

# **50 actions for animals**

# 50 actions for animals

**01. Keep track of your pets**

**02. Count ducks**

**03. Make wildlife matter**

**04. Lend a helping paw**

**05. Don't fail our whales**

**06. Support our vital work as  
a champion for animals**

**07. Be a chimp champ**

**08. Set yourself a  
fundraising challenge**

**09. Encourage early  
appreciation for wildlife**

**10. Speak up for animals**

**11. Save our seals**

**12. Every little helps**

**13. Help combat illegal trade**

**14. Make your garden  
reptile-friendly**

**15. Provide winter food  
and water sources**

**16. Host a wildlife quiz**

**17. Identify animal poo**

**18. Rewild your garden**

**19. Go rockpooling**

**20. Don't feed ducks with bread**

**21. Be a bug defender**

**22. Clean your bird feeders**

**23. Build a 'bug hotel'**

**24. Make a frog pond**

**25. Don't kill the buzz**

**26. Learn about local birds**

**27. Build or install a bird box**

**28. Fill your garden or window sills  
with wildlife-friendly plants**

**29. Create a compost heap**

**30. Feed birds all year round**

**31. Tread carefully on  
a nature walk**

**32. Help an injured animal**

**33. Protect trees over winter**

**34. Take part in  
community challenges**

**35. Plant trees**

**36. Join a community  
beach clean**

**37. Go on a foraging walk**

**38. Go on a tree ID walk**

**39. Fundraise for local  
animal shelters**

**40. Volunteer for nature**

**41. Make a hedgehog highway**

**42. Support cruelty-free  
fashion and cosmetics**

**43. Support animals in your  
grocery shopping**

**44. Buy eco-friendly  
cleaning products**

**45. Use peat-free soil**

**46. Be a responsible tourist**

**47. Cut back on plastic**

**48. Keep your dogs on a lead**

**49. Put a bell on your  
cat's collar**

**50. Book sustainable holidays**

# Foreword



## Lizzie Daly, wildlife biologist, explorer, and presenter

### **Nature needs us now more than ever.**

Across the globe, wildlife is in crisis—and the problems we’re confronted with are urgent and complicated: climate change, the biodiversity crisis, habitat loss, disrupted ecosystems, and dwindling species.

The magnitude of the task at hand might seem overwhelming if faced alone, but that’s what makes the work of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and its partners so vital. We aren’t facing this crisis as individuals—far from it.

By working together, we can find hope and promise for the future of our shared home, and I’m proud to be a part of that effort through my life’s work as a wildlife biologist and explorer.

What we need to see now is a global, collaborative effort—a rallying cry to protect and restore nature, with animals and people at its heart.

Every action you take, be it big or small, contributes to a brighter future. I know that you, like me, want to play your part.

Now is the time to act. Together, we can find a better way.

# 1 Million Actions for Animals

The world is getting increasingly dangerous for animals. Climate change, disasters, loss of habitat, wildlife crime, and countless other threats are taking their tolls. These complex problems require fresh thinking, collaboration, and, critically, bold action.

There are countless actions—some big, some small—that can have meaningful impacts on animals. **1 Million Actions for Animals** sets out to inspire people to collectively complete one million actions to help animals, the environment, and ultimately our planet.

This **Actions for Animals** guide features a list of 50 simple actions that help animals survive and thrive and can foster peaceful coexistence between animals and people. These actions draw from expertise within IFAW and dedicated individuals within the global conservation and animal welfare community. They are actions that anyone can try—regardless of where you live or your age—as a contribution to the broader quest to collectively complete one million actions for animals.

We encourage you to share your action on Instagram with the hashtag **#1MillionActions** to inspire others to take part too.

# 2023 Animal Action Awards

Through IFAW's prestigious annual **Animal Action Awards**, we recognise outstanding efforts of the unsung heroes that support animals or help animals and people thrive together. At this year's 23rd Animal Action Awards event, we will honour the achievements of incredible people (and an animal) who have made significant contributions to animal protection in the UK and across the globe.

