



GREEN CHAMPIONS



Noticing Nature

Soft dews descend upon the flowers
And kindly rest awhile;
'Tis sweet to wait upon these hours,
To see the roses smile.

- The Approach Of June, Or The Month Of Roses by Eliza and Sarah Wolcott (c.1838)

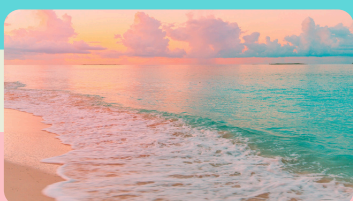


Health - Naturally

The sounds of the waves, the smell of salt air, and the vastness of the ocean can have a calming effect, while the blue colour is also associated with feelings of peace. Exposure to nature and the ocean can help restore attention and perspective, reducing feelings of isolation and stress.

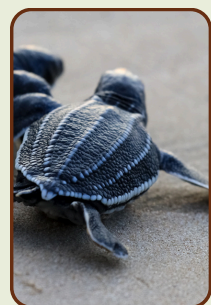
There are many factors about the ocean that contribute to improved mental health, from providing a place to exercise to the relaxing sounds of the tide helping with sleep. The ocean offers a place to find clarity, perspective, and an opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life. If you can't visit the coast why not try listening to ocean sounds:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbdJYCYAgtk>



Learn more about - Sea Turtles

As thoughts turn towards summer holidays and visits to the seaside it may surprise you to know that six of the world's seven marine turtle species, have been recorded in UK waters. The leatherback, the largest marine turtle, is the species most frequently recorded in UK waters. Leatherbacks have a flexible, leathery shell and unusually are able to metabolically raise their body temperature above that of their surrounding environment, allowing them to survive in colder waters. The other five species have hard shells and are less common in UK waters. Usually, these other species occur as stray juveniles carried by currents from warmer seas. Learn more about sea turtles here: <https://www.mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do/citizen-science/sightings/marine-turtles-in-uk-seas/>



Leatherback turtle



City of Nature Programme update

As summer begins to blossom, Birmingham is buzzing with energy and so is the City of Nature Plan. Now being delivered as business as usual across the city, June marks a turning point where green action becomes part of the everyday, woven into how Birmingham grows, learns, and thrives. Here's what's happening this month:

Green Champions in Action

Our Young Green Champions are making waves in schools across the city. With nature-connection book packs arriving and eco-projects sprouting in playgrounds and classrooms, pupils are discovering their power to make a difference. Teachers are reporting a renewed sense of purpose and joy in outdoor learning — from mini meadow-making to storytelling under trees.



Community Gardens Thrive

Neighbourhood groups are embracing community green spaces like never before. With support from the City of Nature Plan, dozens of local gardens are planting for pollinators, growing food for families, and creating spaces of welcome and wellbeing. Look out for open garden events, where you can visit, volunteer, or simply enjoy the view.



Nature Neighbourhoods

This June, it's about Knowing Your Nature, encouraging residents to explore the green gems in their own postcodes. From lunchtime walks to after-school wildlife safaris, the message is clear: nature is for everyone, everywhere, every day. Birmingham is also part of the **Nature Neighbourhoods** programme <https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/news/welcome-to-the-nature-neighbourhoods>



Dates for Your Diary

- 5 June – World Environment Day: Join us in celebrating with local events and school-led eco pledges across Birmingham. **#BeatPlasticPollution** movement.
- 26 - 29 June – Birmingham Settlement - Neighbourhood Futures Festival - A four-day festival embracing nature, right in the heart of Birmingham!
<https://www.birminghamsettlement.org.uk/neighbourhood-futures-2025/>
- Ongoing – Urban Greening Projects: Watch your streets, parks and public spaces bloom and buzz as green infrastructure work continues. <https://iconictv.co.uk/national-trust-pocket-parks/>



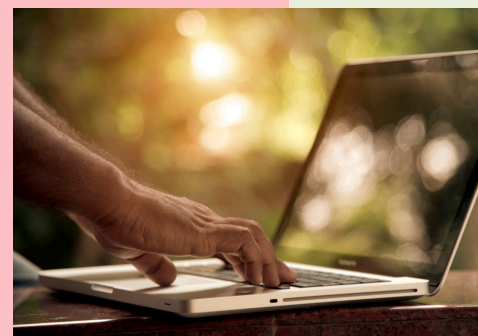
This is just the beginning. The City of Nature Plan is no longer a vision — it's a living, growing movement rooted in everyday actions. Whether you're teaching in a classroom, tending a community plot, or simply taking a mindful walk, you are part of this green city revolution. Thank you.

There will be opportunities to join webinars, workshops and online meetings covering a range of subjects, throughout the year. We will post events on Naturally Birmingham social media and email out through the Green Champion mailing list.

