



## **PRESS RELEASE**

12 December 2011

### **New Year, New Plans**

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and The Wildlife Trusts are reminding people to remember wildlife when making New Year's resolutions for 2012. Wildlife conservation in gardens is becoming increasingly important as more and more species are becoming endangered.

There are many easy and affordable ways in which to support nature in the UK. From budding city gardeners with limited outdoor space, to those with expansive lawns, New Year is a superb time to begin planning how to support wildlife and making green spaces more wildlife-friendly.

"We have seen gardeners become much more interested in the role their gardens have in helping UK wildlife," says Helen Bostock, an RHS wildlife expert. "The New Year is the best time to plan how to make your garden more wildlife-friendly and joining the Defra-sponsored Big Garden Wildlife Competition is an excellent way to get yourself motivated."

The charities suggest three ideas to attract wildlife:

- Setting up birdfeeders, nest boxes, ladybird lodges and feeding hedgehogs will attract wildlife and are superb ways of getting children interested.
- For smaller urban gardens, roof terraces or balconies having a window-box with flowering plants such as lavender will attract hoverflies, bees and butterflies. It is recommended to choose plants with the RHS 'Perfect for Pollinators' logo and to avoid plants with double flowers as these may lack nectar or pollen.
- For households with space, building a pond will provide a rich habitat that attracts lots of different insects and animals. Making a pond with different depths will encourage a greater range of insects such as dragonflies and water beetles, as well as toads and frogs. Very shallow sloping edges are important – this is where the largest variety of pond creatures is found. A pond is also the ideal place for birds to bathe.

Morag Shuaib, The Wildlife Trusts' Big Wildlife Garden Awards Project Manager, says "Gardens are part of a network of mini wildlife havens which link up habitats across the UK. All are a vital source of shelter and food, especially in winter when many species need warm, dry spaces in which to bed down."

“Taking action is simple and can often involve not doing things. So, resist pruning your more strikingly architectural perennials and let them provide a home for overwintering insects. Leave rotting wood to decay in a pile and see if it becomes a home to beetles, fungi, centipedes and more. This kind of approach will reward you with many more garden visitors once spring arrives and sheltering creatures become more active again.”

- ENDS -

For more information contact Eoin Redahan on 020 7821 3044 or [eoinedahan@rhs.org.uk](mailto:eoinedahan@rhs.org.uk) or Anna Guthrie on 01636 670075 or [aguthrie@wildlifetrust.org](mailto:aguthrie@wildlifetrust.org).

## Notes to the Editor:

### About the RHS

The Royal Horticultural Society is the UK's foremost gardening charity, helping and inspiring millions of people to garden. We do this at our gardens and shows and through our scientific research, publications, libraries and our education and community programmes. We are entirely funded by our members, visitors and supporters.

RHS membership is for anyone with an interest in gardening. Support the RHS and secure a healthy future for gardening. For more information call: 0845 130 4646, or visit [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk). RHS Registered Charity No. 222879/SC038262

### The Wildlife Trusts (TWT) [wildlifetrusts.org](http://wildlifetrusts.org)

There are 47 individual Wildlife Trusts covering the whole of the UK. All are working for an environment rich in wildlife for everyone. We have more than 800,000 members including 150,000 members of our junior branch [Wildlife Watch](#). Our vision is to create [A Living Landscape](#) and secure [Living Seas](#). We manage around 2,300 nature reserves and every year we advise thousands of landowners and organisations on how to manage their land for wildlife. We also run marine conservation projects around the UK, collecting vital data on the state of our seas and celebrating our amazing marine wildlife. Every year we work with thousands of schools and our nature reserves and visitor centres receive millions of visitors. Each Wildlife Trust is working within its local communities to inspire people about the future of their area: their own Living Landscapes and Living Seas.

### About the Competition

The Big Wildlife Garden Competition ([www.bigwildlifegarden.org.uk](http://www.bigwildlifegarden.org.uk)) has been created to recognise the importance of individuals' action for nature, and the benefits it brings to people. It was launched in August 2011, alongside the England Biodiversity Strategy by Caroline Spelman, Secretary of State, The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The department is funding the competition, and has appointed The Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Horticultural Society to run it.

In July 2011, The Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Horticultural Society joined together to take over the Big Wildlife Garden website, previously run by the Government's conservation adviser, Natural England.