

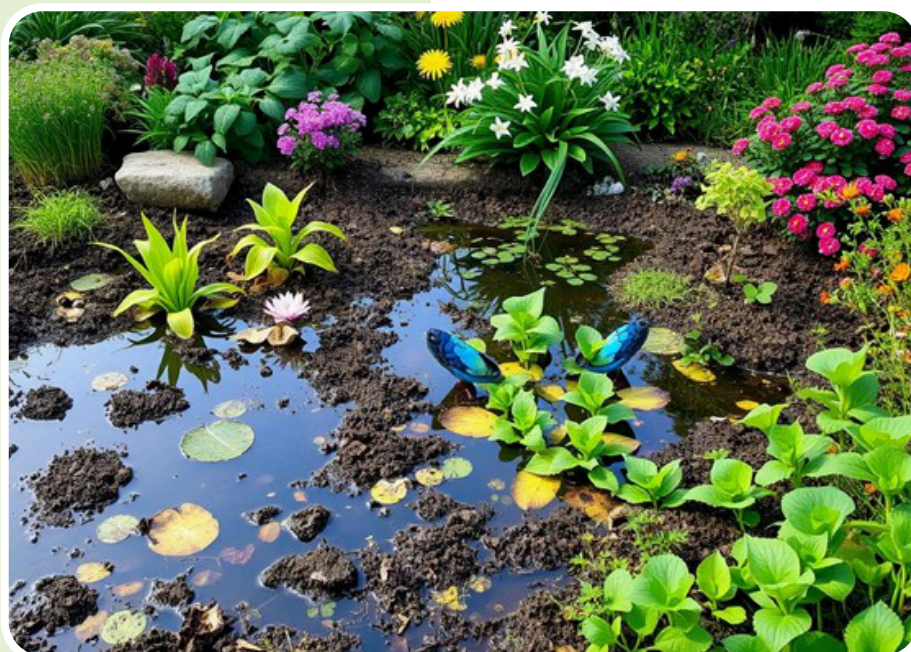
# WILD YOUR SPACE

Wild your school  
Rewild your children

## Bog Gardens/ Wetlands

**A bog garden (or wetland) offers many of the advantages of a pond, but without the same obvious safety concerns, and I've heard it said that a garden without a pond (or a wetland area) is like a theatre without a stage. Bog gardens tick lots of nature restoration boxes also!**

A bog garden will work in transitional areas (between wet and dry) or as a stand-alone feature in an otherwise fairly water depleted garden. They are rare, yet vital, habitats for many species and are often overlooked as most people are far more likely to build a pond. These wet zones offer shelter and a more stable temperature than deeper ponds, and as such add a completely unique and somewhat unusual area to any existing garden. Indeed, shallow water is often where wildlife is most diverse, and you will be amazed at the new life that is attracted – from tiny invertebrates to frogs and birds.



Native Marsh Wildflowers include:

- **Meadowsweet**  
(*Lythrum salicaria*)
- **Salad Burnet**  
(*Saguisorba minor*)
- **Regged Robin**  
(*Lychnis flos-cuculi*)
- **Meadow buttercup**  
(*Ranunculus acris*)
- **Marsh Marigold**  
(*Caltha palustris*)
- **Marsh woundwort**  
(*Stachys palustris*)
- **Creeping Jenny**  
(*Lysimachia nummularia*)

### Useful Weblinks

A step by step guide from the Wildlife Trust - [www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-make-bog-garden](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-make-bog-garden)

Or here for advice from the RHS - [www.rhs.org.uk/garden-design/bog-gardens](http://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-design/bog-gardens)

For a video, follow this YouTube link - [youtu.be/3T-\\_9gJ0p1U](https://youtu.be/3T-_9gJ0p1U)

### Funding

Don't forget our Wild Your Space Microgrant, which is unique to the Scottish Borders and which has already helped numerous local schools to make their play-grounds more wildlife (and child) friendly.

[www.brightgreennature.org/microgrant](http://www.brightgreennature.org/microgrant)

## Top Tips...

- Many will advise you to use pond liners, but we'd far rather that you repurposed an old sink, tub or container.
- Rather than being tempted to go big, you can get similar results with several small bog gardens sited close to each other.
- Choose a light and sunny, but fairly sheltered, spot.
- Be as far as possible from anywhere that weedkiller or pesticides may be used.
- Use only rain water where possible. If you have to use tap water, then let it sit outside for a couple of days before adding it to your wetland.
- If you have a sloped garden, then the bog garden will look best and function best, nearer the bottom of the slope.
- If you have a wooded area and a meadow area, then a bog garden would fit perfectly in-between (although not directly under a tree if possible).
- Try to stay away from large trees, and clear any significant amounts of leaf litter.
- Consider the animals that may move to and from your new wetland. They will be happiest if they can move about safely and hidden from view – think long grass, plants, shrubs and animal shelters.
- Planting can be done at any time of the year, but around April and May will bring the best results.
- Always use native plant species (see list) as these provide the most suitable habitats for native wildlife. UK marshland plants are as beautiful as those found anywhere, so using indigenous species is certainly no hardship.

## Lesson Plans

We can also help to develop bespoke activities around outdoor lessons.

Always get the kids as hands-on as possible with projects like this. Carry out various biodiversity surveys before and then afterwards at regular intervals. By doing these at the same times of the year you will be able to record changes to your wildlife residents.

Talk to your kids about how various species are all interconnected and often co-dependent. Teach them how to identify different types of invertebrates, different pollinators, different plants, different birds etc. Teach them about different seasons and about eggs – larvae – insects.

Consider setting up a wildlife camera that will record activity when you are not there – especially at night.

Incorporate your new environment into stories and art **and** – just make the most of the enjoyment that outdoor learning brings to everyone – young and old!

We can also help to develop bespoke activities around outdoor lessons. And – Always remember that the Bright Green Nature team are available for advice and assistance.



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[www.brightgreennature.org/wildyourspace](http://www.brightgreennature.org/wildyourspace)