If you would like to find out more about:

- Birmingham City Councils City of Nature Plan
- Green Champions Volunteering Programme
- Young Green Champions for Schools
- The City of Nature Alliance
- Ranger Service Healthy Parks Programme

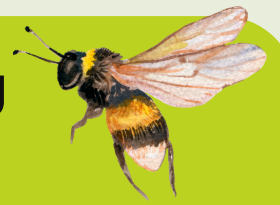
Please email us at Cityofnature@birmingham.gov.uk



If you want to sign up as a Green Champion please complete this form: <https://forms.office.com/e/Va1UFkAe4B>

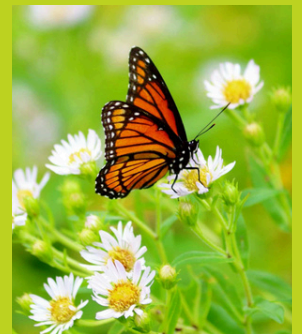


Birmingham's pollinator plans are buzzing



Birmingham is buzzing — quite literally — thanks to the incredible work being done to support pollinators across the city. From bees and butterflies to hoverflies and moths, these tiny creatures play a huge role in our ecosystems. They pollinate plants, help grow the food we eat, and keep wildflowers blooming in our parks, gardens, and verges. But with habitat loss and climate change threatening their survival, our pollinators need a helping hand.

That's where A to Bee Roads comes in — an exciting initiative transforming roadside verges, green corridors, and forgotten patches of land into vibrant, flower-filled highways for pollinators. Across Birmingham, stretches of grassland are being managed differently, allowing wildflowers to flourish and creating safe spaces for bees to feed, rest, and thrive. These mini-meadows don't just help wildlife — they brighten our neighbourhoods and connect people with nature in everyday places. Find out more about the Patchwork Meadow project. <https://www.thepatchworkmeadow.co.uk/>



So next time you pass a patch of tall grasses and wildflowers swaying beside the road, take a moment to look and listen — you might just hear the gentle hum of pollinators at work. And remember, whether it's planting nectar-rich flowers in a window box or leaving a corner of your garden wild, we can all help Birmingham bloom for bees.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20089/parks/2923/a_to_bee_roads



World Environment Day - 5 June

Plastic pollution permeates every corner of the planet—even in our bodies in the form of microplastics. World Environment Day 2025 calls for collective action to tackle plastic pollution. By drawing inspiration from nature and showcasing real-world solutions, the campaign will encourage individuals, organizations, industries, and governments to adopt sustainable practices that drive systemic change.

This year's World Environment Day comes exactly two months before countries meet again to continue negotiating a global treaty to end plastic pollution. Join the #BeatPlasticPollution movement—because together we can create a healthier future.

The rewards of fixing plastic pollution are profound: cleaner oceans and lands, healthier people and ecosystems, greater climate resilience, and stronger economies.

Change happens through all of us. The choices we make can shape industries, shift markets and redefine our collective future. Together, we can deliver an end to plastic pollution that protects people and the planet. A circular economy for plastics offers a sustainable path forward. This means we need to rethink how we design, make, use and reuse plastics. Products must be designed to be used more than once, and to be recycled at the end of their life. This shift must include all stakeholders across the plastics value chain.

<https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/>



Can we talk rubbish?

Over two billion metric tons of unsustainable, human-generated waste are thrown away globally every year, entering our environment and polluting every ecosystem around the world. If we continue practicing waste management strategies as we do today, the total waste generation for 2050 is projected to be around **3.78 billion metric tons**. What a load of rubbish!



Rubbish is anything we no longer want or need - from unwanted items, such as broken toys, electrical items that no longer work, empty packaging or clothing that you've outgrown or no longer wear. The list goes on. Sometimes we use the word 'waste' or 'trash' or 'garbage', when we are talking about rubbish, but none of those words have anything positive about them so we shouldn't be surprised that creating more and more rubbish is having a devastating effect on our environment.

It's also rubbish that dealing with waste costs us all money in 2020 the global direct cost was estimated at **\$252 billion**. Dealing with it more efficiently will involve reducing consumption, reusing materials, recycling, and responsibly disposing of materials that cannot be reused or recycled. The waste management hierarchy prioritizes these actions, with reduction being the most desirable.

1. Reduce Consumption:

- Prioritize needs: Make sure you're only buying what you genuinely need.
- Consider the impact of purchases: Buying new products creates demand, production, and waste.
- Value what you have: Appreciate what you already own to reduce the urge to buy more.

2. Reuse Materials:

- Repurpose items: Find new uses for materials you would otherwise discard.
- Buy in bulk: Store staples in reusable containers like mason jars or cloth bags.
- Donate unwanted items: Give clothes, furniture, and other items to charities or local donation centres.

