



**The Stour Valley
Wildlife Action Group**

OPERATION NECTAR

**A list of trees, shrubs and garden flowers
Attractive to Butterflies and Bumblebees**



Compiled by Stuart Priest, Director of Operations,
The Batsford Foundation Garden Centre

INTRODUCTION

Butterflies and bumblebees have suffered huge declines in recent years to the extent that some species have already become extinct from Britain. Habitat loss has taken away most of their natural food supply, sending their numbers plummeting!

Many of our fruit and vegetable crops are dependent on insect pollination and the current value of this is estimated at £400m per year to the British economy. The effects of losing these pollinators would be far reaching and devastating, as the biological systems we rely on for our food start to collapse, fruit trees would not bear fruit and crops would fail.

HOW CAN WE AVOID THIS FROM HAPPENING?

Simply by taking part in “OPERATION NECTAR” and providing Butterflies and Bumblebees with an alternative food supply!

Gardeners in Britain, have a huge land resource at their disposal estimated at over 1m hectares. Whether your garden is small or large, planting areas for butterflies and bumblebees will all help. Small, low maintenance gardens can be brought to life, with just a few containers or large pots. Fill these with lavender and culinary herbs that will have a dual purpose. Larger areas can be planted out with fruit trees, in beds of flowers and shrubs selected from the enclosed list kindly produced for us by Batsford Garden Centre. Planting for succession of blooms is also important as it extends the display for you and the food supply for the insects. Fruit trees usually flower quite early, so they are perfect for queen bumblebees emerging from hibernation. Also, try not to use pesticides as you may well harm them.

Schools and parks etc. where appropriate, can replace non flowering shrubs with butterfly and bumblebee friendly plants. Also, some grassed areas can be designated as nature gardens and mown just a couple of times a year, saving on fuel and carbon emission. If they are poor in wildflowers, these can be introduced as plug plants, creating a fantastic semi natural display, full of wildlife and a brilliant area for children to learn about nature!

IF WE CAN ALL DO JUST A LITTLE, IT WILL MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE!

REMEMBER, EXTINCTION IS FOREVER.....

Butterfly and Bee attracting plants

Trees

Alder Buckthorn – *Rhamnus frangula*

Acacia dealbata – winter flowering. Needs a warm sheltered site.

Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*-Sloe) early flowering good source of nectar and pollen.

Prunus avium- wild cherry

Prunus padus – bird cherry

Prunus subhirtella autumnalis – autumn/winter flowering cherry

Malus - Crab apples – lots of different varieties

Eucalyptus – *gunnii* or *niphophila*.

Hawthorns (*Crateagus* varieties)

Hazel – *Corylus avellana*

Hop tree – *Ptelea trifoliata* (and *aurea* the golden hop tree)

Hollies

Limes

Field maple – *Acer campestre*

Mountain ash – *Sorbus* varieties

Fruit trees

Almond, Apple, Pears, Plums, Cherries, Quince, and Medlar.

Shrubs

Buddleja (*Buddleia*) Butterfly bush.

Gorse – *Ulex europaeus*

Hebe –hardy veronica varieties

Lavender varieties

Lilacs

Cotoneaster varieties

Caryopteris

Ceanothus varieties

Escallonia varieties

Shrubby honeysuckles

Privet varieties

Herbaceous perennials

Asters including Michaelmas daisy's

Achillia varieties

Aubrietia

Centranthus ruber – valerian

Cephalaria gigantia

Bugle – Ajuga varieties

Echinops ritro

Heliotrope

Perennial wallflower – Cheiranthus varieties

Cirsium rivulare atropurpureum

Catmint

Dianthus varieties

Honesty – Lunaria annua

Eupatorium – joe pye weed

Hyssop

Loosestrife – Lythrum varieties

Lychnis flos-cuculi (ragged robin)

Polygonum varieties

Solidago (golden rod)

Sedums (next to Buddleja probably the best butterfly plant)

Verbena bonariensis

Verbena rigida

Scabious varieties

Thrift – Armeria maritime

Herbs

Catmints

Comfrey

Evening primrose

Hyssop

Marjoram

Mints

Thymes

Rue – ruta graveolens

Sages

Sweet rocket

Climbing Plants

Clematis esp. the species varieties

Honeysuckles

Ivies

Hops - Humulus lupulus (inc. aurea the golden hop.)

Batsford Arboretum and Garden Centre, Moreton in Marsh. 01386-700409

www.stourvalleywildlifeactiongroup.org

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