

No Mow May



As a child, in summer months, I remember going on long drives with my father and him occasionally having to pull over into a layby because visibility had become so poor as a result of insects being squashed against the windscreen. He would grumble about the plague of creepy crawlies and flying things that had meant us having to stop to wash the window because it was too unsafe to drive. I can still hear him telling me that of all the creatures on the planet the insects would outlive everything else. He believed they were indestructible. How wrong he was. Over the last twenty years, flying insects have declined by 60% in the UK. As an adult, I have never had to stop my car to clear the windscreen of dead flies.

Overuse of pesticides and the loss of habitat has impacted heavily on the decline of insect life. We have yet to fully understand the consequences of climate change, but what we do know is that biodiversity is under threat and that what threatens biodiversity threatens all of us. Bugs matter. They matter because they are a primary link in helping everything else that grows to flourish. Put very simply, without bees and other insect pollinators our capacity to grow the variety of food that we do would seriously diminish.

Christian teaching has always emphasised the importance of good stewardship. Almighty God has given the human race the capacity to take responsibility for good husbandry, ensuring that the planet is cared for in such a way as to be a blessing to everyone and all living things. The need to care for creation is now more than ever at the forefront of our thinking as we have come to appreciate the importance of each one of us striving to do our best to care for our planet home.

Since the 1930s Britain has lost 97% of its wildflower meadows. In 2014 a UK charity that promotes wildflowers, plants and fungi, Plantlife came up with the idea of encouraging people to stop mowing their lawns throughout the month of May by way of helping to redress the balance. 'No Mow May' has now become a national movement with more than a million participants helping to give bees and butterflies some much-needed habitat space in backyards and front gardens. It's a good cause that anyone with a garden can share in. Even leaving a small corner or the edges of a lawn uncut for four weeks can make a significant difference, providing a rich food source for insects. And what's good for insects is good for us. You can find out more online at <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/>

Bugs matter. Let's do our best to look after them!

God Bless.

Revd Mark Bailey