3. Recycle Materials:

- Separate waste: Sort different types of waste for recycling as much as you can.
- Follow local guidelines: Ensure you're sorting waste correctly according to your local recycling rules. https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20009/waste_and_recycling/105/what_goes_in_my_bins
- Check for recycling options: Look out for various charitable organisations who can help with recycling programs and facilities in your area.

4. Responsible Disposal:

- Identify disposal options: Determine where you can't reduce or recycle waste.
- Choose reputable waste carriers: Select waste carriers carefully and ensure they meet your Duty of Care responsibilities.
- Report illegal disposal: Report any instances of illegal waste disposal to the appropriate authorities. <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/flytipping>.

5. Refuse to be part of the problem:

- Composting: If possible, compost food scraps and yard waste to reduce landfill waste.
- Reducing single-use plastics: Use reusable containers, water bottles, and shopping bags.
- Choosing sustainable products: opt for products made with recycled materials or that have a lower environmental impact.

We can't dispose our way out of the rubbish problem we are facing. A circular waste economy focuses on keeping resources in use as long as possible, minimizing waste, and regenerating natural systems. It's an alternative to the linear "take-make-dispose" model of production and consumption. In essence, it aims to turn waste into a resource by incorporating practices like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, and recycling. **If we don't do this, our future is looking pretty rubbish.**

Summer Solstice - 21st June 2025

Celebrating the Summer Solstice – Light, Life, and Little Moments in Nature

On June 20th, we welcome the summer solstice the longest day of the year and a magical moment when the sun reaches its highest point in the sky. The word 'solstice' comes from the Latin words for sun (sol) and to stand (sistere). It's the time of year when the position of the rising or setting sun stands still in its movement along the horizon.

In the UK, this ancient turning point has been celebrated for centuries. From stone circles to sunrise walks, the solstice reminds us of our deep-rooted connection to the rhythms of nature and the light that guides us forward.

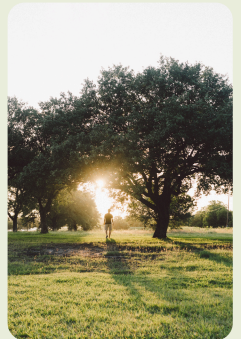
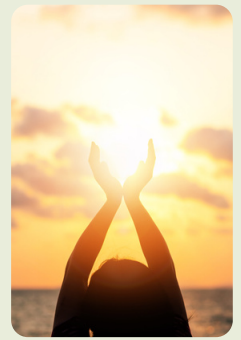
For us now, the solstice is a perfect opportunity to pause and notice the beauty around us:

- The wildflowers dancing in the breeze.
- The birdsong that greets us early.
- The golden glow on tree tops as evening lingers longer.

Why not take a moment to celebrate with your class, family, or community group? You could:

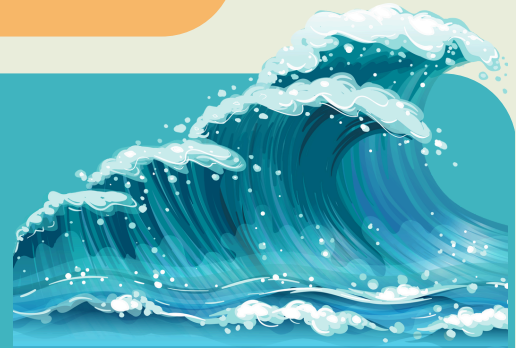
- Watch the sunrise or sunset together.
- Make sun-themed nature art with leaves, petals, and pebbles.
- Reflect on what's grown this year — in nature, and in ourselves.

The summer solstice is a celebration of light, life, and possibility. Let it be a reminder that even small seeds of kindness, action, or wildflowers can grow into something extraordinary with a little sunlight and care.



World Ocean Day - 8 June 2025

The ocean covers over 70% of the planet. It is our life source, supporting humanity's sustenance and that of every other organism on earth.



The ocean produces at least 50% of the planet's oxygen, it is home to most of earth's biodiversity, and is the main source of protein for more than a billion people around the world. Not to mention, the ocean is key to our economy with an estimated 40 million people being employed by ocean-based industries by 2030.

Even though it has all these benefits, the ocean is now in need of our support.

"Wonder: Sustaining what sustains us" is the theme for World Oceans Day 2025, a year marked by the UN Decade of Ocean Science and the celebration of the World Ocean Conference.

With this new vision, the day celebrates the wonder that the ocean inspires in us: its beauty, its mystery, and its vital role in our lives and on the planet. This day reminds us of our deep connection with the sea and calls for its protection through decisions guided by curiosity, wisdom, and a commitment to collective well-being. <https://www.un.org/en/observances/oceans-day>

June - 30 Days to go wild!



With only 30 days June is one of the shorter months, but that's still plenty of time to go wild.

