

WILD YOUR SPACE

Wild your school
Rewild your children

Grass Margins

Grass margins can be taken for granted where they already exist, or overlooked in areas where they have the potential to grow and thrive (including playground areas where they may well have existed previously).

As we increase our understanding of nature restoration, we begin to see the importance of landscape features like these. And, in terms of value for money, and measuring rewards against effort – grass margins are the ultimate win, win. Because these work best when we just step back and do nothing.

No mowing, no maintenance – nothing!



Hedges and grass margins work best together and are a perfect combination, and between them they offer a diverse ecosystem that benefits a great number of plants and animals. But, whether they are part of a hedgerow or not, they will provide wildlife with valuable and useable corridors and unique habitats in their own right. Spiders and insects (including many pollinators) will thrive in these habitats, as will voles, shrews and mice – which in turn will attract birds of prey who will predate on these smaller mammals. Some species of insects depend on grass margins for their very survival, and many birds will use this resource to collect nesting materials in the spring months.

www.brightgreennature.org/wildyourspace

Learning Opportunities/ Lesson Ideas

By having wildlife thrive in such areas within, or near, your school grounds you will be able to demonstrate the contrast between different habitats. In particular, what works best for nature and what does not.

You can carry out regular surveys in certain areas, such as a bioblitz or a FIT Count, where your children can really begin to focus on the incredible diversity that exists right in front of their very eyes.

You can also share details of how the many different species don't just co-exist, they are actually all interconnected and more often than not, dependent on each other.

Links

Grass margins are increasingly becoming recognised as important habitats and, following research, much has been written and published about them being an essential environmental component connected to both agricultural land and to hedgerows. These links are just some of the many relevant ones available online, and are a good place to start, if you are looking for additional information...

- Grass Margins and Beetle Banks
sruc.ac.uk/media/n2lhtpyw/tn513-grass-beetles.pdf
- Hedgerow components | Hedgelink
hedgelink.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-components
- Grass margins a simple but effective environmental measure! - Teagasc | Agriculture and Food Development Authority
teagasc.ie/news--events/daily/grass-margins-a-simple-but-effective-environmental-measure

Top Tips and Key Facts

- Grass margins should be allowed to grow at the base of all hedges (is this the case at your school?). Wherever possible, they should continue even where there are gaps in the hedge.
- Other obvious sites include, along the edge of playing fields and at the base of fences and walls.
- Grasslands are recognised as being amongst the very best carbon stores that nature offers. The more grass margins that we allow to grow, the more grasslands we will have.
- Aim for a minimum width of 2 metres wherever possible, but even a narrow grass margin is better than no grass margin.
- Every time that you introduce a No Mow area, or increase an existing one in size, you will be saving school funds, reducing emissions, and giving nature a helping hand.
- Obviously all Grass Margins must be herbicide and pesticide free zones.

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.

www.brightgreennature.org/microgrant



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Further advice

* Please note that we happy to be your first point of contact regarding any additional advice. We don't know all the answers, but we'll probably know where to find them. These websites in particular contain useful information for anyone considering planting wildflowers –

Shop - Emorsgate Seeds (see additional information section)

www.hazelwoodlandscapes.com/wildflower-meadows-nectar-lawns

Advice Notes – Scotia Seeds

www.scotiaseeds.co.uk/advice-notes

For inspiration- Wildflower Meadows & Nectar Lawns | Hazelwood Landscapes

www.hazelwoodlandscapes.com/wildflower-meadows-nectar-lawns



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