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# An ecological flower bed for insects

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The "StadtGrün" service of the department for green spaces of Trier has for some time been offering opportunities to participate in "StadtGrün Workshops", which aim at the conservation of natural spaces in the city. In 2020, a large flower bed (about 300 m<sup>2</sup>) was laid out in front of the house I live in.

The owner of the house, a housing cooperative, asked me and other tenants if we wanted to take care of the maintenance of this flowerbed. Together with some of the residents, we are now making efforts to keep this flowerbed in bloom in two aspects. As I am professionally active in nature conservation, I was asked to write an article about this "ecological flower bed" for the neighborhood newspaper, to motivate the population of northern Trier and to explain why it is necessary to create and maintain nature-friendly spaces for insects (you will find hereunder an excerpt from this article).

In this flowerbed were mainly planted plants that serve as food for insects. These insects include wild bees, bumblebees, butterflies, dragonflies and beetles. For years now, more and more insects have been threatened with extinction. There are many reasons for this, such as the concreting of the land, the creation of private gardens that are hostile to a natural grow of plants, agricultural toxins, hyper-fertilization and the fact that many landscapes that have been depleted of small biotopes such as hedges, path edges and flowering meadows.

## **Why should we protect insects?**

Insects provide our food. Wild bees are extremely important! We need them and other insects to pollinate our plants. Nearly 90% of all plants depend, at least partially, on insects for reproduction. Many crops that are important for human food depend on this pollinating action. So, it is not only for its honey that man has been keeping bees for centuries. Worker bees of a single hive can visit two to three million flowers a day.

But insects are not only taking care of our food. They are the food base for countless other animals. 60% of the birds in our country eat mainly insects. Many other birds catch insects to feed their young, at least during the brooding period. Insects are also the main food for bats, spiders and many amphibians.

In addition, the colorful flower beds are beautiful to look at ... And thanks to flower beds, children have the opportunity to discover wild plants, to observe birds, butterflies, dragonflies or ladybugs.

And finally, as we face the climate changes, the flowerbeds also contribute to a healthier urban climate.