



Information from Plantlife <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/>
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Far from being wildlife deserts, lawns can be colourful tapestries of flowers supporting pollinators and attracting all sorts of other wildlife. Surprisingly, that doesn't always mean putting away the mower.

Plantlife's **Every Flower Counts** survey of the nation's lawns shows that how you mow your lawn can dramatically increase the number of flowers and how many pollinators your lawn can feed.

Adopting **No Mow May** and cutting your lawn once a month can even turn your lawn into a "superlawn", feeding ten times as many bees as normal.

The "Mowhican" cut

If you really want to boost flowers and nectar, give your lawn a "Mowhican" hair-cut with a mixture of both short-grass and long-grass areas in your garden. Here's how to mow each area.

Short-grass areas

The highest production of flowers and nectar sugar is on lawns cut once every four weeks, such as with Plantlife's No Mow May. This gives small plants like daisies, selfheal, white clover and bird's-foot-trefoil a chance to flower in profusion, which can boost nectar production tenfold. The occasional cutting actually stimulates more flowers to appear, while the short plants duck under the mower blades and carry on growing. Short grass areas will also attract many insects, such as mining bees that create their burrows in the ground.

How often?	Cut once a month (every four weeks)
When?	April to November
How?	With a lawnmower that collects grass clippings
How high?	Between 2.5 and 5 cm (1-2 inches)
CO ₂ savings?	293 kg CO ₂
Tips?	Also use for paths or borders to frame long-grass areas Rotate the mowing each week so you always have some patches in flower
Key flowers?	White clover: produces lots of nectar Bird's-foot-trefoil: feeds over 130 different invertebrates Selfheal: great for bumblebees
Hashtags?	#NoMowMay, #LetItBloomJune, #BloomingHighJuly