Members of the public are stepping up now more than ever, working tirelessly for causes as close to our hearts as theirs: animal conservation, rescue, and welfare. From rescuing Liberia's chimpanzees from the illegal wildlife trade to mobilising a volunteer network of drone pilots and ground searches for missing pets in South Wales, the inspirational individuals being honoured at the **Animal Action Awards** work relentlessly to keep animals safe and help them thrive.

**@IFAWglobal | #1MillionActions**

# Take action from **IFAW** and past winners

# Take action from IFAW and past winners

## 1. Keep track of your pets

'As an organisation that helps to search and rescue missing dogs, I'd like to see more trackers being used on dogs. Should your dog go missing, it will give us a head start on knowing where the dog has gone, giving us the opportunity to have a successful rescue.'

**Contributed by Graham Burton**, who received the Technology for Good Award for establishing the Drone SAR for Lost Dogs UK group, which has reunited thousands of missing dogs with their owners, using its volunteer network of drone pilots and ground searchers



## 2. Count ducks

Sign up for a local Wetland Bird Survey and find as many waterbirds as you can on a nearby pond or reservoir. By counting these birds, you're improving our understanding of where different bird species live across the country.

**Contributed by Kabir Kaul**, who works to promote London's green spaces and wildlife

## 3. Make wildlife matter

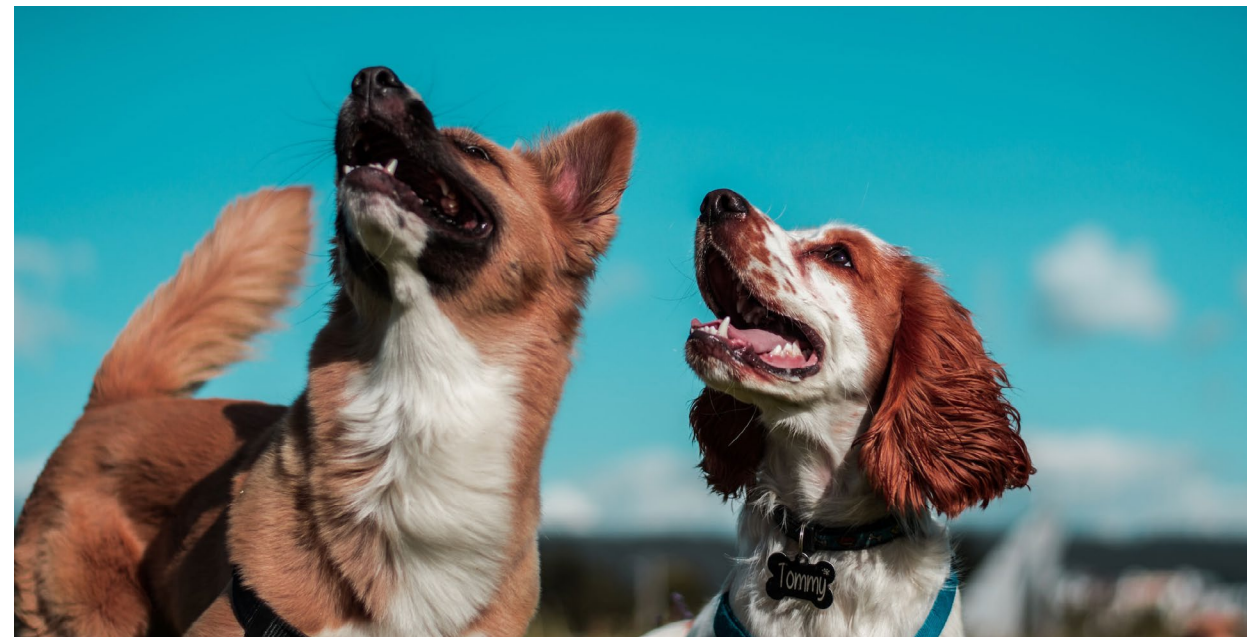
Poisoning, trapping, and being set upon by dogs are just some of the horrific acts inflicted on wild animals in the UK. Badgers, hares, bats, and birds of prey are all cruelly targeted by criminals.