The Wildlife Trust's 30 Days Wild is a free, month-long challenge designed to inspire people of all ages to connect with nature during June. From birdwatching in your garden to exploring a local nature reserve, every action — big or small, daily or weekly — helps you get closer to nature.

There are thousands of ways you can go wild and you can find out more here:
<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/30dayswild>

We want to join the Wildlife Trust and invite people all across Birmingham to take part in the 30 Days Wild campaign — a joyful invitation to do one wild thing every day for 30 days.

Whether it's watching bees in your garden, cloud-gazing in your local park, planting a windowsill herb garden, or simply pausing to listen to birdsong, every small moment of connection with nature counts. The idea is simple: bring a little more wildness into your everyday life — and feel the wellbeing benefits that nature brings.

Getting involved is easy and completely free. You can sign up online to receive your 30 Days Wild pack, filled with inspiration, fun activities, and ideas for all ages — perfect for individuals, families, schools, or community groups.

In Birmingham, keep an eye out for local events, wild walks, and community nature projects happening throughout the month. Share your wild moments on social media using #30DaysWild and join a city-wide movement celebrating the beauty and joy of the natural world right on our doorstep.

Although we encourage people to leave their cars at home when possible, Birmingham is a big beautiful city to explore, so after you have noticed what's on your doorstep why not visit some new wild spaces. From nature reserves to glorious gardens, rivers and lakes to miles of canals, roof tops to grassy dells.

You can find Birmingham City Council managed parks and green spaces here:
https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/directory/9/parks_playgrounds_and_open_spaces_in_birmingham/category/47

The Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust also has Nature Reserves:
<https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/naturereserves>

You could visit Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, there is always a lot going on:
<https://www.castlebromwichhallgardens.org.uk/>



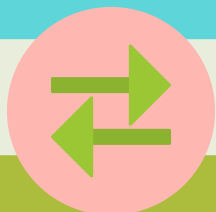
June 16: World Sea Turtle Day

What another article on Sea Turtles? You may have already gone down a rabbit hole learning about sea turtles from the start of this newsletter, but if not here's another chance to find out more. As champions for nature you don't have to confine your green actions to Birmingham, we are all part of one big world that is mostly water and most of that water is salt water, but most of us know very little about it.

World Turtle Day isn't only about admiring turtles. It's about noticing them in a world that often doesn't. Turtles live quietly, without noise or speed. But their stillness carries wisdom. They ask nothing from us except attention. We move too fast. We scroll, swipe, skip ahead. In doing so, we miss small lives like theirs. Turtles don't rush. They don't need to. They've been around for over 200 million years and their survival comes not from force, but from persistence. When we stop and look, we begin to understand.

That's where education comes in. even watching a short film about sea turtle migration can shift perspectives forever. Some of us are lucky enough to visit turtle habitats. Watching a turtle bobbing and basking in sunlight teaches us about stillness and patience, but seeing a turtle struggle to swim wrapped in a plastic bag sadly teaches even more about ourselves. These moments stay with us forever.

World Turtle Day reminds us to see better, not just do more. And once we truly see turtles, not just as animals but as ancient, vital beings, we start to care in deeper, lasting ways. <https://www.wwf.org.uk/learn/wildlife/marine-turtles>



Great Big Green Week - 7th to 15th June

Great Big Green Week is the UK's biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature. During the week, communities, schools, businesses, churches, mosques and more join together in a wave of support for action to protect the planet. Taking action to swap together for good shows our support for a safer, greener, fairer future.

The first Great Big Green Week took place in September 2021, and was the largest event for climate and nature ever seen in the UK, with over 5,000 events taking place up and down the country. Since then, Great Big Green Week has continued to grow and in 2024, 600,000 people took part. Communities, national organisations, institutions, businesses and media outlets joined in, ultimately putting pressure on the government to up its game on climate change.

It's easy to get involved. You can host events and activities in your area from 7th to 15th June 2025, and make this the greatest, biggest, greenest week of the year.

Your event during Great Big Green Week will celebrate how your community is taking action to tackle climate change and protect green spaces, and encourage others to get involved too.

The Great Big Green Week organisation has lots of resources to help you get started:

<https://www.greatbiggreenweek.com/about>

June Celebrations: Joy, Colour, and Care for the Planet

June is a month full of energy, colour, and celebration. Across the UK, people come together for events that uplift, inspire, and bring communities to life from the powerful legacy of Pride to the legendary Glastonbury Festival, and midsummer gatherings that honour nature, creativity, and togetherness.

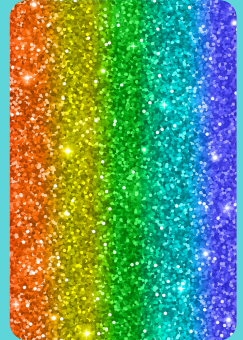
Pride is celebrated each June to honour the Stonewall riots of 1969 a turning point in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. It's a time to celebrate how far we've come in the journey toward acceptance and equality, while recognising that there is still work to do. Pride events are vibrant expressions of love, solidarity, protest, and visibility filled with joy, music, and colour.

