The Verges Restoration Project

All Stretton verge

What is the verge providing for invertebrates ?

FOOD – Nectar/pollen, plant material (all of the plant!), prey

SHELTER

BREEDING HABITAT

OVER WINTERING HABITAT

LINK/OASIS

Butterflies

Associated species

You need to think of the larval stages as well as the adults

Grass feeders – various grasses, fine and course

Nettles – not what is considered desirable, but foodplant to some of the most common and recognisable species

Bird’s Foot trefoil Common blue
Sheep sorrel Small copper
Lady’s smock Orange tip

Over winters as a caterpillar in the last generation
On the plant or in vegetation around

Most commonly found on bird's foot trefoil – luxurious growth

Male Orange Tip.

This species overwinters as a chrysalis

Lady’ smock

Hedge garlic (jack by the hedge

GRASS FEEDERS

Gatekeeper
especially around hedgerows

Meadow brown

Ringlet

Skippers

Meadow brown
Overwinters as a caterpillar in grass clumps

Meadow grasses
Bents
Rye grasses

Nettle Feeders

Comma

Peacock

Small tortoiseshell

Red admiral

Nectar feeding insects

Flowers - what most insects are looking for !

Open – simple, flat –easy access – short tongue

Tubular – more difficult to reach nectar – longer tongue

Bees and Wasps

AND not including ants, parasitic species, sawflies

Nectaring Bees and Wasps (energy from sugars)
Foraging Bees. Social and solitary - collecting pollen
HUNTING Wasps. Social and solitary

Nesting – in/on the ground of the verges

Hedgerows.
Woodland.
Gardens.

Close by or running alongside add to potential nesting (aerial nesters) sites and foraging opportunities.

Social wasps
Social or cuckoo
Ground or aerial nesters

Bumblebees
Social (or cuckoo)
Ground or aerial nesters
Under ground or on the surface

Louise Hislop
BWARS website

Andrena cineraria
A. fulva
A. labiata

Solitary mining bees

Short turf and bare ground are the main nesting areas

Buff-tailed bumblebee, *Bombus terrestris*
Queens very large and common in early spring. Workers have largely white tail, but usually with a hint of buff at the front margin. Yellow bands slightly darker/dirtier than in the white-tailed bumblebee

Early bumblebee, *Bombus pratorum*
A small bee, often nesting in tit-boxes. The yellow band on the abdomen is sometimes missing in females. Colonies are very short-lived, producing males as early as April. Rarely seen from July onwards

Common carder bee, *Bombus pascuorum*
Abundant everywhere, the only common all-brown bumblebee. Can generally be distinguished from the much rarer brown-banded carder by the presence of some black hairs on the sides of the abdomen

White-tailed bumblebee, *Bombus lucorum*
A common bee, often nesting under garden sheds. Distinguished from the similar buff-tailed bumblebee by pure-white tails and lemon yellow bands

Red-tailed bumblebee, *Bombus lapidarius*
Very common on chalk downland, frequent in gardens. Distinguish from the much rarer red-shanked carder bee by black hairs of pollen basket on hind legs

Garden bumblebee, *Bombus hortorum*
A very long-tongued species preferring deep flowers (e.g. foxgloves, *Delphinium,* honeysuckle). Distinguished from the generally smaller heath bumblebee by much longer face when viewed from the front.

Cutting of the verges

Vary timing if possible!

Leave awkward to get to areas – rough areas provide overwintering sites

Undesirable plants can be beneficial - nettles, hogweed, ragwort, bramble.

If there is a hedgerow adjacent…. Game on!
Providing - shelter – over wintering sites – different habitat

Gardens – provide very early nectar/pollen

Bugs – Hermiptera

Suckers – a bug is a bug is a bug!

Ground bugs

Assassin and Damsel bugs - predatory

Shield bugs – both herbivorous and predatory

Flower bugs – predatory – feeding on aphids

Mirid or Capsid bugs – herbivorous – a variety of plants found in verges

Frog hoppers – larvae live in froth! Cuckoo spit

Leaf hoppers – a number feed on grasses

Bed bugs

Aphids !

Hairy Shieldbug

Nymph to adult
No pupation as in a number of other insects

Shrubs but also nettles, plantains, buttercups

Over winters as adult

Bishop’s Mitre.

Grass feeder

Hoverflies, etc!

Left to right

Great pied hoverfly
V.pellucens

Marmalade hoverfly
Episyrphus balteatus

Scaeva pyrastri

All photos
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British Naturalists Ass

Photos taken from

BWARS website

Butterfly Conservation website

British Bugs

British Naturalists website