To shine a spotlight on the problem, IFAW has published a new report—[Make wildlife matter](#)—which argues for urgent change. It calls on the Government to prioritise and protect wildlife by introducing a number of measures. Show your support by signing the [petition](#) here to help make wildlife crimes notifiable in the UK.

## 4. Lend a helping paw

'Encourage your employer to have a pet friendly approach through schemes like "bring your dog to work day"— your dog will love spending the day with a whole host of adoring new friends, who will also enjoy time to unwind and de-stress with them.'

**Contributed by Robert Durgan on behalf of George Durgan**, recipient of the Animal of the Year Award for his role as a therapy dog, visiting prisons, hospitals, and schools, where he provides companionship to people as they read books aloud



## 5. Help save our whales

North Atlantic right whales migrate along the east coast of North America, where they face threats of vessel strikes and entanglement in fishing gear.

To save these magnificent creatures, it is imperative that the US and Canadian governments take immediate action. Add your voice and express your concern by [signing IFAW's petition](#)  
**Contributed by Lizzie Daly**, wildlife biologist, explorer, and presenter



## 6. Support our vital work as a champion for animals

By donating to IFAW, you're actively supporting our tireless work to create a better future for people and animals.

[Donate](#) to support our cause

# Take action from IFAW and past winners

## 7. Be a chimp champ

'You don't have to be in Africa to help chimpanzees. Learn about the importance of chimpanzees and their similarities to humans, and spread the word among friends and across social media about how we can stand up for their protection and conservation.'

**Contributed by Jim and Jenny Desmond**, who received the International Wildlife Rescue Award for their work with chimpanzees at their sanctuary and conservation centre, where they rescue chimps who are victims of the illegal bushmeat and pet trades



## 8. Set yourself a fundraising challenge

Support IFAW's work by setting yourself a challenge! This could be anything, like hosting a community bake sale, a live-streamed gaming marathon, or a long distance walk or cycle. You can help save animals while doing something fun.

## 9. Encourage early appreciation for wildlife

'Inevitably, we care most about those we know and love. Don't wait and help your kids fall in love with all kinds of animals by visiting rescue farms, bird-watching on nature walks, drawing pictures of critters you saw together...or, better yet, by adopting a furry friend from a local shelter.'

**Contributed by Marina Bayeva**, who received the International Emergency Response Award for her work to coordinate help for animal shelters in Ukraine

## 10. Speak up for animals

'If you believe that an animal is suffering neglect, cruelty or abuse—please speak out and take action by alerting the relevant authorities. They don't have a voice, but you do.'

**Contributed by Trudie James**, for her years of tireless work rehoming abandoned and mistreated dogs in the UK

## 11. Save our seals

'I would love people on beaches to help rangers and volunteers by watching over a seal if found in distress and by asking people to keep their dogs on a lead, particularly during pupping season.'

**Contributed by Jo Collins**, who is dedicated to rescuing stranded and injured seals and other marine mammals

## 12. Every little helps

'Don't think that your action is too insignificant to make a difference! We are a very small charity run entirely by volunteers but have still managed to make a significant contribution towards saving rhinos and other endangered wildlife. I think that people often feel that the prognosis for survival of a species like the rhino is hopeless due to the poaching crisis, but what they don't realise is that if everyone just did one small thing, like donating a few pounds, it would make a significant difference, as we have proved.'

**Contributed by veterinarian Elisa Best**, who founded a craft conservation charity to galvanise public support for centres rescuing rhinos and other threatened African wildlife, initially through knitting blankets for orphaned animals



# Take action for wildlife

# Take action for wildlife

## 13. Help combat illegal trade

Raise awareness with your friends about not buying wildlife trade products such as ivory.

