



11<sup>th</sup> May 2026

## Make your garden buzz for World Bee Day with British Garden Centres

This World Bee Day (20<sup>th</sup> May), if you're wondering what you can actually do to help Britain's bees, the answer is closer than you think. The expert team at your local British Garden Centres store has everything you need, with the plants, the seeds, the advice, and the know-how on how to turn any outside space into somewhere bees genuinely want to be. With two bumblebee species already extinct in the UK, eight more on the endangered list, and 97% of our wildflower meadows gone since the 1930s, our gardens have never mattered more.

British Garden Centres' Make it Bloom campaign was built for exactly this moment, to inspire and support every gardener, whether you're nurturing your very first plant or tending a garden you've loved for years. With the right plants and a bit of advice, every outside space can bloom for every season. This spring, look out for three friendly faces in centres: Bernard the butterfly, Georgie the bee, and Charlie the bird. Follow their lead to the plants that will bring your garden to life for World Bee Day and give Britain's wildlife something to buzz about.

### What to plant for World Bee Day and beyond

**Lavender** is a popular classic for good reason, as bees return to it all summer, drawn by its scent as much as its nectar-rich flowers. It works in a border, a container, or on a sunny doorstep. Buy it small and let it establish rather than buying it already in bloom.

**Salvias:** These flower from May until the first frosts and will be covered in pollinators the entire time. The tall floral spikes look spectacular in a border, and the perennial varieties come back year after year without being asked.

**Foxgloves:** At this time of year, foxgloves are at their best right now with their tall spikes of purple, pink, white and blue that solitary bees find irresistible. Native to Britain, happy in light shade, and beautiful as cut flowers too.

**Alliums:** Bees love those tall spherical purple pompoms; they look at home in any garden and look fabulous in amongst your borders or in a container.

**Aquilegia:** Also known as Granny's Bonnets, they are rich in nectar and visited constantly, making them an ideal plant for World Bee Day and beyond.

**Poppies:** These are one of the great pollen plants with wide open petals in red, white, purple and pink that pollinators make a beeline for. They thrive in a sunny spot and largely take care of themselves.

**Verbena bonariensis:** This earns its keep from July right through to autumn, so pollinators come flocking even after World Bee Day, its tall, wiry stems and lilac flower clusters visited by bees and butterflies in turns.



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**Buddleia:** This plant can take over at the end of summer when much else is fading, its long flower spikes drawing pollinators in numbers. Low maintenance and fast growing, it's a brilliant starting point for anyone new to gardening.

**Single-flowered dahlias:** Ideal for later in the season, single dahlias are the ones with visible stamens rather than densely packed petals and are among the best nectar sources of late summer and autumn.

**Sedum:** With its flat pink flowerheads, it keeps bees fed right into October and gives them somewhere to rest while they're at it.

**Eryngium:** Also known as sea holly, it is one of those plants that earns its place twice over. Its steely blue, architectural flowerheads look stunning in a sunny border from midsummer onwards, and bees absolutely love them. Drought-tolerant and incredibly low-maintenance, it's one of the most rewarding plants you can add to a garden.

**Herbs:** Rosemary draws bees in large numbers to its small but nectar-rich flowers. Chives coming into bloom right now are magnets for bumblebees, and sage and thyme allowed to flower rather than being cut back will give you weeks of pollinator activity with no extra effort.

### **Lawns for bees**

Leaving even a small patch unmown through May and June allows clover and dandelions to come through, two of the most important plants for bumblebees in the country. Or you can get your lawn abuzz with a packet of wildflower seeds. Scatter them in a bare patch or throughout your lawn and let them get on with it; they'll feed bees, butterflies, birds and insects from one end of summer to the other.

### **Plan for the whole year**

Most gardens put on a good show from now until August and then go quiet. For bees, that's a problem as a queen bumblebee emerging from hibernation in February needs food, and by October, bees are still foraging hard, building the fat reserves that will see them through winter.

From February to March, Hellebores, pulmonaria, crocus and snowdrops may seem modest, but they're genuinely vital at a time when almost nothing else is flowering. In September and October, asters are one of the last great bee plants of the season. And ivy, usually the first thing to be cut back, is in fact one of the most important plants of the whole year at this point and provides a last vital source of nectar before winter closes in.



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**Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres,** said: “World Bee Day only comes once a year, but the difference a garden can make lasts all season. Plant something this May that a bee can use, and you can turn your outside space into somewhere that wildlife genuinely wants to be.”

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

**ENDS**

**WORD COUNT: 864**

**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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