

Sweden: Boosting Biodiversity in Swedish Allotment Gardens

The allotment gardens are important for promoting biodiversity, with numerous small gardens with a large variety of plants and habitats they are excellent for biodiversity.

The Swedish Allotment society, Koloniträdgårdsförbundet, has for 20 years been working with the Environmental Certification program. These last two years we have put an even stronger emphasis for measures promoting biodiversity, now one of the main criteria for this certification.

Numerous ideas and hacks as well as important scientific background are communicated to our members. Material for studies has been produced and in collaboration with Studieförbundet, (adult education organisation) the studies are being coached.



During the pandemic years we elaborated the possibility of distance gathering. We have hosted and broadcasted about 40 free webinars on different gardening and cultivation topics but also about ponds, hedgehogs, bats, birds, gardening, soil and lots of other topics. We reached up to 2500 participants in some webinars and all together we have reached about 10 000 persons. It has been very appreciated among our members and created more unity around our long and narrow country.

When an allotment garden organisation has reached the Environmental certification we inform the landowners, mainly the municipalities and cities, about this long-term work and to get the authorities to acknowledge the great work that is done. This is an important measure for strengthening relations and the “raison d’être” for allotment gardens in the present competitive situation of land use in the cities.

These last two years we have been a part of the project Rikare Trädgård (Richer Garden). The purpose of this project is to spread knowledge of biodiversity. The “knowledge hub”, rikaretradgard.se, is an accessible and pedagogic site for everything a garden owner needs to know for creating and promoting biodiversity. It consists of guides, for example how to create a meadow, a pond or a bird friendly garden,



for example guide to wild bees, create a pond, guide to bee hotels and bird feeding. And sometimes “Doing less is more” when it comes to these issues.

Some highlights have been “Garden bug of the year”, a way to talk about bugs and give attention to species that are contributing to the garden in some way. In 2021 “Green rose chafer” and in 2022 “Migrant Hoverfly”. There is also a yearly theme with guides and articles. In 2021: “Ponds in the garden” and in 2022 “Collect seeds from wild plants and grow them in your garden” in collaboration with Swedish Botanical Society

This spring we published a set of 14 different signposts with themes about biodiversity to show in their gardens, when visitors or neighbours might question some arrangements that don’t correspond to traditional views on what a neat garden is. The signposts also work like “Conversation pieces” for discussion and exchange of knowledge about biodiversity.

Now, with the rapid change of climate we experience, with heat waves on a regular basis the need for green spaces in the cities is becoming an argent issue. Our allotment gardens provide numerous ecosystem services such as local climate modification, pollination, as well as being locations for social sustainability. In short, an important greenspace feature of urban landscapes.



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