

Hedge Plants to Improve Biodiversity

Species Name		February	March	April	May	June-August	Autumn	Winter	Needs	Additional Information
Alder Buckthorn	<i>Frangula alnus</i>				Small white flowers	Small white flowers	Berries: red then purple-black	dark stems with white streaks	Acid - neutral soil	Leaves foodplant of Brimstone Butterfly caterpillars. Pollen & nectar for pollinating insects, berries for birds
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>			Male catkins & female flowers on same tree	Male catkins & female flowers on same tree	leaves change from soft light green to darker green	Nuts	copper coloured lves remain over winter	wide range soil. Not too wet	wind-pollinated but when cut as a hedge will not have flowers or fruit. Leaves important for 64 insects including some moth caterpillars
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>		white flowers before leaves				blue berries: sloes used for sloe gin		Well drained soil, full sunlight	Sharp thorns so unsuitable for gardens with children but good to keep out intruders. Twigs good for lichens. Supports early pollinators, 109 invertebrates eat the leaves, birds eat berries. Good protection for nesting birds, and animals which are protected beneath it eg bank voles, shrews, hedgehogs & hibernating reptiles and amphibians. Can be invasive
Cherry Plum	<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>	white flowers before leaves					yellow or red fruit			Good for early pollinators. Fruit eaten by birds & humans, Non native but naturalised in UK
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina</i> agg.					Pink flowers	Red rose hips		Wide range of soils. Likes full sun	Important nectar source for insects. Birds and small mammals eat rose hips. Various insects eat /use leaves eg leaf-cutter bees. Leaf buds may be used by a gall wasp. Can be harvested to make rose hip syrup. Prickly so not suitable in gardens with small children
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>				white flowers in clusters		leaves turn red, black berries	green stems in shade, stems in sunlight & new twigs red	Wide range soil. Tolerates damp soils	Flowers good for pollinators, leaves eaten by invertebrates including moth caterpillars, berries eaten by birds

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Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>				yellow-green hang in clusters		golden yellow leaves, brown winged fruit		Wide range of soils	Good for pollinating insects, leaves important for several moth species, other insects & their predators. Fruit eaten by voles. When cut as a hedge may not have flowers or fruit. Twigs good for lichens
Guelder Rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>				creamy white. Flat-topped-similar structure to hydrangea		translucent red berries, stunning orange-red leaves		Wide range of soils including damp places	Flowers important for pollinators esp. hoverflies. Berries eaten by birds
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Common Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>				white flowers		Red berries		Wide range soils, but flowers & fruits best in sunny places	Fast growing. Important for pollinators. 149 invertebrates specialise in eating leaves, can support 300+ insects. Fruit important for birds. Slightly thorny so protects nesting birds, small mammals, hibernating reptiles & amphibians
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	yellow male catkins (lamb's tails) & small red 'flowers'. Wind pollinated				nuts start to mature in August	Nuts		Wide range of soils. Will tolerate shade	Early bees may take pollen. Leaves eaten by >70 insects including some moth species. Woody stems can be cut at base in winter for use as bean poles. Nuts eaten by birds & mammals eg nuthatch, jays, squirrels

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Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>				Separate male & female plants. Small yellow-white flowers		red berries on female plants	evergreen	Wide range of soils. Will tolerate shade	Used by pollinating insects, leaves important for leaf miner moths, other insects & their predators. Young leaves & buds eaten by holly blue butterfly caterpillars. Fruit eaten by birds eg mistle thrush after 1st frost. Lower leaves prickly so may be unsuitable for gardens with children
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>			Wind pollinated male & female catkins on the same tree			leaves yellow orange. Fruit very attractive: nutlets in leafy bracts hang down in tiered clusters	In hedgerows it will keep its leaves over winter	Range of soils, tolerates shade but doesn't tolerate waterlogging.	Will not produce flowers & fruit when cut as a hedge. Leaves eaten by 28 insects including several moth caterpillars. Protects birds & animals in winter. Finches, tits & small mammals eat seeds
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaea</i>				Small white flowers		leaves orange red, striking pink berries with orange seeds	Small twigs green in winter	Prefers chalk soil. Sometimes in areas where concrete beneath soil	Pollinated by insects, particularly flies. Leaves eaten by a number of moth caterpillars. Aphids suck sap and attract predators which eat them e.g. hoverflies, lacewings and birds such as long-tailed tit & house sparrows
Wayfaring Tree	<i>Viburnum lantana</i>				Creamy white flowers in flat-topped head		Berries red, becoming black		Prefers chalk soils in sunny places but will grow elsewhere	Leaves eaten by some moth caterpillars. Flowers pollinated by insects, including hoverflies. Berries eaten by birds and small mammals but poisonous for humans.
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>			Male & female flowers on different trees. Wind pollinated	Male & female flowers on different trees. Wind pollinated		red berries	evergreen	Wide range of soils. Tolerates shade	Poisonous. Leaves eaten by caterpillars of satin beauty moth. Fruit taken by birds eg mistle thrush who survive because they do not break down the poisonous seed. Forms dense hedgerows which protect birds.