

WILD YOUR SPACE

Wild your school
Rewild your children

Spring Bulbs and Flowers

The nectar on offer from the early flowering spring bulbs and wildflower plants can be a life-saver for many bees and other pollinators. And as well as being a lifeline for these species, it will be a lovely encouraging start for any school garden to burst into colour (and life) so early in the season. Furthermore, all effective nature restoration projects should look to offer as much diversity as possible, and having an ex-

tended season for flowering plants means offering additional support to nature, and could make a big difference to your local wildlife.

Careful planting of certain native bulbs in the autumn will be sure to bring rewarding results a mere 6 months later, and this effect will be amplified by adding some native spring wildflower plug plants when the time is right. You can also expect to see improving results year on year as your healthy bulbs become better established and start to multiply – a process known as offset formation, which happens naturally and requires no assistance from you.



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 playgrounds more wildlife (and child) friendly.

So, if you need some funding to help you to turn your vision into reality, have a look on the Bright Green Nature website

www.brightgreennature.org/microgrant

www.brightgreennature.org/wildyourspace



Recommended Native Bulbs and Plants

Grassy banks and lawns will look better, and will be better for wildlife if you add some **Cowslip** (*Primula veris*), **Primrose** (*Primula vulgaris*) and perhaps **Wild Daffodil** (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*) which is a UK native plant in England and Wales but is not strictly native to Scotland. Whilst we are all about native plants, we may turn a blind eye to this one – partly as there are so few truly native bulbs to our country, and

we can't deny their importance to pollinators needing some food early in the season. If you are looking to improve suitable areas around any trees, then we'd suggest that you look to emulate ancient natural woodland by adding species such as **Wood Anemone** (*Anemone nemorosa*), **Bluebell** (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), **Solomon's Seal** (*Polygonatum hybridum*) and **Sweet Woodruff** (*Galium odoratum*).

Remember – when adding spring bulbs and wildflowers to grassy areas, it is important not to carry out any mowing until June at the earliest.

Learning Opportunity

Few plants in Scotland grow from bulbs, so (possibly using the Bluebell as your example) this would provide an opportunity to talk about, and compare, how different plant species grow. Also how they store energy in different ways, and how different parts of different plants become food sources for people and many other species.



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