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POLLINATORS AND OTHER INVERTEBRATES

Leave or plant ivy as a food resource



Ivy is a useful nectar source at a time of year when other resources are in short supply. The blossom is visited by high numbers of bees, wasps, butterflies, and other important pollinators like hoverflies. Ivy's leaves, berries and structure are also important for a wide variety of wildlife.



Suitability	Low, medium and high density housing (where existing stands of Ivy are present that do not pose H&S concerns).
Management type	Maintaining important resources.
Supplier information	Consult your local Wildlife Trust for advice on suitable suppliers.
Community engagement?	Not really, although important to engage with residents about site management proposals and explain the ecological value of ivy.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An important nectar source at a time of year when other resources are in short supply. Ivy blossom is visited by high numbers of bees, butterflies, and other invertebrates, many of which are important pollinators (e.g. hoverflies). • Ivy is the single most important nectar source for the Ivy Bee, a colonial species of solitary bee that has now become well established in southern England. • The berries and foliage are important food for many animals with some species particularly associated with ivy (e.g. Holly Blue butterfly and numerous moth species). • Ivy stands provide good nesting sites for birds and important overwintering sites for invertebrates, such as the Brimstone butterfly, which spends the winter as adults hidden away from predators. • Ivy is a useful native screening plant being evergreen and provides shelter and cover during winter months.
Costs/Disbenefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial cost: Low • Ivy can be a H&S issue (e.g. heavy ivy loads on weakened or top-heavy trees can result in tree fall). There is a risk of damage from ivy to high value heritage assets, such as tombstones. You can consider planting the shrub variety <i>Hedera helix</i> 'Arborescens' to avoid any chance of damage.
Level of ongoing maintenance	Medium.

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		Notes
How achieved	<p>Careful management of ivy already present.</p> <p>Where there are no suitable structures for the climbing variety, we recommend planting the shrub variety <i>Hedera helix</i> 'Arborescens'.</p>	
Timing of activity	Any time.	
Long-term management	<p>Recommend limiting main ivy growth to lower standing structures and structures away from main buildings etc.</p> <p>Could even use purpose-built structures e.g. trellis (ivy screening).</p> <p>Cut back ivy on trees conservatively where total removal is not necessary.</p>	
Monitoring success	<p>General recording (see page 6).</p> <p>Invertebrate surveys – a butterfly timed count could be set up as part of the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme http://www.ukbms.org.</p> <p>Flower-Insect Timed (FIT) counts can be conducted as part of the National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS) https://www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring.</p>	