

let's get buzzing in Buriton



Buriton has been selected as one of only six parishes in Hampshire for an important wildlife project – and it is hoped that lots of people will want to take part.

Experts explain that it is not just big animals like elephants, rhinos and tigers that are under threat: lots of insect species are also declining – and many of these small creatures are vital to our lives.

Bees, butterflies, moths and beetles are vital for crops and fruit – with estimates suggesting that over a third of the food that we eat depends on such unsung little pollinators.

Pollinators collect pollen and nectar from flowers and, when they move from one to another, they fertilise the plants in the process so they can produce their seeds and fruit. Some creatures collect pollen deliberately, like many bees, whilst others move pollen accidentally like butterflies.

But lots of these creatures are now struggling because of the loss of habitats and use of pesticides. They need all the help we can give them.

The theme of this year's Village Show (Saturday 7th August) will be 'Pollinators and Pollination' with all sorts of bug-tastic entry classes in the horticultural and

craft sections as well as information from experts and opportunities to develop a plan for the whole community: perhaps identifying a network of sites as stepping stones or corridors through the village offering food, shelter and safety for bees, birds, bats and other types of wildlife.

The project offers the potential to involve the village school, St Mary's church, local farmers, roadside verges and residential gardens as well as Parish Council land and the existing Nature Reserves. Each part of the village might wish to think about how their area could help. It may be possible to plant some more native trees or shrubs, to build bug hotels, to reduce grass mowing and to increase areas of wildflowers. Simply mowing some parts of grassed areas less frequently and thinking carefully about when not to cut vegetation back can probably help to create corridors for wildlife to connect to the wider countryside.

And everyone can get a buzz out of wildlife-friendly gardening!

Come along to the Village Show to find out more or contact Doug Jones (01730 231326 or doug.pam@btinternet.com) if you'd like to get involved in the meantime.

What can we do?

If any of our pollinators could talk, they would probably ask us to let more grassy areas bloom and provide friendly flowers.. This could help throughout the life-cycle of these creatures.

Bumblebees can only fly for about 40 minutes between feeding stops. So every wildflower that we allow to grow, or pollinator-friendly flower or tree that we plant could be the fuel stop that saves lives.

It's important that there is food and shelter throughout the year, so diverse native grasses are valuable as well as different plants producing pollen and nectar from February to October.

Ideas to help pollinators in gardens should be available at the Village Show, including:

- plant some pollinator-friendly plants instead of bedding plants (many of which produce little or no pollen and nectar because they have been bred for their appearance: bees cannot feed on showy double flowers, and plants like



- pansies offer little to pollinators)
- keep some weeds (such as dandelions, daisies, buttercups and clover) because they are great sources of pollen and nectar
- leave areas of lawn unmown: short uniform grass that is regularly cut will often have few species – and longer grassy areas can be important nesting habitats
- hedges are much better for wildlife than wooden fences or walls
- think carefully about whether to use pesticides
- provide some bee hotels.

If everyone did just some of these things lots of bees, butterflies, hoverflies and beetles would be very grateful.

Count what we've got

It will be fascinating to know if we can make a difference – so some regular simple counts could be very useful. Just watch a small patch of flowers for 10 minutes and count how many insects visit in warm, dry conditions. Try to count each individual insect just once. If a bee goes from flower to flower in your patch that just counts as one. Count the total number

of insects and take a photograph of the patch. If you can, count them into different groups such as Bumblebees, Honeybees, Solitary bees, Wasps, Butterflies and moths, Hoverflies, Other flies and Other insects. No-one expects you to be an expert, just do this as best you can and bring results to the Village Show.

Make a bee-line to BURITON SHOW

We aim to hold a real-life Buriton Village Show as near to normal as the pandemic permits this summer. After everything we've all been through in the past year, we deserve it.

Show date is Saturday 7th August.

We can't predict for sure what conditions will be like then, of course. But gatherings like our show will be permissible after the summer solstice, if the roadmap out of lockdown holds. The odds are good enough to hold out for the possibility.

The theme of this year's show will be pollinators – in step with the exciting project Buriton is hosting, aimed at encouraging us all to take steps to promote bees and all the other insects, which make the vital contribution to our ecology of pollinating the plants around us.

Look out for all sorts of bug-tastic entry classes in the horticultural and craft show. You should receive the show schedule and entries form along with this edition of the parish magazine.

We aim to create a buzz with pollinator displays and activities at the show, including an exhibition of artwork made for a themed competition that's already up and running. Look out for plenty of pollinator paintings by children at the village school. There will be prizes!

Naturally we'll follow any Covid safety measures deemed necessary at the time. We anticipate a one-way system around the village hall, with 2 metre distancing and hand sanitiser readily available. The organising committee asks that contributors and visitors respect whatever precautions we need to put in place.

It should be said that, at time of writing, access to the village hall is not approved or guaranteed, so this is all wishful thinking. We may also spread the show across several venues around the village, including the church, if avoiding crowds is still advisable in August.

We could even hold the event entirely outdoors on safety grounds. The show committee asks for your patience and flexibility in these uncertain times. Whatever it takes for the show to go on.

Good though the Virtual Village Show was last year, we aim to avoid a return to that as anything other than a last resort.

All being well, we hope to lay on a full array of fun - as we have in the past - centred around the sensational display of flowers, garden produce, cooking, arts and craft, that has become one of the delightful hallmarks of our community's calendar.



If public health and the weather permit, we'll have food and drink stalls around the recreation ground, as well as the usual range of outdoor activities, including kids' races and the classic egg-tossing contest.

As ever, the success of the show will depend on the support of a big team, including our legendary compere Tim Concannon and designer of distinction, Paul Martin.

On this occasion we are likely to need a crew of doughty marshals to help uphold the law, standards of propriety and pandemic safety. Please contact Buzz Cousins (contact details below) if you fancy being sworn in as a marshal, or helping our crew in any way to make this a memorable occasion.

All being well we will also hold Open Gardens the following afternoon,

on Sunday 8th August. It gives you the chance to wander around and see how some of our more talented gardeners get the best results locally. Look out for details nearer the time, once we have settled on venues.

At the moment it seems like most of us are scheming escape plans to run away to the West Country or... dare we even dream of a summer holiday abroad? If you're among the few people left in Buriton this summer, join us at the village hall on 7th August. What a buzz it'll be!

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