

# Your Buzzing Garden!

## February

While February is still often a slow time for most invertebrates, towards the end of the month the first signs of spring will start to show as early wildflowers emerge and insects in diapause begin to leave their dormant state. This month's guide features a few important detritivores and decomposers, organisms that break down organic material and return nutrients to the soil. Decomposers are an essential part of any healthy garden, so keep an eye out for some of these this month!



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**Common drone hoverfly (*Eristalis tenax*)** - This hoverfly is a convincing mimic of a honeybee in both appearance and movement, and can be found in gardens across the UK. As a honeybee mimic, these hoverflies can be identified by the thick cross on the top of their abdomen and their enlarged back legs.



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**Hedgehog slug (*Arion intermedius*)** - This small slug, which is active all year, has small tubercles along its body, giving it a spiky appearance for which it is named. It eats dead plants and fungi, so look for it in the damp corners of your garden.



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**Green meshweb spider (*Nigma walckenaeri*)** - This spider has become widespread in south-east England and is often found on the leaves of ivy and holly, where the female spends its day under a silk web. The species matures later than most other spiders, meaning both males and females can be found all year round.



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**Common woodlouse (*Oniscus asellus*)** - This common arthropod is an important detritivore, feeding on dead plants and materials all year round. Try turning over dead logs and rocks to find some in the winter months.

**Daffodils** - Two species of daffodils, *Narcissus obvallaris* and *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, are native to the UK.

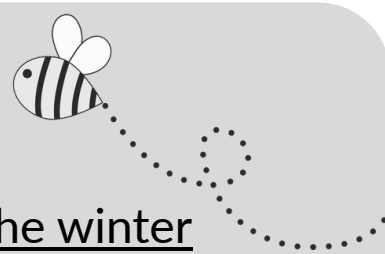
**Primrose** - These small woodland plants are a great early nectar source for pollinators.

### Flowers blooming in February:

**Willows** - Their catkins can be an excellent source of pollen.

### Where are all the bees?

Most bee species are dormant during the winter months, which is why you won't see them in your garden this time of year. Different bees have different strategies for how they survive: honeybees huddle in special clusters where they "shiver" to keep their queen warm; bumblebee colonies die off in the fall, leaving the future queens to hide out the winter underground; and most solitary bees lay their eggs in cavities or underground where they hatch and stay dormant until the weather gets warm.



Graphic by Maeve Sneddon