June also brings the return of Glastonbury Festival, where thousands gather to enjoy world-class music, performance, and creativity in the heart of the countryside. Alongside the sound of guitars and dancing feet, there's a growing movement at Glastonbury and other festivals to celebrate in ways that are kinder to the planet using reusable cups, banning glitter and single-use plastics, and embracing green travel.

Whether you're waving a rainbow flag at a Pride march, dancing in a muddy field to your favourite band, or hosting a garden party with friends, or celebrating with your community there are ways to make your celebration more eco-friendly:

- Switch to plant-based, compostable cups – look for PLA instead of plastic #6.
- Choose decorations that last – invest in reusable bunting, fairy lights, or handmade pieces that can be enjoyed all year round.
- Skip the balloons – helium balloons often escape and pollute rivers and oceans. Instead, decorate with flowers, fabric streamers, or colourful recycled crafts.
- Let nature inspire your theme – the natural world is bursting with colour. Why not decorate with rainbow flowers, painted pebbles, or leaf garlands?

Whatever you're celebrating this June, let it be joyful, inclusive, and just a little bit wild — and let's remember that loving our planet can be part of the party too.



June - Men's health week and Fathers Day June 15th

In Europe, Father's Day goes way back to the middle ages, when it was connected to St Joseph and was celebrated on his feast day in March. However, it wasn't until the 20th century that Father's Day became a secular celebration, started in the USA by Sonora Smart Dodd in the early 1900s, to celebrate her father. The concept of Father's Day gradually grew in popularity and some 60 years later, it was declared an official holiday in the USA... the UK soon followed suit.

It's tradition to send cards and buy gifts for fathers and father figures on Fathers Day, but why not take the chance to do something a little different this year. Spending time in nature, engaging in outdoor activities, and promoting sustainable habits can positively impact men's health and well-being, making it a great way to celebrate Father's Day. Activities like gardening, hiking, or even just taking a walk in a park can reduce stress, boost mood, and promote physical activity.

- **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Studies show that spending time in nature can lower cortisol levels (the stress hormone) and promote relaxation, positively impacting mental health.
- **Increased Physical Activity:** Outdoor activities like gardening, hiking, or playing sports encourage physical activity, which is crucial for maintaining a healthy weight, reducing the risk of chronic diseases, and boosting overall well-being.
- **Improved Mental Health:** Nature can improve cognitive function, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and enhance overall mood.



Urban Nature Development - In Your Neighbourhood

Rooted Where We Live: Finding Connection with Urban Nature in Birmingham



Nature isn't just something we visit on holidays or see on screens — it's right here, woven into the fabric of our neighbourhoods. From the street trees that change with the seasons, to the birds nesting under rooftops, to the green spaces tucked between busy roads, urban nature is all around us in Birmingham. And the more we notice it, the more we feel part of it. This feeling — called nature connectedness — is about more than knowing species names or visiting wild places. It's about a sense of relationship, care, and belonging with the natural world, wherever we are.

For many men, particularly in urban settings, time in nature can offer a vital lifeline for mental and physical wellbeing. Whether it's taking a quiet walk in the park, joining a local gardening group, or simply sitting under a tree for a breather, connecting with nature has been shown to reduce stress, improve mood, and even lower blood pressure. In Birmingham, projects that bring men together through shared outdoor activities — from allotments to conservation volunteering — are creating spaces for connection, purpose, and quiet healing. These green moments matter, especially in a world that often asks men to keep their emotions hidden.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20010/parks_leisure_and_wellbeing/1158/improving_your_health_with_nature

If you're curious about the science and soul behind nature connectedness, **A Blackbird's Song** by Professor Miles Richardson is a beautifully thoughtful read. Drawing on research and real-world experience, the book offers a compelling case for why we need more than just access to nature — we need a relationship with it. As Richardson writes:

"Nature can calm us, lift our mood, and provide joy — not because we escape into it, but because we belong to it." <https://findingnature.org.uk/>

It's a gentle, powerful reminder that small, everyday interactions with the natural world — especially in cities — can bring both personal healing and collective hope.

As the City of Nature Plan continues to grow roots across Birmingham, we're inviting everyone to take a moment to see the wild in the everyday. For ten community groups we have provided a free pack of books that includes *A Blackbird's Song* among other inspirational titles and nature identification guides. We are looking forward to finding out how the books get used and if they bring further benefits. But everyone can notice the bugs in the pavement cracks, the dandelions by the bus stop and the soft rustle of leaves outside your window. Because the more we connect with the nature around us, the more we see it and the more we care for it — and the more it cares for us, in return.



