

A good way of helping bugs in your garden is to plant wildflowers. These will provide pollen and nectar for bees and butterflies, and larvae (such as caterpillars) often feed on their leaves.

## ✓ No flowerbeds, no problem!

The best place to plant wildflowers is in a sunny spot in the garden, but if you don't have the space you can plant them in a container. Any container will do as long as it has drainage holes in the bottom. Once you've found a suitable container (i.e. an old bucket or plastic tub) fill it three quarters full with peat-free compost.



## ✓ When to plant

Many wild flower seeds need to be chilled before they germinate so a good time to plant them is in late autumn; firm down the soil, sprinkle the seeds on the surface, gently press them in with something flat, then water them. After that you can leave them alone, just make sure the compost doesn't dry out.

## ✓ Flowers to choose from

There are lots of wildflowers to choose from (for example, Knapweed, Lady's Bedstraw, Meadow Buttercup, Cowslip, Oxeye Daisy, Black Medic, Field Scabious, Selfheal, Wild Parsnip, Wild Marjoram, and Yarrow). If you buy a packet of mixed wildflower seed do make sure that they are all types that are native to the your area.

If you can't find wildflowers, many bugs will enjoy herbs such as Rosemary, Thyme, Sage, Basil, Sweet Marjoram, Chives, Lovage, Lemon Balm, Parsley, Borage and Mint.

## ✓ Maintaining your wildflower garden

When your plants start to grow you might have to thin them out if they are too crowded; otherwise leave them alone apart from watering. Once the wildflowers have finished flowering don't cut them back or pull them up. Some wildflowers will flower again the next year, while others grow one year and flower the next. Many bugs will have laid eggs in the compost, or hidden amongst the dead stems and leaves to hibernate over winter.

