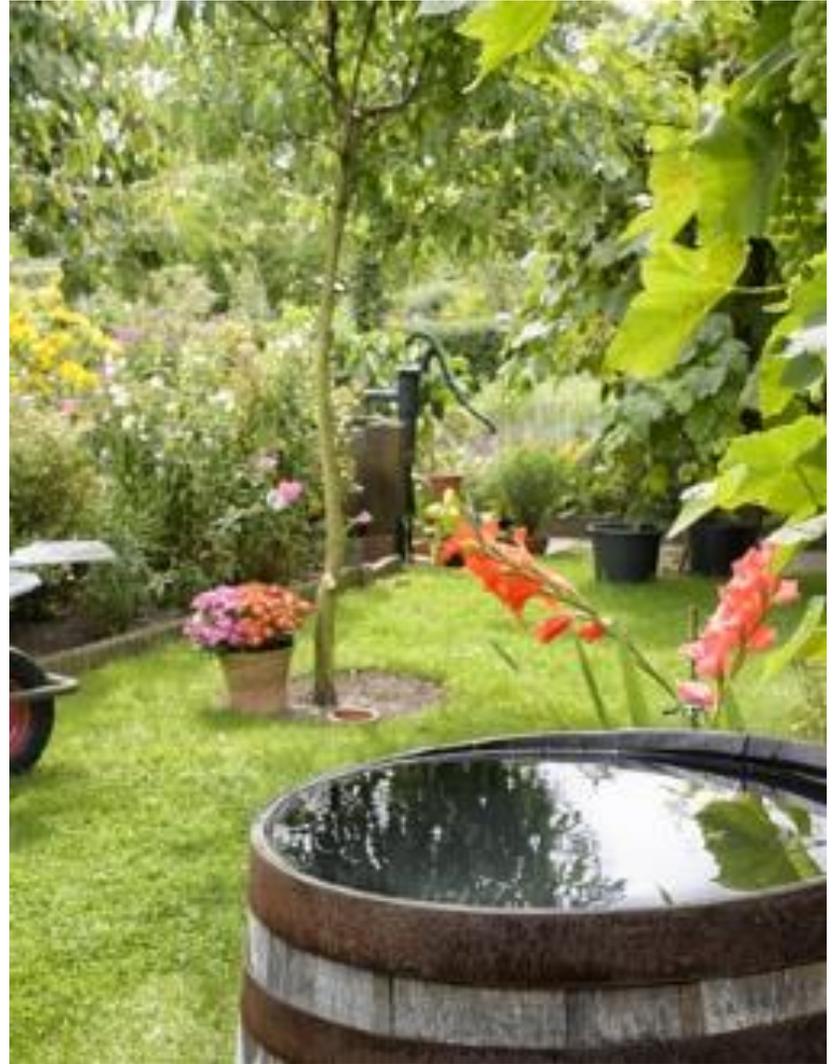
9th April at 8pm in Tullys



What is sustainable gardening ? Examples?

**Approach to gardening
that minimizes the
environmental impact**

- **organic materials – soil
chemical free**
- **conserving water**
- **creating habitats for
wildlife though planting
and garden features**



Go Organic Stop Using Chemicals

Fertilisers Herbicides Pesticide

- Chemical cocktails can kill, harm and disorientate pollinators.
- these products can harm waterways as they seep down through the soil and runoff into streams, lakes, sea.
- Synthetic fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides are made using fossil fuels or finite resources such as rock phosphate in fertilisers.
- Production can use a lot of energy

Alternatives to chemical fertiliser

- Compost, Manures, Seaweed
 - Support long-term soil health, enhance soil structure and enrich your garden with a balanced, slow-release supply of nutrients
- Seaweed nettle and comfrey teas
- Organic and non-synthetic plant feed alternatives available to purchase



Pesticide and Herbicide Alternatives

- The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan released a survey 'Pesticide alternatives'. 82 responses completed by a range of different groups authorities, community groups, Tidy Towns,, landscape contractors and individuals

<https://pollinators.ie/pesticide-alternatives/>



Pesticide Alternatives

The survey focused on common pesticide alternatives:

weed burning, manual control, organic sprays, mulching hot foam, steam weed control,

Managing pests and diseases without chemicals – tips for controlling aphids, vine weevils or garden pests

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/controlling-pests-and-diseases-without-chemicals>

Non chemical weed control

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/weeds-non-chemical-control>

Water management

- a key element of gardening sustainably
- **Rainwater collection**
- can be used to water plants during drier periods
- Better than mains water as it has not treated
- Can be an attractive feature
- **Habitat creation** Supports biodiversity – frogs, bees, birds
- **Planting in the ground** not in pots ...more sustainable as requires less watering
- **Water in the morning** and water plants at the base not on top
- **Use mulch improve soil structure** to retain water in the soil



Soil Management

Making your own compost

- Every 1kg of homemade compost saves over 0.1kg fossil CO₂ emissions.
- **Compost** improves soil structure, enhances water and nutrient holding capacity, protects the soil from erosion and compaction, and supports a healthy community of soil organisms including microorganisms
- **Soil microbiomes** play a crucial role in capturing carbon from the atmosphere reducing atmospheric CO₂ levels,.

