

# What to do

Top tips for improving your churchyard for wildlife.

Every churchyard is different but here are some ideas on what you could do for wildlife:

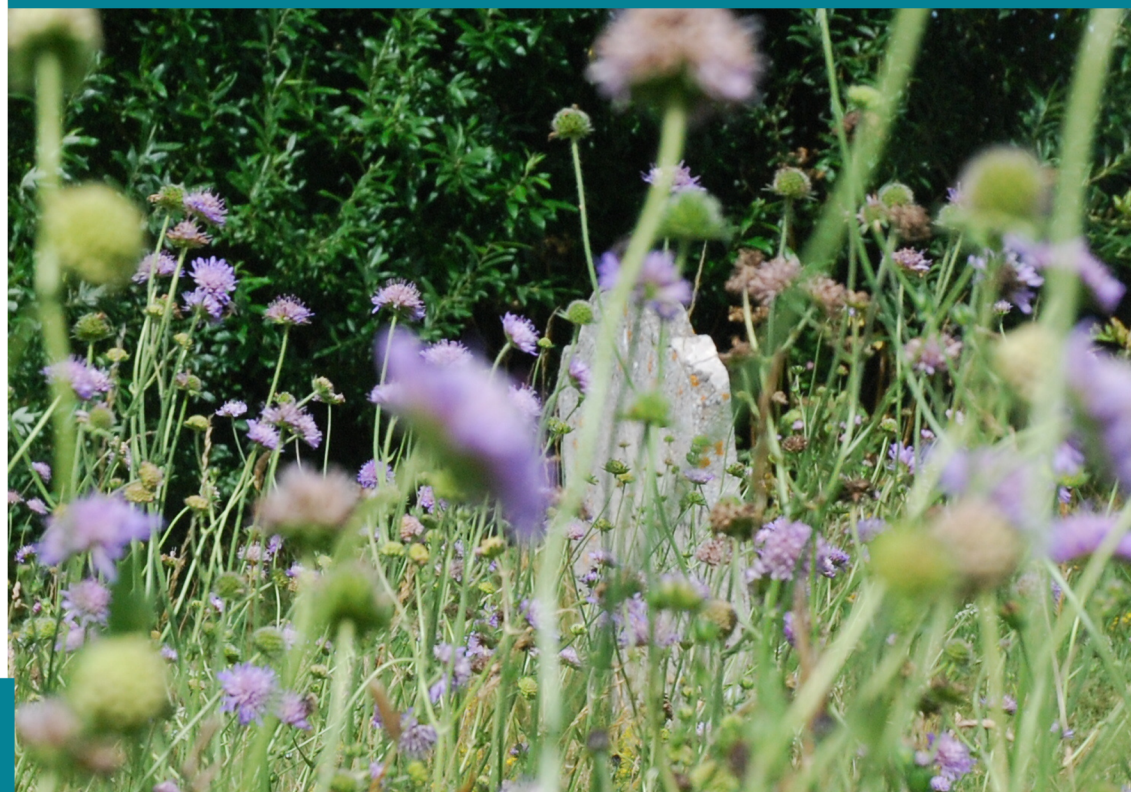
- Provide bird, bat and insect boxes plus log piles
- Build a compost heap – great for reptiles and small mammals
- Plant hedges – providing cover and winter berries for insects, birds and mammals
- Leave small plants, mosses and lichens on walls and monuments
- Think about any grassland areas you could cut differently – for example by removing grass cuttings from mown areas to encourage wildflower growth
- Plant herbs to attract butterflies, bees and other essential pollinators
- Plant trees for the future, keeping climate change in mind. Site them carefully and inspect them annually
- Maintain a list of plants and animals seen in the churchyard and make this available on a noticeboard for everyone to see
- Seek advice on surveying and caring for the churchyard



Wildlife Trust for  
**Beds, Cambs  
& Northants**

## Northamptonshire Churchyard Conservation Award Scheme

Patron: Bishop of Brixworth, The Rt. Revd. John Holbrook



[wildlifebcn.org/churchyards](http://wildlifebcn.org/churchyards)

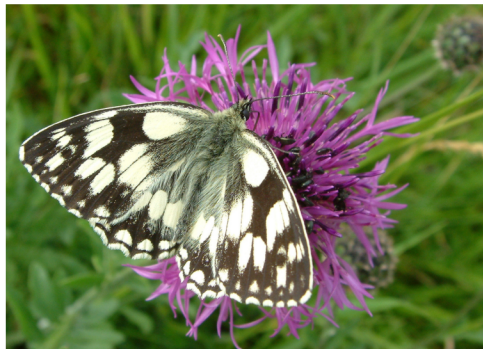


# Importance of Churchyards for Wildlife

Churchyards and graveyards can be havens for wildlife: many birds nest and feed in them, different wildflowers grow, and their trees are often an important feature of the village or town.

In addition churchyards play a significant role as part of the whole mosaic of important sites for wildlife across our three counties. Grassland habitats within churchyards are particularly important havens for wildlife, such as wildflowers, butterflies and insects and can often form the remaining fragments of old, unimproved, wildlife rich grasslands.

The Wildlife Trust encourages the management of churchyards for the conservation of their wildlife and believes this can be balanced with other values of peace and beauty which churchyards provide.



## Churchyard Conservation Award

The Wildlife Trust runs the Conservation Churchyard Award Scheme which aims to help people increase the wildlife of their churchyards. Any churchyard can request an advisory visit where we will provide information on how best to encourage wildlife in their churchyards.

They can then enter the scheme where there are Bronze, Silver and Gold awards that can be worked towards. All those that enter will receive a visit from our judges, a report with recommendations and also a plaque to be displayed in the churchyard. Each award lasts for three years.

## Getting started

However big or small, urban or rural your churchyard is it will have value for local wildlife. If you would like to enter the scheme or just want some advice about management, please contact us at The Wildlife Trust and we will arrange for an adviser to meet up with yourselves, answer your questions and give some advice.

### Gather a group

What skills do you have, what other groups could you involve i.e. scouts, schools, gardening clubs?

### Talk to people at your church

Explain your ideas, gain their support, who currently manages your churchyard, how and why?

### Look around

What wildlife already uses your churchyard, what else could you attract?

### Start small

Focus on a small area first, only take on as much as you can manage.

### Make a plan

Write up what you can do, when and why, then present it to your church.



### Contact us:

The Northants Churchyard Conservation Award Scheme,  
The Wildlife Trust BCN, The Manor House, Broad Street, Great Cambourne, CB23 6DH  
Registered Charity No. 1000412  
Telephone: (01604) 405285  
Email: [northamptonshire@wildlifebcn.org](mailto:northamptonshire@wildlifebcn.org)

### Further resources:

[wildlifebcn.org/churchyards](http://wildlifebcn.org/churchyards)  
[ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)  
[caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://caringforgodsacre.org.uk)