



Yorkshire
Wildlife Trust



Team
Wilder

Your Wildlife-Friendly Open Gardens

Supporter Pack

Saturday 3rd–Sunday 11th May 2025

ywt.org.uk/open-gardens



ywt.org.uk



Yorkshire Wildlife Trust is the only charity
entirely dedicated to conserving, protecting and
enhancing Yorkshire's wildlife and wild places

It's time to celebrate our wildlife-friendly gardens!

Since we launched our Wildlife Gardening Award two years ago, we have rewarded over 500 green-fingered Yorkshire folk for their incredible work to create wildlife havens in their back yards, gardens and community spaces.

We are immensely proud of how wildlife-friendly Yorkshire's gardens are. To celebrate the success of the Wildlife Gardening Award, we would like to invite you to open your garden for at least one day between **Saturday 3rd and Sunday 11th May** to help us spread awareness of the important role our own spaces can play in bringing about nature's recovery.

We've filled this pack with everything you need to successfully take part and open your garden to the public.

If you have any questions after reading this pack, please get in touch by email at team.wilder@ywt.org.uk.

Our top tips for opening your garden

1 Use some simple signs to highlight your favourite wildlife-friendly features and create some talking points. These could be printed on card or written on small chalk board signs like those below. E.g.

■ Piles of logs provide an amazing home for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles and small mammals

■ A pond is one of the best features you can create for wildlife as amphibians and many insects need water to complete their life cycles

■ Hoverfly lagoon! This container of water and decaying leaves provides the perfect place for the larvae of some hoverfly species to thrive

2 Consider whether you'd like your visitors to take a particular route around your space and how you'll communicate that to them.

3 Remember that no one expects you to be a wildlife gardening expert – we've got all the inspiration, information and toolkits your visitors may need on our website: ywt.org.uk/wildlife-gardening-hub

4 Encourage visitors to go slowly and look for the creatures that call your garden home. Make use of our spotter sheets or some field guides to help people identify what they see. You could even host some moth trapping or pond dipping activities.

5 Don't be put off by rain – gardens need water and visitors will still come!

6 If you've got a shabby patch that you'd rather people not see, pop up an 'under construction' sign!

7 There's no obligation to provide access to a toilet. If you'd prefer not to do this, consider local facilities (cafes or pubs) that you could direct people to instead.

8 If parking is limited, please consult your neighbours prior to the event.



Spread the word

Please help us to promote our Wildlife-Friendly Open Gardens by:

- 1 Putting up posters in local shops, cafes, garden-centres, community spaces and noticeboards. We've included some in this pack, but you can download more from ywt.org.uk/open-gardens/supporter-pack. Please always get permission first!
- 2 Sharing our posts on social media – especially with local groups.
- 3 Creating your own social media content to advertise with local Facebook groups using our downloadable graphics here ywt.org.uk/open-gardens/supporter-pack
- 4 Telling as many people about your open day as you can! Make use of local clubs and networks to get the word out.



- 5 A full programme of Wildlife-Friendly Open Gardens will be available to download from ywt.org.uk/open-gardens

Sow seeds of change

We hope that everyone who visits your wildlife-friendly space will be inspired to take action for nature too!

To help you spread awareness of the important role our own spaces can play in bringing about nature's recovery, and to encourage others to complete the



Wildlife Gardening Award, **we've included a poster and some flyers for you** to share in this pack.

Our new tiered Wildlife Gardening Award now offers bronze, silver and gold awards! The application process remains the same with 5 categories of food, shelter, water, management and connectivity and an online form where applicants are invited to tick all the actions they have carried out for wildlife in their gardens.

A total of 12 ticks (at least 2 in each category) will earn a bronze award, while 24 ticks (at least 3 in each category) will earn a silver award, and 36 ticks (at least 4 in each category) will earn a gold Wildlife Gardening Award.

Applicants are also asked to submit two photos showing their garden.

For more information visit ywt.org.uk/Wildlife-Gardening-Award

Collecting donations in aid of Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Nature gives us all so much. Please consider giving something back by using your event to raise some vital funds to help us to continue our work for Yorkshire's wildlife and most-loved wild places.

Our fundraising top tips:



Display our **donations posters** clearly and ask anyone who wishes to donate to do so digitally – please **don't collect any cash** for your own security.



