

Urban Buzz Leicester | E-News | Nov 17

Breaking New Ground!

Urban Buzz Leicester has completed initial ground preparations and wildflower seeding of 6 flagship 'Buzzing hotspots' with additional preparation completed on an additional four sites. The first of the flagship sites to get underway were three road verges located on Goodwood Road, New Parks Way and Saffron Lane. Tractors were on site cutting the grass, removing the arisings and scarifying, producing perfect conditions for a wildflower seedbed. These initial 6 sites are seeded with wildflowers such as Field scabious, Yellow rattle, Betony, Ladies bedstraw, Cornflower and Agrimony.

Follow up work such as plug planting with volunteers is planned on many of these sites to give these new wildflower areas the best chance of success.



Ground preparation machinery in action on Goodwood Road verge

URBAN BUZZ EVENTS

- Evington in Bloom, Urban Buzz Talk 06/12/2017 @ Evington House 19:15
- Saffron Acres wildflower seeding TBD @ Saffron Acres Environmental space
- Bennion Pools and Castle Hill plug planting TBD
- Tip Top Meadow Plug Planting, 19/12/2017 @ Aylestone Meadows 10:00—12:00

Volunteering

Urban Buzz will be leading on a number of Projects where volunteers can create habitats for pollinating insects such as plug planting wildflowers, preparing ground for sowing seed, building bee banks, planting trees, sowing wildflower seed - and lots more!

If you are interested in volunteering with Urban Buzz please contact Nick Packham Nick.Packham@buglife.org.uk



Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society Volunteers @ Aylestone Tip Top Meadows

NEWS

Initial plans have been agreed with Leicester City Council's 'Parks and Open Spaces' and 'Nature Conservation' teams to create a ribbon of flowers along Leicester's ring road for pollinators and people alike. Named 'Bee Roads' the project will add around 18 new buzzing hotspots to Leicester road network, with the aim of providing vibrant strips of pollinator friendly plants for commuters, residents, bees and butterflies across the city throughout spring, summer and pushing into autumn, providing colour for much of the year.

Aylestone Meadows Appreciation Society and Urban Buzz joined forces at the Aylestone Tip Top Meadow for a woodland planting session. We coppiced woodland to open up the canopy and encourage ground flora. The Group also planted over 400 bulbs in this area to increase the diversity and help provide food sources for longer periods of the year.

This work is part of a wider 'Tip Top Meadows' project to improve the space for wildlife and people which includes enhancing a wildflower meadow and sculpture installation. Stay tuned for future updates.

Other Headlines

- Urban Buzz teamed up with Knighton Wild nature group to identify possible Buzzing hotspots in Knighton. Opportunities at the Attenborough Arboretum and Knighton Park were identified.
- A number of possible buzzing hotspots were identified at Saffron Gardens Cemetery, and other cemetery's across the city including woodland and spring plug planting.



Aylestone Tip Top Meadows grassland

Aylestone Tip Top Meadows woodland

WATCH OUT FOR... Winter Pollinators

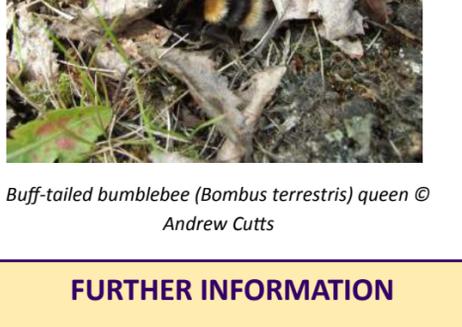
For most, the cold winter means a chance to bring out the thick, woolly jumpers and spend long nights by the central heating or log fire. But how do our pollinating heroes make it through this harsh season? Well, to put it simply, they avoid it. Spending their winter in a low energy form, the pollinator is in a state which requires as little activity as possible. The warmth of spring being the indicator to many flies, butterflies, moths and solitary bees that it is time to start the next stages of life.

Some species of butterflies and moths overwinter as eggs, having been laid by their parents at the end of summer; these hardy eggs are able to withstand the rigors of winter. These eggs finally hatch when the weather warms, the caterpillars gorging themselves in the fresh growth. However, some species of butterfly, notably the Peacock, (*Aglais io*) and moth overwinter as adults. Within the lepidopterans, the adults enter a low energy state in dry and sheltered locations, using the fat stores acquired over the summer.

Bumblebees have a similar strategy. At the end of the summer the nest produces new queens and males, these will then mate and once this task is done, the workers and males die off. The new queens then gorge themselves on nectar before finding somewhere to hibernate, usually underground, where they will wait until spring to emerge and develop a new colony.

Other species, notably the Painted ladies, (*Vanessa cardui*) most Red admirals (*Vanessa atalanta*) and the Silver Y moths, (*Aurographa gamma*) do not wish to wait the winter out, migrating to warmer climes.

Finally, hardier species simply carry on as normal, the winter being just like every other season. The winter moth, (*Poecilocampa popul*) December moth, Spring Usher moth (*Agriopsis leucophaearia*) and brimstone butterfly (*Opisthograptis luteolata*) all remain active in the winter, weathering the cold through a quirk of evolution that has given them antifreeze for blood.



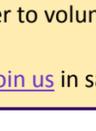
Buff-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus terrestris*) queen © Andrew Cutts

Peacock Butterfly, *Inachis io* (at rest) © Roger Key

FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit the [Urban Buzz Hub](#) online to find out how you can help insect pollinators.

Connect with us on social media via the following links:



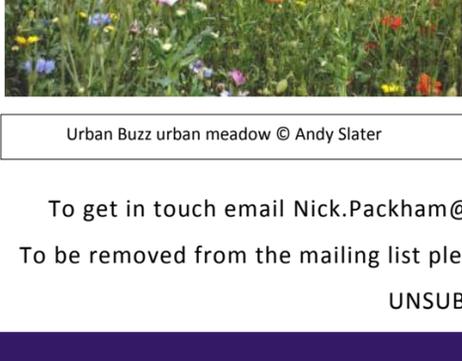
[@buzz_dont_tweet](#) #UrbanBuzz



[Buglife - The Invertebrate Conservation Trust](#)

Register to volunteer on Leicester City Council's web page [Here](#)

[Join us](#) in saving the small things that run the planet.



Urban Buzz urban meadow © Andy Slater

Common blue butterfly, © Nick Packham

To get in touch email Nick.Packham@buglife.org.uk or call 07464 828 623

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