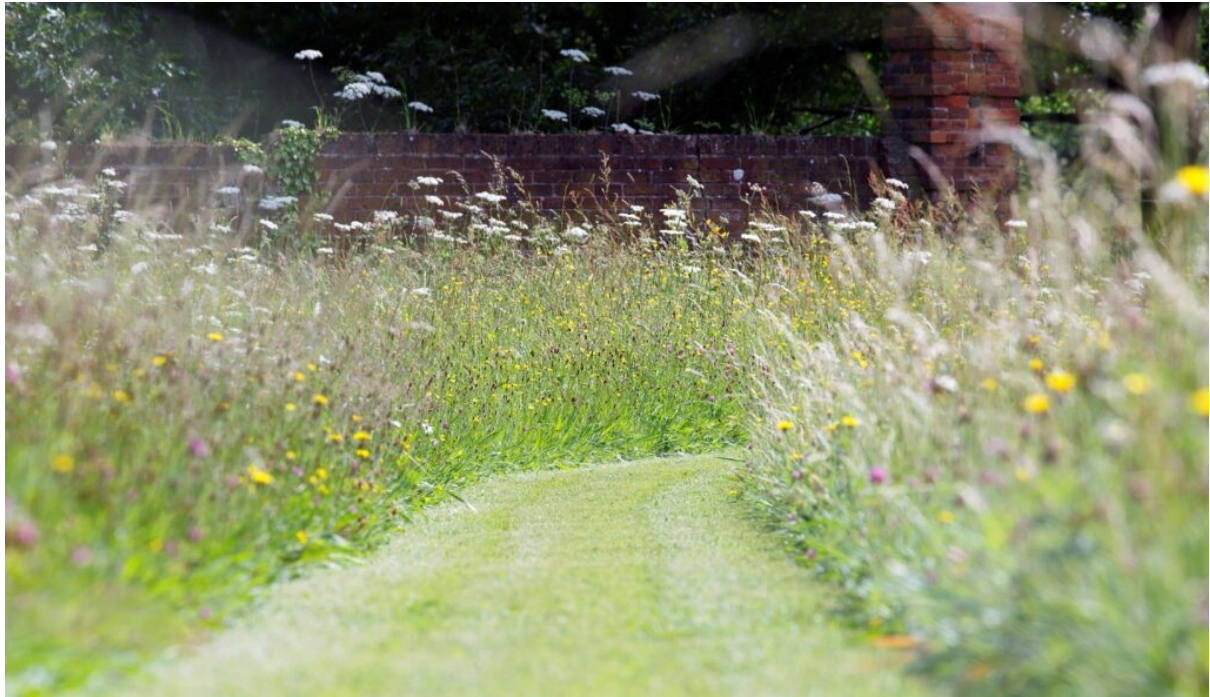


Long-grass areas

Longer grass left unmown from spring to autumn is home to a wider range of flowers, with tall plants like oxeye daisy, field scabious, red clover, knapweed and even orchids. These increase the range of nectar sources for different pollinators and extends nectar production well into autumn.

Long grass also provides valuable feeding material, shelter and nesting sites for many invertebrates.

How often?	Twice a year
When?	In September and again before Christmas
How?	First cut with a scythe, sheers or a strimmer (check for wildlife first!) Second cut with a lawnmower that collects the clippings that collects grass
How high?	Between 5 and 10 cm (2-4 inches)
CO ₂ savings?	359 kg CO ₂
Tips?	Spread hay from first cut on other areas of grass to transfer seeds and ino Leave some areas uncut all winter to provide habitat for insects and other
Key flowers?	Yellow rattle: nature's lawnmower helps keep grass short Oxeye daisy: long flowering season and packed with pollen and nectar Common knapweed: produces huge amounts of nectar in summer
Hashtags?	#NoMow, #LetItBloomJune, #BloomingHighJuly



But what will the neighbours say?

Embracing a wilder lawn is exciting, but can be challenging for some people. By separating long-grass areas with short-grass borders and paths, you can create a sort of “managed messiness” that shows the flowers are intentional and not down to neglect.

In addition, you can:

Put up signs showing you are part of Plantlife’s #NoMowMay campaign
Create a scaremow to show the longer grass is there for a reason
Have a chat with them – they might be keen to bring more wildlife into their garden too, or at least save many hours of mowing!



How to get more wild flowers in your lawn

There are some simple ways to increase the number and range of wild flowers in your lawn:

- Don't use herbicides or fertilizers as these both impact wild flowers. Avoid using moss killer as lawn moss can help wildflowers establish.
- Allow plants time to set seed before cutting so they increase naturally.
- Over time, more and more plants will arrive if you give them a chance, and seeing what 'pops-up' each year is one of the joys of reducing your mowing.
- Introduce yellow rattle – known as 'nature's lawnmower' – to long-grass areas as it reduces growth of grasses giving wildflowers more space to grow. Here's our comprehensive guide to growing yellow rattle.
- Introduce plug plants of suitable native perennial meadow flowers, preferably in the autumn. Cowslips, bird's-foot-trefoil, betony, oxeye daisy, selfheal and knapweed can all be added this way, along with many others.
- Sow seed of native perennial meadow flowers in patches of prepared soil in autumn. Remove the top few centimetres of turf from a small area, break up the soil a little with a fork and sprinkle the seed in the patch. Keep well watered if the soil is dry until established.

Join in the fun!

Thanks to campaigns such as No Mow May, the nation's mowing habits are changing. Before taking part in the 'Every Flower Counts' survey, the percentage of people...

- ...leaving their lawns unmown for a month (No Mow May) leapt from 15% in 2019 to 36% in 2020
- ...leaving their lawns unmown for the whole year more than doubled, from 10% to 21% in 2020
- ... cutting their lawns weekly or fortnightly dropped from 47% to just 16% in 2020

Less mowing can also have a dramatic effect on your CO₂ footprint:

Plantlife calculations show that if you normally spend an hour cutting your lawn every weekend, adopting #NoMowMay would cut your CO₂ footprint by 293kg per year and save you 24 hours mowing time. Yes, that's two whole days to do something more fun!

<https://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/>

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