



Foodplant Species for Gardens

These species have been chosen for their usefulness as foodplants, that is, invertebrates feed on or are strongly associated with the plant, for example caterpillars may eat the leaves, some larvae eat the bark and even the roots, stems or heartwood. Without foodplants, we will not have many pollinators.

| Type | Name | Comments |
|---|---|--|
| Trees | Grey Willow (Common Sallow) (<i>Salix cinerea</i>) | Supports a vast range of invertebrates |
| | English Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) | Well known tree which supports a huge range of animals |
| | Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) | Seeds popular with Bullfinches |
| | Aspen (<i>Populus tremula</i>) | Suckers freely so may be a problem in the confines of a garden but is a very valuable foodplant. |
| | Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>) | The flowers and berries can be used in cooking, the berries supply food for birds in the autumn. |
| | Common Alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) | Supports a large number of species. Seeds popular with Siskins |
| | Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>) | A very pretty tree, supports over 150 species of moth and butterfly as their foodplant |
| | Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>) | Supports over 150 species of moth and butterfly as their foodplant |
| Hedging | Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) | Supports some 115 species of large moth and butterfly as well as providing a wonderful food source for birds in winter once they are large enough to produce Haws |
| | Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>) | Suckers freely so may be a problem in the confines of a smaller garden; Supports a wide range of insect life; sloes can be used to make sloe gin! |
| | Crab Apple (<i>Malus sylvestris</i>) | Supports a wide variety of insects as a foodplant but also an early flowerer. |
| | Dog-rose (<i>Rosa canina</i>) | Seeds from hips eaten by Greenfinches and Goldfinches |
| | Wild Privet (<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>) | Suckers freely so may be a problem in the confines of a garden. Berries eaten by various birds |
| Shrubs / Bushes | Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) | |
| | Common Broom (<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>) | A bush with yellow flowers and a wonderful scent. |
| | Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>) | A climbing plant which gives pretty flowers and a strong scent. Berries popular with Blackcaps and Robins |
| | Bell Heather (<i>Erica cinerea</i>) | |
| | Common Heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>) | |
| | Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) | A wonderful bush when controlled, providing food and shelter for birds and insects |
| | Atlantic Ivy (<i>Hedera hibernica</i>) | An important pollinator as well as foodplant as it flowers late in the year, also provides berries in winter for birds |
| Wildflowers | Dandelion (<i>Taraxacum</i> agg.) | Very valuable as a food plant but may be considered a weed by some, best to keep in a wild patch if you aren't keen to have in your lawn. Remove the seed heads before they disperse to control. |
| | Common Birds-foot-trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>) | A very pretty low growing flower |
| | Primrose (<i>Primula vulgaris</i>) | |
| | Yarrow (<i>Achillea millefolium</i>) | |
| | Ribwort Plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>) | Valuable as a food plant but may be considered a weed by some, best to keep in a wild patch if you aren't keen to have in your lawn. |
| | White Clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>) | |
| | Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>) | Seeds eaten by Goldfinches |
| | Red Clover (<i>Trifolium pratense</i>) | |
| | Field Scabious (<i>Knautia arvensis</i>) | |
| | Common Vetch (<i>Vicia sativa nigra</i>) | |
| | Foxglove (<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>) | |
| | Black Medick (<i>Medicago lupulina</i>) | A very small flower often unseen in lawns. |
| | Common Toadflax (<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>) | |
| | Nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>) | A very good food plant for many butterfly species |
| | Wood Dock (<i>Rumex sanguineum</i>) | Supports nearly 100 species of moth and butterfly |
| Hedge Woundwort | | |
| Hedge and Ladies' Bedstraws (<i>Galium album</i> & <i>Galium verum</i>) | | |

Please ensure that you purchase the above species by their scientific (Latin) name as shown in brackets. There are many similar trees and hedges but these may be cultivars or non-native species which will not have the same positive impact as they do not support the same wildlife.

This list has been approved by the Guernsey Biological Record Centre as containing native plants and wildflowers which should be planted to help act as foodplants to a variety of local species.