Wildlife in June: Is busting out all over

June is one of the most magical months for wildlife in the UK. A time when the natural world feels vibrant, abundant, and alive with sound and colour. As the days stretch long and the sun warms the ground, Birmingham's green spaces, parks, canals, and even roadside verges become buzzing, fluttering havens for nature.

Look closely, and you'll spot the small wonders. Click the images for more info



Bees and butterflies are in full flight, drawn to wildflowers blooming in meadows and gardens — from oxeye daisies and red clover to the sunny yellow of bird's-foot trefoil.

Swifts scream overhead in joyful loops after returning from their long migration from Africa, darting through the skies above our rooftops.

If you are sitting out on a warm evening looking at the stars you may hear frogs and newts emerge from garden ponds and splashing back in again. Or perhaps it's a Hedgehog beginning their night-time wanderings. Do make sure your garden is hedgehog friendly: <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/>

If you're near the city's canals or ponds, keep your eyes peeled for damselflies and dragonflies, shimmering like living jewels above the water.

June is also a busy time for birds, many of whom are feeding hungry chicks. You might notice blackbirds, robins, and blue tits flitting back and forth with beaks full of insects. It's a reminder that the spaces we share — no matter how urban — are also home to thousands of other lives, quietly depending on trees, plants, and ponds to survive. Find out how to help them thrive: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/gardening>

Get involved: Become a citizen scientist!

You don't need to be an expert to help protect Birmingham's wildlife — just curious and observant.

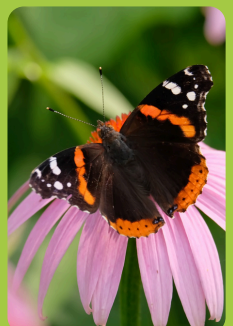
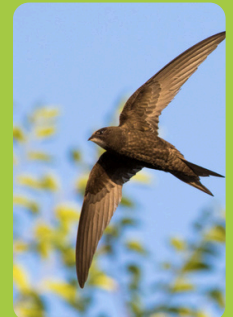
This month, take part in the Big Meadow Search <https://bigmeadowsearch.co.uk/> a national effort to map wildflowers across the UK. All you need is to find a green space and a few minutes to spot what's growing.

You can also log butterfly sightings for Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count (starting in July, but a great time to get your eye in). <https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/>

And if you're seeing swifts swoop through your neighbourhood, report your sightings to the RSPB Swift Mapper to help monitor these incredible birds. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-we-do/protecting-species-and-habitats/swift-conservation-take-part-in-swift-mapper>

These small actions help scientists, conservationists and local groups build a better picture of Birmingham's biodiversity — and they help us feel more connected to the world around us.

So take a notebook or your phone, step outside, and join the city-wide effort to notice, celebrate, and protect the wildlife that shares our home.

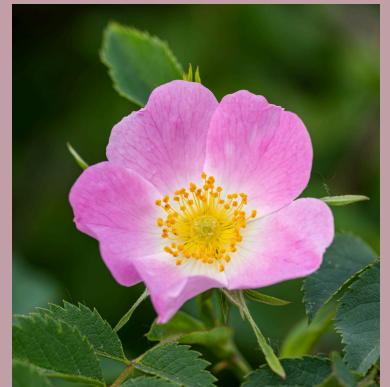


Roses and grasses to please the senses

June in the garden - "tis the month of June, The month of leaves and roses,
When pleasant sights salute the eyes, And pleasant scents the noses."

June 21 is the longest day of the year, and the extra light and warmth encourages the garden to put on an exuberant burst of growth. This brings some of the first harvests from the vegetable garden, including tasty new potatoes and salads. As the conditions become drier, keep an eye on any containers you have planted up and if you haven't got one, it's never a bad time to install a water butt.

Dog roses and grasses are more tolerant of drier conditions and can be visually pleasing in a garden setting, with the airy textures of grasses complementing the larger, more dense rose bushes.



Dog roses, also known as wild roses, are native shrubs that offer pink or white flowers and can provide a good informal hedge. Here's a more detailed look at their characteristics:

Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*):

Growth Habit: Dog roses are rambling shrubs that can grow up to 3 meters tall when well supported, often weaving through other vegetation.

Flowers: They produce sweet-scented pink or white flowers, appearing in June and July.

Rosehips: After flowering, they produce red rosehips, which are a food source for wildlife like birds and small mammals.

Habitat: They thrive in hedgerows, woodland edges, sand dunes, and grasslands.

Growth Rate: Dog roses are fast-growing, with some varieties growing 40-60cm per year.

Grasses:

Visual Appeal:

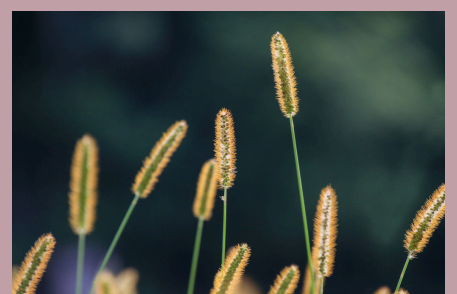
Grasses can add a sense of lightness and movement to a garden, complementing the denser foliage of dog roses.

