

WILDLIFE GARDENING

(2009)

WG 004

WHY PUT UP A TRELLIS?

Many modern gardens have high fences made from solid panels or are surrounded by walls. These areas do not have to be barren for wildlife as a trellis covered in climbers will bring them to life. There is a slight difference between a trellis in a "normal" garden and one in a wildlife garden. Whereas a normal trellis is attached directly to the fence or wall by vine ties, a trellis in a wildlife garden is mounted on wooden blocks which are attached to the fence or wall. This creates a gap of 8-10cms between the back of the trellis and the fence. This is very important for wildlife as birds can nest in the space, insects and small mammals can shelter there and maybe even a bat or Small Tortoiseshell Butterfly may roost or hibernate in this secret hideaway.

Trellis are readily available in garden centres. Look for those with guarantees. It is also easy to make your own and this gives you more flexibility as you can make one that fits exactly where you want to put it. There are many designs on which you can base your trellis, but the important features for use in a wildlife garden are the use of galvanised nails to prevent rusting and the use of a preservative that is non toxic to plants. Creosote, for example, is toxic.

Pergolas are another attractive addition to a garden and can be turned into a very useful feature for wildlife by attaching hanging baskets full of nectar rich plants, bird boxes or bird feeders. If you have a small garden, this is a good way of increasing your "wildlife habitat".

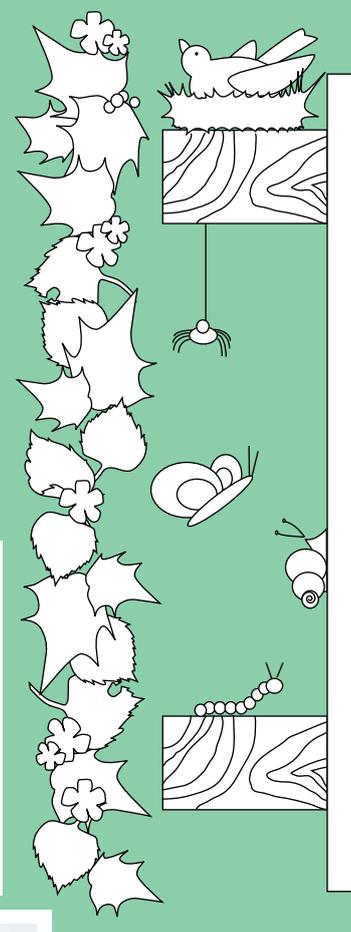
TIPS ABOUT PLANTING CLIMBERS

The bottom of a wall or fence can be very susceptible to drying out as it is relatively sheltered. When planting any climbers, plant them some 20 to 30cms away from the wall. Train them to grow up the wall via a slanting piece of cane. Always water these plants well, especially in dry conditions. Depending on what climbers you plant, you may have to feed them with some organic plant food like blood, fish and bone meal or seaweed meal.

Many climbers have to be cut right down to 10cms or so above the ground in the first year to encourage good root growth and strong shoot development. Some Clematis need this sort of pruning back every year. For this reason, they have less value for wildlife as their growth is not bushy enough to provide shelter.

Ivy, *Hedera helix*, is probably the best climber for wildlife. It grows very thickly providing lots of shelter and its flowers and berries are also very popular with all sorts of insects and birds. Ivy can be a problem in that it may weaken the structure of an old wall. If your wall is old or built with soft mortar, then ivy may not be the best climber to plant. Otherwise it will not be a problem.

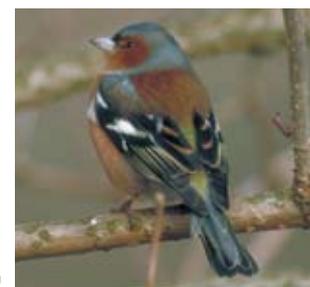
GARDEN TRELLIS



TORTOISESHELL
BUTTERFLY



LEISLER'S BAT



CHAFFINCH

LIST OF SUGGESTED CLIMBERS THAT ARE GOOD FOR WILDLIFE

COMMON NAME	LATIN NAME	FLOWERING TIME	COLOUR	BERRIES	SOIL	ASPECT
Californian Lilac	<i>Ceanothus sp.</i>	Jun - Aug	Purple	No	W-D	Sun
Quince	<i>Chaenomeles japonica</i>	Mar - Apr	Various	Yes	Most	Sun
Clematis*	<i>Clematis montana</i>	Apr - May	White/Pink	No	Most	Sh/roots
Old Man's Beard	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	Jul - Sep	Greenish	No (seeds)	Most	Sun
Cotoneaster*	<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>	May - Jun	White	Yes	Most	Sun,Sh
Forsythia	<i>Forsythia suspensa</i>	Mar - Apr	Yellow	No	Most	Sun,PtSh
Ivy*	<i>Hedera helix</i>	Sept - Nov	Green	Yes	Most	Sh,Sun
Climbing Hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea petiolaris</i>	Jun - Aug	White	No	Most	Sun,PtSh
Honeysuckle*	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Jun - Oct	Cream	Yes	Moist	Sun
Virginia Creeper	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Aug	Green	No	Moist	Sh,Sun
Passion Flower	<i>Passiflora caerulea</i>	Jun - Sep	White/Purple	Rare	Most	Sun,Sh
Russian Vine	<i>Polygonum baldschuanicum</i>		White	No	Most	Sun,PtSh
Firethorn	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>	May - Jun	White	Yes	Most	Sh,Sun
Dogrose	<i>Rosa canina</i>	Jun - Jul	Pink	Yes	Most	Sun,PtSh
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	May - Nov	White	Yes	Most	Sh,Sun
Nasturtium	<i>Tropaeolum spp.</i>	Jun - Oct	Orange	No	Most	Sun,PtSh
Wisteria	<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>	May - Aug	Mauve/White	No	Acid/Clay	Sun,Shel

* There are many garden forms of these species that are also beneficial to wildlife.
Sh = Shade; PtSh = Part Shade; Shel = Sheltered spot; W-D = Well Drained

FOR FURTHER READING

- Creating a Wildlife Garden** - Bob and Liz Gibbons. 1992. Hamlyn.
How to Make a Wildlife Garden - Chris Baines. 1985. Elm Tree Books.
Wildlife Gardening - Fran Hill. 1988. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust
Wildflower Gardening - Michael Jefferson-Brown. 1992 Cassell.
The Joy of Wildlife Gardening - Geoffrey Smith. 1989 RSPB.
The National Trust Book of Wildflower Gardening - John Stevens. 1987. Dorling Kindersley.
Successful Organic Gardening - Geoff Hamilton. 1987. Dorling Kindersley.
Garden Plants Valuable to Bees - International Bee Research Association. 1992. IBRA.

Our aim is to protect, conserve and promote the natural and built environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

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