

Animals and plants used in Not Alone

European nettle tree

This tree can be found in woods, meadows, on riverbanks and cliffs, as well as in urban and suburban areas. It can reach up to 20-25 metres tall and can live up to 1,000 years. Its fruits provide a food source for birds and mammals, also attract bees and butterflies. It can store 3,660 kg of CO₂ in 30 years (if in town) and 5,070 kg of CO₂ in 50 years (if in the park). It has a potential absorption of gaseous pollutants and is able to collect a high volume of dust. This tree also provides shade, thereby keeping street and building surfaces cooler.

Pipistrelle

This bat species is the one that you are most likely to see very, especially in cities. It can also be found in parks and forests. Their summer and winter roosts can be found in cracks on the outside of buildings. It's a small mammal weighing 3g - 8g and able to fly. It appears fast in flight, usually catching and eating prey on the wing. This bat feeds on mosquitoes, small moths and other insects, helping to keep insect populations in check. A single pipistrelle can consume up to 3,000 insects in one night. Populations of pipistrelles have declined dramatically in the last few decades.

Norway maple

The Norway maple occurs in both coniferous and mixed deciduous forests. It's a tall, fast-growing tree, that can grow up to 25-30 metres, well adapted to a range of growing conditions. It can store 4,807 kg of CO₂ in 30 years (if in town) and 6,601 kg of CO₂ in 50 years (if in the park). It has a potential absorption of gaseous pollutants and can be used to alleviate soil erosion. This tree can help to keep street and building surfaces cooler.

Hedgehog

This small mammal can be found in fields, hedgerows, urban and suburban areas, especially in home gardens, cemeteries and parks. Hedgehogs are moving into our towns and cities due to the pesticide use on farms that reduces the number of insects and worms making them compete with badgers for food. Gardens provide hedgehogs with plenty of food and many potential nest sites. Hedgehogs are omnivorous, meaning they can eat a variety of food but predominantly feed on insects and other invertebrates such as slugs, snails and earthworms. An adult can easily eat up to 200g of insects in one night.

Red clover

Red clover can be found in dry grasslands, brownfield sites and coastal. This plant has a long flowering period and requires low maintenance. Its flowers are dark pink and are a great nectar source especially for long-tongued bumblebee species. This plant can purify atmospheric air from carbon dioxide through photosynthesis. Red clover is valued for its nitrogen fixation, which increases soil fertility. Red clover will establish well in the dry, shallow soils and low nutrient environments on an extensive green roof. Plants in green roofs remove heavy metals, airborne particles and volatile organic compounds.



White stonecrop

This plant is specially adapted for growing on thin dry soils and can be found on walls, dry banks, seashore rocks and in rocky meadows. The flowers are white with a hint of pink and the leaves are shaped like jelly beans. Sedum plants have been shown to have benefits for spiders and honey bees, amongst other invertebrates, by providing microclimates. White stonecrop can remove greenhouse gases from the air through photosynthesis. It's possible to install green roofs only made of sedum mat systems. This can significantly reduce the surface run-off of rainfall, the need for air conditioning and can provide a degree of insulation in winter.

House sparrow

This small bird can be found in urban and rural areas. It weighs between 24 to 39.5 g and its plumage is grey and brown. Sparrows mostly feed on seeds, but they're opportunistic, this means they'll eat whatever foods are available. They have the potential to be valuable 'bioindicators' of the toxic effects of air pollution, including heavy metals pollution, meaning they are great indicators of air quality. In summer, House sparrows eat insects and feed them to their young. They also feed on seeds, contributing to the seed dispersal. Nowadays, their population has been on the decline over much of its natural range.

Honeysuckle

Honeysuckles are valued as garden plants, for their ability to cover walls and outbuildings. Since they're climbers, they can be used in living walls. This plant can suck up pollution particles from the air because it grows tiny particle-absorbing hairs on its stem, leaves, and flowers. Many insects visit honeysuckles as a food source, especially moths at night. It also attracts loads of spiders and insects and provides nesting opportunities for sparrows.

Barn swallow

Barn swallow's preferred habitat is pasture, meadows and farmland, but they're also found in urban and suburban areas. It's the most widespread species of swallow in the world. Its plumage is blue, white and red. They do aerial acrobatics when chasing prey in flight. They act as pest control since they eat an average of 850 insects per day, mainly flies but also mosquitoes, beetles, wasps, crickets, ants, etc. Insects are their main food source and they have benefited from human-made structures.

Western honey bee

Honey bees are found to inhabit temperate forests, grasslands and even semi-deserts. The Western honey bee is the most common of all the honey bee species. Its colours can vary, the body is black or brown intermixed with yellow. They live in groups, called colonies, a colony can consist of 50,000 animals. It's considered to be one of the most important pollinators of crops and other plant species. A typical colony will visit 225,000 flowers per day. They are important to humans because they act as environmental indicators and also provide honey.