Go peat free

- Peatlands are the world's largest carbon store on land. Our planet's billions of acres of peat hold more carbon than all the world's forests combined.

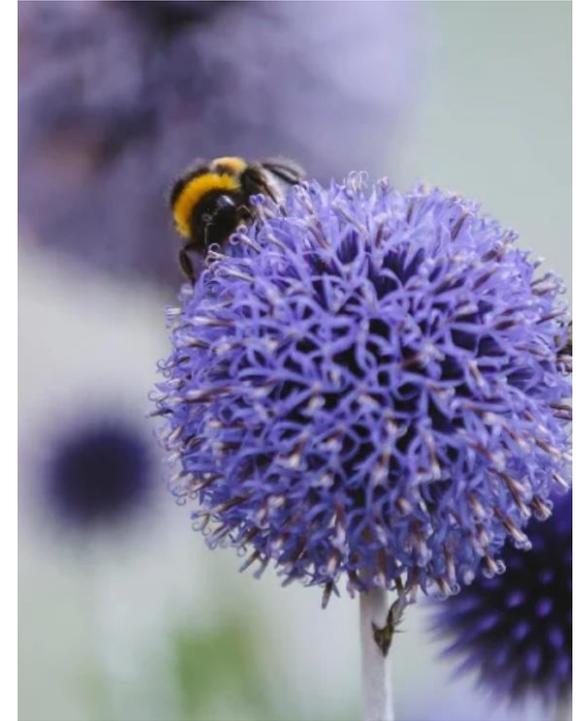
Mulch your soil. Mulch beds before they dry out in summer with straw, cardboard, garden compost, bark chippings, sheep's wool or leaf mold to conserve water in the soil, smother weeds, and increase organic matter content.



Sustainable Planting Practices

Pollinators need our help

- Loss of habitat is one of the main reasons why we see fewer bees, butterflies and other insects visiting our gardens.
- Help slow and reverse the by growing a wide variety of plants to support pollinator diversity.
- Great Dixter Garden in Kent Biodiversity Audit the ornamental garden. the garden supported more diverse range of wildlife than the wildflower meadows and woodlands. .

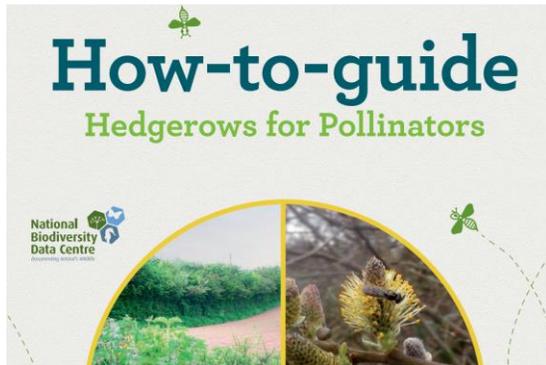


Grow your own garden plants – annual, perennials, shrubs and trees

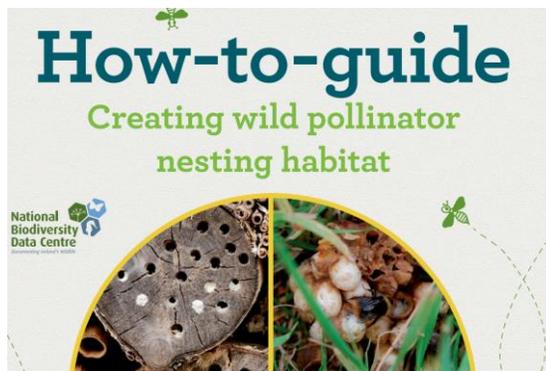
- Many garden centers are poor at adapting to working sustainably.
- Importing plants, use large volumes of water , not using peat free compost, using chemicals to manage pests and diseases , single use plastic pots – no returns
- Grow your own flowers for cutting-shop bought flowers 10 x the carbon footprint of home bouquets
- Plant a tree - trees are brilliant at drawing down carbon from the atmosphere