Variety:

There are many types of grasses, allowing for a range of textures and heights to be incorporated into a design. These can include native grasses like Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and Meadow Foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*)

Companion Planting:

Grasses can be used as a backdrop for dog roses or mixed in amongst them, creating a visually appealing combination.



Young Green Champions are leading the way



Birmingham's youngest nature heroes are stepping up —
and they're bringing big ideas in small wellies!

The **Young Green Champion programme** is nurturing a new generation of eco-leaders by helping children across the city connect with nature, care for their environment, and take pride in their local green spaces. Through playful, hands-on activities like planting, bug-hunting, litter-picking and storytelling, children learn that their actions matter — and that even the smallest voice can inspire big change.

This joyful, child-led programme doesn't just grow plants — it grows confidence, kindness, and curiosity. Whether it's a nursery class exploring worms in the garden, or a primary school group creating a wildflower patch for pollinators, **Young Green Champions** are showing us all what it means to love where we live. With the support of teachers, families, and community groups, these young champions are already shaping a greener, fairer future for Birmingham — one muddy handprint at a time.



Environmental Justice - Greening the city

Environmental justice means that everyone — no matter where they live, how much they earn, or what their background is — has the right to a clean, healthy environment. In Birmingham, a city rich in green space but marked by deep inequality, it's a growing priority to make sure nature and environmental benefits are shared fairly across all communities.



Birmingham is proud to be one of the greenest cities in Europe, with over 8,000 acres of parks and open spaces, from the wide lawns of Cannon Hill Park and Handsworth Park to farming sites of Woodgate Valley Country Park on the west side of the city and Sheldon Country Park to the east and right out to the wild beauty of Lickey Hills in the south and Sutton Park National Nature Reserve in the north. There are almost 1000 urban green spaces in between from play areas, to pocket parks to river corridors canals, reservoirs lakes and woodlands.

These places offer more than just scenic views — they improve air quality, support mental and physical health, and give children space to play and explore. But access isn't equal for everyone. Some neighbourhoods have less greenery, more pollution, and are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Environmental justice in Birmingham means investing in nature where it's needed most, listening to the voices of local people, and ensuring that every resident — no matter their postcode — can breathe clean air, walk safely under trees, and feel the benefits of a thriving natural environment. You can read more here: <https://naturallybirmingham.org/environmental-justice/>

As the City of Nature Plan takes root, it offers a chance to build a greener Birmingham that truly works for everyone.

You can explore more of the city in this webinar recording: <https://youtu.be/4C8cN6m9WkM>

Park Rangers - Green at Heart Healthy Parks

Get Active in Aston, Newtown & Nechells Parks!

Do you live in or near Aston, Newtown or Nechells ward and are you looking for a fun, rewarding way to enjoy the outdoors and give back to your community? You can join our Park Rangers and help care for your local green spaces—whether it's planting for pollinators, litter picking, or creating wildlife-friendly areas, your time makes a difference. Or bring the whole family and take part in our free nature-inspired activities—perfect for all ages!

No experience needed – just enthusiasm! Wear suitable outdoor clothing and footwear. **Check for cancellation in bad weather.** Come along, get stuck in, and help make our parks better for both people and wildlife.

Email Lickey.hub@birmingham.gov.uk for more information.



Out and About in June with the the City's Park Rangers

Wed 4th June 11.00 to 12.30

Burbury Park (B19 2UP) :

Nature surveying: What is living in the park?! Meet by the playground and help record the nature on your doorstep.

Thursday 5th June 11.00 to 12.30 :

Yellow Park (B19 2LA) :

Join the Park rangers and lend a hand with the care of the raised bed to get ready for more planting. Meet by the playground.

Thursday 12th June 11.00-12.30 :

New John Street West Public Open Space (B19 2YX):

Nature surveying: What is living in the park?! Meet by the entrance off Bridge Street West by the church and help record the nature on your doorstep.; there is probably more than you would think!

Tuesday 17th June 11.15 -12.45:

Philip Street Park (B6 4PT) :

Nature surveying: What is living in the park?! Meet by the playground and help record the nature on your doorstep.

Wednesday 18th June 11.15- 12.45

Salford Park:

Nature surveying: What is living in the park?! meet by the notice board by the main entrance and help record the nature on your doorstep.

Wed 25th June 11.15- 12.45

Yellow Park (B19 2LA):

Join the rangers for a community cleanup & help to care for the park. Meet by the entrance off Porchester Street. B19 2LA.

