



Maintenance work in autumn

What is it about?

Fall maintenance activities should consider overwintering habitats for insects.

Recommendations for (parts of) gardens

Leave portions of „old“/faded vegetation to provide overwintering habitat. Faded stems should be retained until May of the year after next. Alternatively, stems can be „stored“ leaning upright or tied down in a less prominent/exposed location. If you discover pithy stems with boreholes, leave them in place throughout the summer as well. It is likely that special wild bees have taken up residence here.

Maintain old grass strips and/or „wild corners“ during the last cut and do not cut them again until June of the following year.

Leave a litter pad and/or place leaf piles in a targeted manner.

Do not cut back the entire hedge/woody structure at one time. Leave at least 1/3 of the structure until the next cut. Next winter, select another section of the hedge.



Background

Insects have very complex life cycles: many overwinter as eggs/pupae/caterpillars in cavities, (tall!) grass stands, vegetation-covered ground, or open sandy soils. Some also overwinter as adult insects. Therefore, dry and withered plant parts should be preserved at least partially and, if possible, permanently and at least through the winter.



Further recommendations

Autumn is also a particularly suitable planting time for (wild) perennials, native shrubs and trees. Early bloomers should also be planted before frost (see „Early bloomers“ measure sheet).

Improve the soil of the vegetable patch with diverse green manure and encourage insects at the same time. For this purpose, it is ideal if the green manure is sown in early autumn and remains as long as possible through the spring.

Do not forget about other animals in the garden: shelter for hedgehogs, quarters for amphibians and reptiles, winter birds...

