

Kingston Wildlife Gardening Forum

On 19 June Dave Goulson, Professor of Biology at Sussex University and bestselling author, gave a talk on ***Saving Insects*** in the Parish Hall. Over 30 people attended, and we all found what he had to say very sobering. He explained the perilous state of insect life in Britain today and the importance of acting NOW to create good habitats for insects and to prevent further decline.

Dave told us about the great benefits being seen in terms of increased biodiversity at re-wilding projects such as Knepp. He also explained he is a great advocate of rewilding our gardens because if we all allowed our gardens to be a little wilder the combined benefit to insects would be very significant.

He outlined some of the things we can all do to prevent further biodiversity decline and support insects:

- Plant native plants in our gardens to support both pollinators and herbivorous insects (for example Marjoram, Viper's bugloss and Greater knapweed for pollinators and Cuckoo flower for caterpillars of Orange tip butterflies)
- Re-imagine weeds; dandelions, ragwort and thistles are all excellent for insects and could all have a place in our gardens.
- Stop using herbicides and pesticides. Garden Centre plants inevitably have high levels of pesticide on them.
- Re-consider using flea treatments for pets because the pesticides, which are banned for agricultural use, end up in rivers and destroy insects
- Allow our grass (lawns, verges) to grow longer to encourage a diversity of plants and food sources for insects.

Dave Goulson's widely available books such as *Gardening for Wildlife* and *Silent Earth* explain in far greater detail the crisis facing the insect population, its considerable detrimental effects, and what we can all do in our gardens and elsewhere. Dave Goulson set up the [Bumblebee Conservation Trust](#). £63.77 was donated by those attending the talk to The Bumblebee Conservation Trust.