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Growing green: British Garden Centres' guide to an eco-friendly garden

With climate awareness at an all-time high and household budgets under pressure, more homeowners than ever are seeking sustainable, cost-effective ways to tend their gardens and outdoor spaces. As part of its “Make it Bloom” campaign, British Garden Centres is urging gardeners to embrace a greener approach this season with five simple yet impactful practices that are kind to both the planet and the pocket.

Harvest and reuse water

With increasing pressure on the UK's water supplies, collecting rainwater offers a smart and practical solution. Installing water butts at downspouts to capture rainfall creates a free, sustainable resource for watering the garden using soaker hoses or watering cans. A single water butt can save thousands of litres per year, dramatically reducing household water bills during drier months.

You can also go further by redirecting grey water from sinks, baths, and washing machines to water ornamental plants, lawns, and containers. Grey water comprises 50–80% of household wastewater, making it one of the most underused resources for outdoor spaces that plants will thank you for during a dry spell.

Create your own compost

Home composting is one of the most rewarding habits a gardener can adopt. By transforming kitchen and garden waste into rich, natural fertiliser, you reduce the amount of waste going to landfill whilst producing a free growing medium for your plants to thrive. It is estimated that up to 30% of household food waste could be composted, including fruit and vegetable scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds, and used tea bags

You can also compost dry materials such as shredded cardboard, paper, and grass clippings and garden waste like fallen leaves and prunings from non-diseased plants.

Choose native plants

Planting British native species is one of the most impactful things a gardener can do for local wildlife. Native plants are naturally adapted to UK weather conditions, meaning they require far less water, fewer fertilisers, and little to no



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chemical pest control. They are also significantly more resilient and long-lived than many exotic alternatives, reducing replacement costs over time.

For colour and pollinator appeal, British Garden Centres recommends spring favourites such as primrose, with its delicate pale yellow blooms, and the vivid blue flowers of forget-me-not. Foxglove produces tall, dramatic spikes of pink-purple tubular flowers that bees find irresistible, while oxeye daisies offer cheerful white and yellow blooms from late spring well into summer.

For structure and year-round interest, native trees and shrubs are invaluable. Silver birch provides its characteristic white bark and elegant form, while holly offers evergreen foliage and berries that birds and other wildlife depend on through winter. Hornbeam makes excellent hedging, and wild cherry delivers beautiful spring blossom followed by fruit that supports garden birds. Many plants are grown on British Garden Centres' UK nurseries, so look for the red dot on the plant label.

Switch to peat-free compost and organic feeds

Peat extraction has long been a significant contributor to carbon emissions and the destruction of rare bog habitats. With the UK government phasing out the sale of peat-based products for amateur gardeners, now is the ideal time to make the switch. Modern peat-free composts, many blended with coir, bark, or wood fibre, offer excellent results across a wide range of plants.

Pairing peat-free growing media with organic, slow-release plant feeds, such as seaweed extracts, fish meal, or worm castings, means the garden can be nourished without synthetic chemicals reaching the soil or local waterways.

Build wildlife habitats

A healthy garden is a wildlife-friendly garden, and creating habitats for beneficial insects does not need to cost a penny. Old pallets, broken terracotta pots, bamboo canes, and cut pipes can all be repurposed into insect hotels and wildlife houses that shelter solitary bees, lacewings, and other invaluable garden allies throughout the year. Even single-use plastic bottles can find a second life as protective mini-cloches for young seedlings.



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Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres, said: “Sustainable gardening doesn’t have to be complicated or expensive. With a few straightforward changes, every garden can play a meaningful role in supporting our local environment. Whether you have a patio, an allotment, or a large country garden, these five steps can make a real difference to your local ecosystem.”

Visit <https://www.britishgardencentres.com/make-it-bloom/> for more information and more inspiring gardening tips.

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Notes to Editors:

About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK’s largest family-owned garden centre group with 79 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by the Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.

BGC was launched in 1990 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018, it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres, allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now, with 79 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 3,200 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres, Woodthorpe Leisure Park, and Woody’s Restaurant & Bar.

Social Media

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