



Useful Animals for the Garden

Gardeners like a good harvest from what they sow; for that reason, they fight every summer against slugs, spider mites, aphids, scale insects and other pests. In this tug-of-war, one must never lose sight that weapons, such as pesticides, are often not very selective and kill all insects present.

We propose that you stop spraying pesticides and, instead, count on the brigade of useful animals in the garden who will assist you to control the pests. Many animals, small and large, will feast on the banquet; and the environment, your health and your palate will thank you.

In order to recognize the useful animals, please find below the description of some of them.

Mammals

Bats devour tons of insects every night. Hedgehogs feed on slugs, grubs, caterpillars and mice, but also on a variety of fruit.

Moles and shrews eat slugs, snails and insects. These animals are protected; they do not cause damage in the garden, as they make their underground tunnels around the roots of plants. The mole that is protected by law loosens garden soil.

Birds

Blackbirds, starlings, and sparrows feed on worms and insects. Sparrows additionally eat seeds of weeds. Tits, robins and finches take care of aphids, caterpillars, scale insects and larvae.



Amphibians and Reptiles

Snakes, lizards, toads and frogs feast on slugs, insects and worms.



Insects and Spiders

Larvae of lacewings and ladybugs eat between 200 and 600 aphids during their few weeks of existence. Also, as adults, their diet consists mainly of aphids and scale insects; the lacewings also eat spider mites and other insects.

Ground beetles prefer to eat caterpillars, click beetles and their larvae (wireworms), slugs and snails, as well as aphids, scale insects and mites. Earwigs eat, as well, a multitude of pests. Spiders are remarkable hunters and won't miss insects in the garden.

All these animals are ready to help you combat the enemies of your crops; you must simply make your garden attractive to wildlife by having a wide diversity of plants. A thin layer of mulch also provides them with a favorable microclimate. Piles of dead wood, branches, leaves and stones in the corners of your garden are favorable environments for many animals.

Nesting boxes invite birds and bats to make their home there.

To preserve the wildlife in the garden, you must avoid the over-use of pesticides.



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