Consider offering refreshments to help encourage donations. It is very important to clearly label any allergens and be sure to follow food hygiene guidelines – you'll find a wealth of advice at www.food.gov.uk



If you have some back issues of Yorkshire Wildlife Trust member's magazines you could place some on a table near the refreshments for visitors to browse to help raise awareness of our work.



Consider offering plants, cuttings or seeds in return for donations, or donating a portion of any profits you make from any sales.



Making a donation to us

■ **The easiest way to do this is via our website at:**
www.ywt.org.uk/donate or scan the QR code.



■ **Alternatively, you can send a bank transfer to us using the following details:**

Bank: Barclays

Address: 1-3 Parliament Street, York, YO1 8XD

Account Name: Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Sort Code: 20-99-56

Account Number: 30996335

■ **If you'd prefer to pay in your donation by cheque,** please make it out Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and send it to us at 1. St George's Place, York YO24 1GN.

Make it safe, keep it green

Before opening your space, you'll need to complete a risk assessment. An example/template has been included in this pack, or you can download it here: ywt.org.uk/open-gardens/supporter-pack.

Complete a Risk Assessment

We all carry out risk assessments in our head every day – a risk assessment just refers to what you think about before you do something. For example, before you cross the road. A risk assessment that you don't write down, and just do in your head, is called a "dynamic risk assessment".

The other type of risk assessment is a "formal risk assessment". You write these down and keep them as a record. We've created an example to help you write yours.

Writing a risk assessment doesn't have to be complicated or onerous. The most important thing is that safety has been considered and communicated.

The risk assessment should address:

- What are the risks?
- Who might be harmed?
- How can risks be minimised?
- Is it safe to do the activity with the risk mitigations in place?



A hazard is something that could cause harm.



A risk is the chance that the hazard will cause harm and how serious that harm could be.

A risk assessment looks at all the hazards and works out how harmful they are. It also works out how likely it is that the hazard happens. A hazard that is both very likely AND very harmful would be too dangerous to do.

The "matrix" below helps the person carrying out the risk assessment to score hazards.

If something is very harmful (might seriously harm you or someone else) AND very likely – it would be intolerable. If something falls in the Moderate or substantial boxes, then you need to decide whether you can make the risk less likely, or the harm caused smaller.

The things you put in place to make the risk less or the harm smaller are called "**control measures**".

Take a walk around your space and look closely at the entire plot, noting anything that could be an issue down on the assessment form. Don't miss out any areas such as 'behind the shed' or 'down by the stream' etc.

Once you've noted any obvious problems or potential issues, resolve to either fix them before or isolate them during your event.

Likelihood x Severity Matrix

	Slight harm	Harmful	Very harmful
Unlikely	Trivial	Slight	Moderate
Likely	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
Very likely	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable

Some things can't be fixed, e.g. the dangers associated with large ponds. In this case, make use of the **Garden Hazards poster** included in this pack and display it at the entrance to your garden to help make your visitors aware of any potential dangers present.

On the day, don't forget to ask people to keep a close eye on their children – they can wander off in the blink of an eye!

Securing your property

As well as assessing potential hazards to visitors, it's also worth considering the security of your own property during the event. You may wish to ensure that your house or shed are safely locked.

Liability

Please note that Yorkshire Wildlife Trust cannot assume liability for accidents or damage to individuals or property resulting from your fundraising event, nor can we offer any legal advice. You may want to check your existing home or contents insurance policies or consider obtaining public liability insurance separately to ensure that you have the cover you need in place before your event.

Share your story



We'd love to see photos of your event, but please make sure that everyone who is featured is aware and has given their consent before you share them! If your photos include children under the age of 18, you'll need to get permission from their parents/guardians.

Send your photos to media@ywt.org.uk or share on social media with the hashtag **#YWTOpenGardens**.

Make it count!



Undertake a 'bioblitz' and measure the difference you're making for wildlife in your garden!

By surveying your space each year, you can monitor the impact that your wildlife-friendly interventions are having for the creatures that call your garden home – are they thriving? Are new species moving in?

