



LAWN SPECIES OF THE DAY



Here is a little bit of information about a few garden species that are found in lawn habitats.



DANDELIONS are more diverse than you might realise! There are actually around **150 species** currently found in the UK with differences spotted in the flowers, leaves and other features. You can find out more about this [here](#). If you are able to identify which species of dandelion occur in your lawn that's brilliant, if not you can record any dandelion as '*Taraxacum officinale agg.*' This means that it could be any one of those 150 species. Dandelions are great plants for **pollinators** so letting them grow is one easy way to make your garden a wildlife haven. We hold **1825** dandelion records from the last 10 years.

ANTS are members of the insect group 'Hymenoptera' which also includes bees and wasps. There are over **30 species of UK ant** but **BLACK GARDEN ANTS** are one of the most common. This species commonly turns up in gardens where they might nest under slabs, in soil or in lawns. They live in colonies with **one queen** who can live up to 15 years! UK ants are **hard to identify** so it's tricky to know if you've definitely got this species or a similar one. We hold very few ant records at all – with a total of only **184** from the last 10 years, perhaps highlighting how tricky they are to ID!



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The UK is home to many types of **BUTTERCUP** with 3 common and similar species being Creeping buttercup, Bulbous buttercup and Meadow Buttercup. **CREeping BUTTERCUP** is the species most likely to be seen in lawns and spreads across them using **runners**. It can be distinguished from the other 2 species by looking at the shape of the leaves and is the only 1 of the 3 to have sepals pointing upwards and a furrowed stalk. We hold **6515** Creeping Buttercup records (since 2010), making it by far our **most recorded buttercup!**

WOOD MICE are thought to be our most common UK rodent! Look out for **big ears and eyes** compared to a house mouse. Wood mice are **nocturnal** so they could well be scampering across your lawn each night without you realising it. They're **omnivores**, foraging on all sorts including seeds, berries, buds and invertebrates. They might collect **grass from lawns** to build nests, which are usually hidden away in underground burrows. We have **396** wood mouse records since 2010 putting it within our top 20 most recorded mammals.





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TAWNY MINING BEES are one of the easiest **spring-flying** solitary bees to ID. They're found in **many habitats** March - June, particularly gardens and parks. They frequently **nest in lawns**, preferring shorter vegetation and being one of a few species to create 'soil volcanoes'. They love feeding on lawn plants like dandelions and buttercups as well as others like hawthorn or fruit trees. Females are easiest to spot and ID: they're the size of a honey bee, with long, **thick orange/red hair** on their thorax and dense but slightly lighter orange hair on their abdomen. They also have black hair on their faces, legs and undersides. In comparison, **males are much slimmer** and smaller with brown, less dense hair and a white moustache. We hold **174 records** of this species since 2010.

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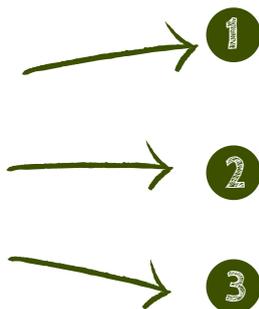
RIBWORT PLANTAIN can be found in a variety of **grassy habitats** including cultivated ground and tracks, road verges, hedge banks, field edges and grasslands but also appears in lawns. You can see it flowering from April until October. Its stem is **thin and wiry** and it looks like it's balancing its short, oval flowerhead on top! Hoverflies, moths and small butterflies can often be seen **feeding its flower heads**. In winter, its seed heads are an ideal food source for birds such as Goldfinches. When not in flower, you can identify it by its **spear-shapes leaves** forming a rosette at the base of the plant. We hold 1488 records of this species since 2010.



SONG THRUSHES belong to the same family as **blackbirds** and have a similar body shape but different colouration. You might notice them on your garden lawn looking for their favourite food- **earthworms!** In winter, when the ground's too hard to be picking earthworms and other invertebrates out, they **break snails open** by smashing them against stone surfaces, which is a **unique behaviour**. So if you find a pile of empty shells you might have song thrushes visiting your garden. Listen out too for their **beautiful, loud song** comprised of repeating phrases. We hold **2429 song thrush records** (last 10 years).

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For the **#MyPatch** campaign we're looking for any records of **garden wildlife, or wildlife seen out your window**. There are a few ways you can send us this information...



1 Sign up to iNaturalist and become a member of the project. Add observations through the app or website and any which fit the criteria will automatically be added to the campaign

2 Email us with what you've seen: info@record-irc.co.uk. Make sure you include all the details. Or send us paper records.

3 If you already use Rodis, iRecord or other recording platforms you can carry on with these if you'd like and we will pick up your records as we normally do

