

Chat recorded for webinar 13th February 2024

Many affirmative comments and thanks edited out, and where possible answers or follow-up chat is associated with the initial question.

Francesca Martelli Interactions between pollinators and people

Dave: How did you decide which flowers were native?

Steve Head: Best data on non-natives species is Alien Plants:(Collins New Naturalist Library) 2015

Francesca Martelli: Here is one of the website I used to know if a plant is native or not (see the 'biogeography' section of each plant): <https://plantatlas2020.org/atlas>

Jenny Bourne: Flowers shown include dahlias - only single petal open flowers will attract pollinators, not double... was this factored in?

Maggie Zebroski: I see there were nearly double the amount of insects in allotment gardens. However, do you know if the allotments were organic and no chemical use as I wonder if perhaps more chemicals would be used in allotments, and this could have a detrimental effect on the visiting insects and their eggs and larvae? Thank you

Steve Head: Can't wait for the published paper - this is excellent work!

Dave: Did you collect ethnicity data from the owners of the plots?

Robin Frampton: Did you look at particular wildlife - for example did you find more amphibians in allotments or in gardens?

Charlotte: When collecting your data regarding the percentiles of native and non-native species did you find a significant difference on the ratio between allotments and residential gardens?

joe: I understand how there might be a relationship between SES and gardens (since this may affect how the garden is used / cared for), but I'm struggling a bit to understand why SES might affect biodiversity in allotments, which are more utilitarian by nature - places to grow food, essentially. Was this your hypothesis also?

joe: Related point - did you look at rented homes Vs owned homes? I think this could have a significant influence on how gardens are used/looked after.

Michelle Thomasson: Was there a spatial analysis of nearby green / park areas also taken into account (acting like a biodiversity reserve) for the allotments and gardens? Thank you

joe: I'm fascinated to know of any studies that track changing garden usage over time (esp the "extension of the living room" trend), and effects on biodiversity, if anyone knows of any good papers on this?

Mark Goddard: Good Q Joe, I can't think of anything off the top of my head but feel free to email me (mark.goddard@northumbria.ac.uk) and I'll see what I can find :)

Steve Head: We have data on garden size changes and eg replacement of lawns and front gardens with hard substrates eg https://www.wlgf.org/garden_resource.html

joe: Thanks - I'm exploring research topics for my Ecology MSc and this might be one of them! ☺

Jenny: Should I use seeds which have "packed in the UK" on the packet? There's no other info on the origin on the packet.

Judith Conroy: If you're enjoying tonight's talks, we have a final Winter Webinar on Monday 26th February, "The pollinator night-shift: helping moths in our towns and cities" from Emilie Ellis. Register here - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-pollinator-night-shift-helping-moths-in-our-towns-and-cities-tickets-776378337507?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Aisling Pugsley: I am based in Northern Ireland and many wildlife gardeners are using the All Ireland Pollinator Plan. Although it is focused on the island of Ireland, many of you might find the website useful <https://pollinators.ie/>

Tomos Jones How can gardeners stop the spread of invasive species?

Alison Marsden: Do you consider named cultivars of *Buddleja davidii* e.g. different coloured ones to be invasive as well? they do not seem to set seed like the species.

David Riddle: the seeds of cultivars will not come true. as seed dispersed as a result of sexual reproduction the seedlings will be varied. Natural selection will favour those that have adaptations to allow them to thrive. bright red and deep purple cultivars characteristics are likely to be less favourable than pale blue which will become more common.

Susan: Is there an unbiased reliable resource/list of invasives to avoid? Even looking for information on *davidii*, different websites will be in favour or out of favour with it for example.

Tomos Jones: Garden without harmful plants:

https://www.nonnativespecies.org/assets/Apha_garden_booklet_AW_proof1.pdf

joe: Interesting stuff. Don't we need to support new plant species to spread up from Europe, say, as the climate changes so rapidly? As I understand it, the climate is changing much faster than most plants can naturally migrate so translocations may become necessary...

Steve Head: This is important and I don't think people are talking about it. "Native status" can be blinkering.

David Riddle: Are there hot spots for garden plants escaping. Leaving on the edge of a town next to farmers fields dumping of garden waste is an obvious one. Also Kayaking down rivers I notice many escapees I assume spread by flooding.

Hilary May: Is there a link for plant alert?

Judith Conroy: Plant Alert website - <https://plantalert.org/>

Steve Head: Given the huge climatic shift, can we suggest an appropriate flora for Wales in 2070 - ignoring native/non native issues?

Susan: Are garden centres still allowed to sell the harmful non natives?

Helen Bostock WLGf: A list of invasive plants that are regulated can be found at <https://www.rhs.org.uk/prevention-protection/invasive-non-native-plants>

Nigel Jennings: How big a problem is the hybridisation of wild natives with cultivars e.g. English bluebells and Spanish bluebells

Steve Head: Not as big a problem as we feared - see Ruhsam et al 2023

<https://nph.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ppp3.10387>

Tomos Jones: For how gardeners define and understand the term invasive please see:

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1462901123002630?ref=pdf_download&fr=RR-2&rr=854f72751bec23b1

joe: Have you read "The New Wild, Why Invasive Species will be Nature's Salvation" by Fred Pearce? Yes, it's pop science, but he makes an interesting argument that fear/threat of invasives is vastly exaggerated, and they may even help drive/speed up evolution - most invasives either fizzle out, are harmless, or help drive evolutionary development. Not saying I agree but it's an interesting read! (I think if our native biodiversity was in a stronger, healthier state. he'd have a stronger argument).

joe: Sorry, I should say most exotics don't become invasive.

Nigel Jennings: Joe, a recent edition of Rare Earth on Radio 4 touched on this topic.

joe: oh good thanks. I heard the earlier episode about should humans just leave nature to get on with it. Will have to listen to the invasives episode!

Judith Conroy: Thank you so much for your support this evening and thanks also to our super speakers.

For a wealth of Wildlife Gardening information, check out our website <https://www.wlgf.org/> and for our final webinar (moths! 🦋), register here - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-pollinator-night-shift-helping-moths-in-our-towns-and-cities-tickets-776378337507?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>