

Certain animals can actually make your garden grow

Planning and maintaining a garden requires a lot of effort,

which can result in an aesthetically pleasing addition to the land-

scape. But that hard work can also fall victim to nature when local wildlife find a garden too mouth-watering to resist.

In an effort to rid a garden of unwanted pests, gardeners may unwittingly scare away animals and insects that might just protect the garden from more ill-intentioned animals. Not every creature that scurries is out to get prized petunias or to devour



Several animals are handy to have around and should be welcomed to the landscape.

tomatoes. In fact, many can prove beneficial to gardens.

Helpful and harmful insects

Gardeners grow frustrated when seeing their gardens infested with insects. In an effort to restore their gardens, homeowners might be tempted to eradicate any bug that moves in their yards. But gardeners would be wise to first learn which insects are hurting their gardens and which can actually help gardens in the long run.

HARMFUL
Certain insects can be dangerous to animals and plants.

APHIDS: These insects suck on the juice needed to sustain plants, particularly when they congregate.

BALD-FACED HORNET: Hornets tend to be an aggressive species that can sting repeatedly. Should you find a nest near an entertaining space or garden, it can cause trouble.

CARPENTER ANTS: These ants will burrow into wood causing damage. They may compromise any wooden structure.

RED PAVEMENT ANT: As they feed on all manner of human food, these ants can quickly overtake areas and deliver painful bites.

GRASSHOPPERS: Certain grasshoppers, like the red-legged grasshopper, can decimate food crops and transfer parasites to birds when eaten as prey.

CATERPILLARS: Many caterpillars will feed on leaves, stems and other parts of plants. The tobacco hornworm moth caterpillar can damage potato and tomato plants.

HELPFUL
Plants depend on insects to transfer pollen as they forage. While some pollinate, others are predators of other pests.

BIG DIPPER FIREFLY: These colorful insects feast on earthworms, slugs and snails during the larval stage.

GARDEN SPIDERS: Although some spiders can be venomous, many are handy to have around. They'll help control pest populations that can damage plants.

DRAGONFLIES: These arial artists are consuming smaller insects that would otherwise pester plants and humans.

BLUE-WINGED WASP: This wasp attacks the larvae of Japanese beetles, helping to control beetle populations.

BEES AND BUTTERFLIES: Butterflies and bees are some of the best pollinators and can add whimsy to gardens.

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