Thursday 26th June 11.30

Eliot Street Park ('Old Lady Park') B7 5LX Meet by the notice board. This walk leaves the park please don't be late.

Start Nature walk with the rangers. Stroll through Eliot Street park, Mount Street POS, along the canal to Salford park and back and see the nature you can spot on the way. (Approx 5K) in Eliot Street park ('old lady park') B7 5LX

Thursday 27th June 11.15-12.45

Georges Park, Lozells (B19 1PP)

Get your hands in the soil and help the rangers care for the flower bed by the playground.

A change to the city's governance structures that oversee the city's natural environment across the full 25-year term (G9)

Birmingham City Council has / will:

- 1. Establish a Long-Term Governance Board- Create a dedicated, cross-sector City of Nature Governance Board with representation from the council, local communities, environmental organisations, youth voices, academic experts, and business. This board would oversee strategic delivery, monitor progress, and ensure accountability over the full 25-year term.
- 2. Embed Nature into Core Council Decision-Making. Amend existing governance frameworks to ensure that nature, biodiversity, and climate resilience are embedded in all relevant policy, planning, and investment decisions — not just within environmental departments, but across housing, transport, public health, education, and finance.
- 3. Secure a Sustainable Delivery and Reporting Mechanism - Develop a robust, long-term delivery structure within the council with dedicated staff and resourcing. This includes setting up clear reporting cycles (e.g. annual reviews), transparent metrics, and public accountability mechanisms to track progress and adapt as needed over time.



Earth Stories - Memories, Hopes and Happenings

There's something quietly powerful about June. The days stretch long into golden evenings, trees are full and vibrant, and the air hums with possibility. In many ways, this is nature at its most generous — offering colour, light, and life in abundance.

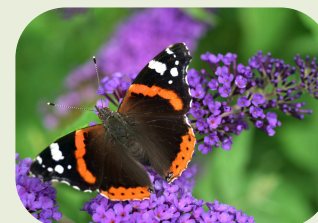
Four years ago when I led Teeny Explorer sessions at the Lickey Hills - June was full of jam filled picnics and jolly daisy chains. We rolled down grassy hills, howled with the wolves and played with dragons until the magic of mid summer melted into the summer holidays. and families took time together to explore more widely.

Now this month marks a special chapter in our City of Nature story. With the plan now moving into everyday action across Birmingham, we're seeing the seeds of hope and hard work blossom into something truly inspiring — school gardens buzzing with life, young people finding their voice in nature, and communities working together to transform green corners into places of connection and care. Now that really is magic.

June also brings the summer solstice — the sun's longest appearance, and a moment to pause, breathe, and notice how far we've come. It's a time to celebrate growth, not just in gardens and parks, but in hearts and minds too.

You, our Green Champions, are helping to sow something that will outlast any season: a culture of care, curiosity, and courage for the planet. So whether you're planting wildflowers, sharing stories under trees, or simply watching bees go about their business, remember this — every small action matters. We are part of something that is growing and glowing across our city.

Debbie Needle - Green Champion
Editor, City of Nature Newsletter



Birmingham City Council's Route to Net Zero

Net zero is the idea of reducing our emissions down to zero or as close as possible to prevent further temperature increases. To find out more about BCC's Net Zero journey visit BCC website:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50282/climate_change/2641/what_is_climate_change_and_net_zero/4

To keep up to date you can receive the BCC **Greener Birmingham Bulletin** by email go to :

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20179/news_and_media/201/sign_up_for_regular_email_updates_from_birmingham_city_council#:~:text=Subscribe%20to%20the%20Birmingham%20Bulletin,on%20a%20range%20of%20topics
scroll down and select the **"Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero"** option.



Natural England

Natural England have Health and Environment Lead roles to support and create connections between any Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprises, health practitioners, Community Wellbeing Roles, or local authorities interested in increasing the offer of Green / Blue Social Prescribing. To receive the West Midlands newsletter please contact: Amber.Marquand@naturalengland.org.uk

Birmingham TreePeople

Birmingham TreePeople, organise and oversee the Urban Forestry Volunteer Scheme in the city. It was originally set up as part of the Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme by Birmingham City Council's Tree Officers in 2016, and is now one of the largest of its kind in the UK. For more information contact:

<https://birminghamtreepeople.org.uk/about-us/urban-forest-volunteers/>

Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust

Works with us for nature's recovery across Birmingham and the Black Country; protecting, restoring and creating wildlife-rich, accessible spaces that benefit people and wildlife. Get involved and find out more about their events in Birmingham and the Black Country.

<https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/>



BOSF - Find you local Friends of Open Spaces Group

BOSF offers opportunities for those interested in open spaces to share knowledge and experience. You can register your group to receive regular updates about funding sources, training opportunities, events in open spaces and lots of useful information. If you want to start a group to care for a green space near you they can support you to do that.

<https://bosf.org.uk/>



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