

Establish a small wildflower meadow

Watch the video by arborist Guy Horwood via this link: [meadow video](#)

Follow the steps below to establish a small wildflower meadow, less than an acre

Step 1 - Remove weeds

One year prior to establishing a wildflower meadow, remove the weeds by rotavating the allocated area. Then, rake the area to level it out.

Step 2 - Sow your seeds

Seeds can be bought in or brush-harvested from another meadow. You can sow your seeds anytime throughout the winter months.

- Check that your seed mix includes yellow rattle, which will reduce the dominance of grasses and enable other wildflowers to prosper.

Seeds can be either sowed by hand or you can use a grass-seed-dispenser which will help spreading the seeds evenly. Another tip is to mix in your seeds with sawdust to top up the volume of your seed mix and help distributing the seeds evenly.

Put on your football boots and walk over the soil to insert your seeds, replicating the hooves of cattle stamping in the wildflower seeds in a meadow. Your children or neighbours might be able to help with that by inviting them over for a game of football!

Step 3 - Weed

It is difficult to drop nutrient levels in small spaces so keep on top of weeding. Generally, weeding by hand is most effective.

Step 4 - Regrow

July/August: cut back the wildflower meadow, using a lawnmower or strimmer. Then, rake off the arisings and let the wildflowers and grass regrow.

Step 5 - Establish more wildflowers

September/October: after the wildflowers have set seed and dropped their seeds, have another football session (step 2) to insert the seeds. This is especially important to yellow rattle seeds as they won't establish otherwise.

Repeat and alternate

To keep as much diversity as you can, try to alternate the processes listed as follows:

- Wildflowers compete so alternate the months when you mow and regrow. Sometimes in July, other times in August or September.
- Alternate the time when you you insert more wildflowers (step 5).
- Every three years, don't cut the grass to give the wildflower meadow a bit of a rest.

The first three years are usually the most labour-intensive. Once the yellow-rattle is established, you are basically there.