



### **SBC Green Team: Here are some nature-friendly ideas for your garden this Spring**

- Leave some dandelions to flower in spring. They are an invaluable source of nectar and pollen for queen bumble bees emerging from winter hibernation, who need to fuel-up to make successful nests. Remove the dandelions later in the summer if you feel you need to, when there are lots of other flowers for the bees.
- Make sure there are hedgehog holes in your fences so that hedgehogs can travel between yours and neighbouring gardens: on average hedgehogs need to visit 8 gardens a night to forage. In 2020 hedgehogs were classified as 'vulnerable to extinction' due to their declining numbers and gardens seem to offer their best hope of survival. Make a hole at the base of the fence approx 13cm x 13cm.
- Put up a nest box, or several. For advice on the different sorts of nest boxes which are best for different species, and where to put them, visit <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/all-about-nest-boxes>  
You can buy a nest box or make your own. If you have a spot 5m above ground consider a swift box.
- Don't poison wildlife by using pesticides. Aphids can be treated with a diluted liquid soap solution, or better still, wait for the ladybirds and blue tits to descend on them.
- Many bedding plants, such as Begonias and African Marigolds, have no pollen or nectar for pollinating insects. They have been bred to remove them so that the flowers last longer. Download a guide to bumblebee friendly planters at <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/bumblebee-friendly-planters/>
- Try planting seeds in a toilet roll or halved kitchen roll tube. Seedlings can then be transferred into the ground in their holders. Also, try using egg cartons or plastic fruit / veg trays to plant seeds in.