How to Make a Bug Hotel (STEP BY STEP)

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This blog will show you how to make a bug hotel using a gabion basket. Just follow the step-by-step instructions below to create a shelter for the little back garden creatures.



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Step-by-Step Instructions

OVERVIEW

- **Experience Required:** Low
- **Tools Required:** Protective Gloves
- **Materials Required:** Gabion Basket (45cm x 45cm), Helicoil Corner Kit (Pack of 2) or Cable Ties, Logs, Pinecones, Twigs, Compost, Bamboo, Bark, Dead Woods, Twigs, Plant Pots, Hay, Straw, Dry Leaves, Bricks, Cardboard, Tiles

Step 1) Materials and Their Purposes



- **Logs, pinecones and twigs:** create a perfect habitat for creepy crawlies that thrive in dark, woody environments.
- **Compost:** serves as a food source for beasts like earthworms and mites and should be placed at the base of the shelter.
- **Bamboo:** its hollows offer solitary bees, bumblebees, and wasps suitable sites for nesting, egg-laying, and hiding.
- **Bark, dead woods and twigs:** offer hiding places and food sources for beetles, especially in urban areas.
- **Plant Pots:** filled with hay, straw, or leaves make excellent shelters for snails and beasties and keep them dry.
- **Hay, straw, and dry leaves:** offer warmth and protection for ladybugs, during colder weather.
- **Bricks:** provide additional nesting opportunities for mini beasts like bees.
- **Cardboard:** provides insulation, nesting material, protection, and moisture retention for a variety of species.
- **Tiles**: serve as ideal roofing materials, preventing water from entering the minibeast house.

Step 2) Attach the Corners



- Fold the four side panels up from the base.
- Use tying wire or helicoil to attach the corners. If these aren't available, cable ties or rope can serve the same purpose.
- Twist the helicoil into place, ensuring they secure the corners of both panels.

Step 3) All Sides Assembled



- Once you have assembled all sides, leave the top lid hanging open.

Step 4) Fill the Gabion Basket



- Start filling the basket with the materials collected, aiming to construct nooks, crannies, crevices, and tunnels.

Step 5) Finish Filling in



- Add all the materials you have gathered.

Step 6) Close the Lid



- Close the lid, ensuring it sits comfortably on the fillings without any gaps.
- Secure the top around the edges with the helicoils, using the same technique as before.

Step 7) Add a Roof to the Bug Hotel



- Make sure to add a roof to protect your building from bad weather.

Step 8) Attract Pollinators to Your Bug Hotel



- Your gabion bug hotel is now ready! Additionally, you can add flowers to the top to attract pollinators.

Video

Video: Watch the video on YouTube

Tips and Tricks

Now you have learned how to make a bug hotel, here are some tips and suggestions to attract even more beneficial insects to your garden!

- Create a “sky bar” by adding flowers to the top of your mini guest house to create a welcoming environment for pollinators. In this article by The Wildlife Trusts you can learn more about which flowers are the best nectar cafes for them.
- Place the elements horizontally to help creepy crawlies move easily between them.
- Avoid using harmful materials like toxic paints or substances that could harm your guests.
- If you don’t have helicoil, rope or cable ties can be used to attach the gabion corners.
- Periodically check and clean your building to remove debris and ensure it remains a safe and comfortable habitat.
- Provide a nearby water source such as a shallow dish filled with pebbles or rocks to offer drinking spots for small creatures.

Further Reading

Build a minibeast hotel

A well-built insect house can provide hideaways for various minibeasts while also offering shelter to hedgehogs and toads. You can learn more about this by reading the RSPB's in-depth guide.

Simple Bug Hotel for Kids

Sure, you might find fancier ideas out there, but sometimes, simple is best—especially if it means creating fun memories with kids. If you're looking for simple ideas, check out Red Ted Art's tutorial.

How to make a tin can bug hotel

Our back gardens require our care and protection, and it is vital to educate our children about their significance, Backyard Nature offers a simple old tin house tutorial, it's a perfect activity to teach kids about the world around them.

Build A Bug Hotel From Your Recycling

In this article by Lukeosaurus And Me you'll discover how to use recycled tin cans to recreate a bug's natural habitat. Building a beastie house will help increase the number of beneficial insects visiting your back garden.

Make a simple bug hotel

You can help the mini beasts in their vital work by providing a place to hide and hibernate, even if you don't have a garden. You can enhance your balcony with a simple shelter, created by Thrive.

How to attract insects to your garden

In addition to shelters, there are numerous methods available for enticing wildlife to your garden. This article by Kew Gardens explores other approaches.

Beneficial Insects & How to Attract Them

This article by Gem The Mother Cooker explores the importance of beneficial beasts and offers guidance on how to attract them to your garden with practical tips and insights to create a hospitable environment for these helpful creatures.

Beneficial Insects in the Garden

The Almanac's article not only provides a formal introduction to the diverse array of beneficial beasts possibly inhabiting your back garden but also offers insights into how you can attract them to your outdoor space.

Beneficial Insects: Nature's Pest Control

Garden Design offers valuable insights into identifying and attracting beneficial beasties to your garden in this article. It lists the importance of pollinators, predatory insects, and parasitoid insects, highlighting their diverse roles beyond pest control.