Habitat Management



<https://pollinators.ie/resources/#how-to-guides>

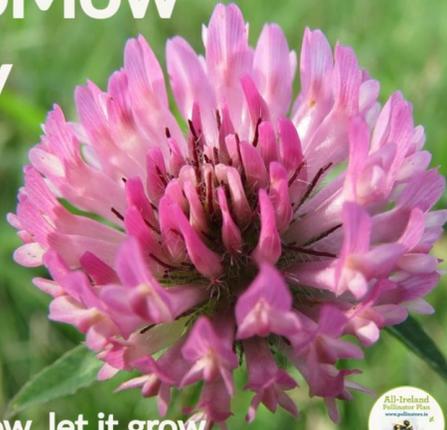


- Use your garden to attract and sustain local wildlife by providing diverse habitats
- Try to have at least **3-5 flowering plants** in your garden at any one time
- The more variety the better. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan have put together a seasonal list of recommended plant species that benefit our native pollinators
- If you have the space, **plant some native trees and hedges**. These will attract wildlife as they provide food and shelter.
- Home composting also provides many insect and worm species with food and shelter.
- Bug hotels and ponds can add to the diversity of habitats in your gardens

<https://pollinators.ie/resources/#how-to-guides>

#NoMow May

Red clover



Don't mow, let it grow
Join the buzz to save the bees

www.pollinators.ie



Let lawns grow

- Native Irish wildflowers like Dandelions, Clover, and Birds-foot trefoil provide the best source of pollen and nectar for our hungry wild pollinators.
- By mowing less, we can give them a chance to appear naturally – no seeds needed!
- There's no need to stop at May. Mowing less all summer is one of the best things you can do to help pollinators.

Create a short-flowering meadow

By mowing just once a month, you can give native wildflowers and insect friendly grasses a chance to pop up naturally and help feed hungry wild bees. No seeds needed!



April:

#Let Dandelions Bee



When you mow, make sure you remove grass clippings so wildflowers can grow.

May:

#No Mow May



June:

#Let it Bloom June



Be creative when you mow! Cut pathways, spirals, and shapes.



July:

#Help Them Fly July



August:



If your grass gets too tall at any stage, trim it with blades raised high to save the wildflowers. Leave some corners to grow long.



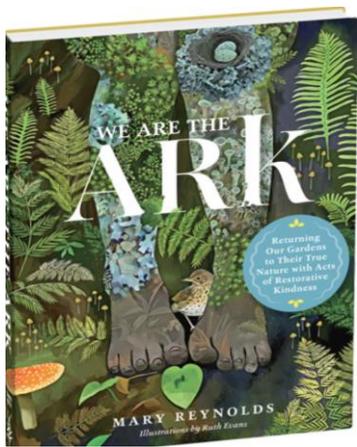
Want to do more? Create a long-flowering meadow by cutting once a year in September.

Find out more at www.pollinators.ie

Garden Tools and Equipment

- **Reuse recycle**
- For essential tools, garden furniture and other big buys it's worth checking second-hand shops and websites too. If you really need to buy new, choose carefully.
- Avoid plastic as much as possible and go with tools made from strong, sustainable materials
- Old tools were often better made
- **Clean energy lawn mowers**
- Electric and battery-operated garden tools such as lawn mowers offer a sustainable and eco-friendly alternative that reduces carbon emissions, noise pollution, and dependence on fossil fuels





Gardens alone cannot “solve” climate change, but they can play a central role in providing habitats for our wildlife.

Resources

1. Mary Reynolds <https://marymary.ie/>

Internationally acclaimed garden designer and environmental activist, Returning Our Gardens to Their True Nature Through Acts of Restorative Kindness

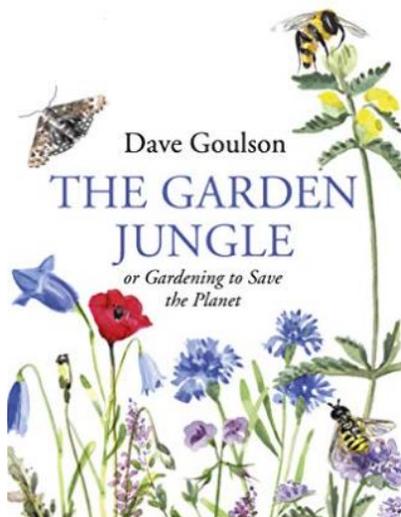
2. Knepp Walled Garden....unique horticultural experiment

3. Dave Goulson Professor of Biology at the University of Sussex. Specializing in the ecology and conservation of insects, particularly bumblebees



THE SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLER

'Exquisite...should be read by every gardener in the country' *Observer*



- All promote a new way of thinking about how we garden
- Working with nature to create a complex mosaic of habitats
- Maximize opportunities for insects, birds and other wildlife.
- Not about 'letting go'
- It is about giving nature more space for biodiversity, in the most sustainable way possible, working with, rather than against, nature.