We've compiled a guide to using iNaturalist app...
www.ywt.org.uk/how-use-inaturalist

Garden Hazards

(Please tick as appropriate)

Welcome to our wildlife-friendly open garden!
Please note that our space contains:

- ☐ Uneven paths, steps and paving areas
- ☐ A steep slope or sudden drop
- ☐ Greenhouse glass / cold frames
- ☒ An unprotected pond
- ☐ Poisonous plants/seeds
- ☐ A riverbank or stream
- ☒ Gardening equipment/chemicals
- ☐ Thorny plants
- ☒ Wildlife that may sting or bite
- ☐ Pets (e.g. our rabbits, dogs or cats)

Other:

Please keep children under close supervision at all times.

ywt.org.uk

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Risk Assessment

This pre-entered text is simply for illustration. You should always create your own Risk Assessment relevant to your circumstances.

Assessor name:	Location of open garden:	Date of assessment:	Date of open garden:
Additional risk factors to add and consider on the day: <i>(e.g. the weather or any areas which have been designated out of bounds since you completed your assessment)</i>			

Hazard If children or vulnerable adults are present, remember to include safeguarding risks.	Who is affected and how many people? e.g. staff, volunteers, members of the public	Typical outcome e.g. minor injury, serious injury, death	How will the risk be controlled? Who will control the risk? How will the control measure be communicated?	Remaining Risk Level e.g. likely x harmful = moderate (using the Likelihood / Severity matrix on page 5)
Slips, trips and falls	All visitors	Minor injuries through serious injuries – sprains, bruising, cuts, broken bones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carry out pre-event garden inspection and ensure any dangerous areas are taped off and avoided. ■ Use hazards poster to highlight any areas where care should be taken. ■ Point out any known hazards to visitors (i.e steps, slopes, uneven pathways) 	Unlikely x Harmful = Slight
Over-hanging branches	All visitors	Cuts, grazes, eye injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Direct visitors on a safe route around the garden. ■ Carry out a pre-event check for any obstacles and remove any small branches at eye level over the route. 	Unlikely x Harmful = Slight
Pond	All visitors	Drowning, sickness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use hazards poster and ensure visitors are made aware of the location of the pond, and that children are accompanied by an adult around it. ■ If you are doing any pond dipping activities, ensure that all participants wash hands afterwards. 	Unlikely x very harmful = Moderate
Plants (toxic or allergens)	All visitors	Allergic reaction, anaphylactic shock, sickness, death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notify visitors of any known toxic or allergen plants close to path and warn visitors not to touch. ■ Use hazards poster to highlight if any hazardous plants are present. 	Unlikely x Very harmful = moderate

Risk Assessment

This section is for you to complete your own risk assessment (continue on another sheet if necessary)

Assessor name:	Location of open garden:	Date of assessment:	Date of open garden:
Additional risk factors to add and consider on the day: <i>(e.g. the weather or any areas which have been designated out of bounds since you completed your assessment)</i>			

Hazard If children or vulnerable adults are present, remember to include safeguarding risks.	Who is affected and how many people? e.g. staff, volunteers, members of the public	Typical outcome e.g. minor injury, serious injury, death	How will the risk be controlled? Who will control the risk? How will the control measure be communicated?	Remaining Risk Level e.g. likely x harmful = moderate (using the Likelihood / Severity matrix on page 5)

We're wild about wildlife-friendly gardens

Thank you for participating in our Open Gardens Weekend! Your garden is a blooming oasis that supports local wildlife and creates a network of natural havens. We encourage you to “turn over a new leaf” by recording the species you observe in your garden. This data is invaluable for conservation efforts, and by noting the different birds, insects, and plants, you help grow our understanding of the variety of local wildlife.



Before you start making wildlife-friendly changes, take note of what's already “sprouting” in your garden. Recording the species you see before and after your improvements is a great way to dig up insights into how your efforts are making a difference.



Don't forget to “dig deeper” with our Wildlife Gardening Hub page, packed full of tips and resources on making your garden even more welcoming for wildlife. Whether you have a small balcony or a large garden, every space can blossom into a thriving environment for all creatures great and small. Let's plant the seeds of change together and create a budding community of wildlife enthusiasts! ywt.org.uk/wildlife-gardening-hub

Have you thought about joining us as a member?

Our members are wildlife heroes. They help us to bring species back from the brink of extinction, give Yorkshire's wildlife a powerful voice in government and inspire future generations to care for our amazing wild places.

Will you join them?

Visit ywt.org.uk/membership, scan the QR code or call us on **01904 659570, option 1**, to discover the great benefits of being a member, and get your welcome pack on its way.



Good luck and thank you for helping Yorkshire's Wildlife!

ywt.org.uk/open-gardens



ywt.org.uk