If you encounter listings (e.g., social media posts) that promote and/or display wildlife cybercrime or animal harm, don't like or share the listing—report them to the platform and the [Coalition to End Trafficking Online](#).



## 14. Make your garden reptile-friendly

Reptiles are cold-blooded creatures, which means they need external heat sources to stay warm.

Slow worms are one of the easiest to attract, as all you need is a sheet of corrugated metal. Make your slow worm sun bed in a sunny, quiet spot next to long grass or log piles and attach a small handle so you can lift it. The slow worms will emerge in the spring.

## 15. Provide winter food and water sources

As well as providing a water source when others are likely frozen over during winter, you can also turn feeding garden wildlife into an arts and crafts activity.

You can use melted lard and seeds to create fat balls or collect pinecones, roll them in natural peanut butter, and then coat them in seeds—both make delicious treats for your garden visitors when food is hard to come by.



## 16. Host a wildlife quiz

**University of Cambridge researcher Robert MacFarlane** wrote his book [The Lost Words](#) to help young people reconnect with nature through language, inspiring them to rediscover 'lost words' of nature before it's too late.

How much do you know about native wildlife? Host a quiz based on nature's 'lost words' with friends to find out.

## 17. Identify animal poo

Even the most elusive of animals will leave behind clues for us to find—from footprints to the songs they sing and even their poo!

The next time you're on a nature walk and stumble across some animal poo, use a stick to break it apart and try to find out what the animal ate. Look for fur, tiny bones, berries and seeds. Remember—don't use your hands!

# Take action for wildlife



## 18. Rewild your garden

By allowing even a small section of your garden to return to its wild side, you'll be actively creating a whole new ecosystem by simply letting it grow.

Initiatives like Plantlife's [No Mow May](#) highlight the importance of making space for nature to thrive in our gardens. By keeping part of your garden wild, pollinators will soon set up camp. Wildflowers provide a feast for pollinators, tackle pollution, and lock away atmospheric carbon below ground.

## 19. Go rockpooling

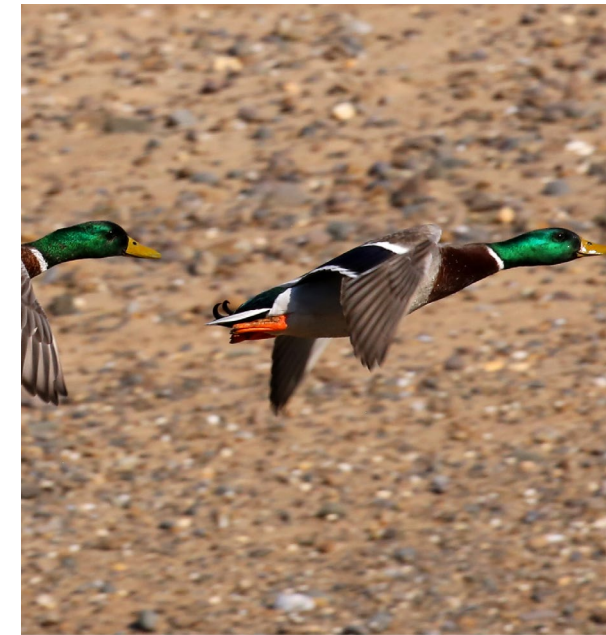
Want to discover what life is like beneath the waves, but don't fancy diving in headfirst?

Rockpooling is a fun, simple way of connecting with coastlines and the creatures that live there. Make sure to visit at low tide, and the shore will reveal its secrets. Limpets, jellyfish, starfish, and even wading birds like oystercatchers can be found looking for their next meal.



## 20. Don't feed ducks with bread

Avoid feeding ducks with bread. Like us, they need a varied diet to be healthy. Bread fills their stomachs, meaning they don't forage for foods they would naturally eat, which can lead to malnutrition. Also, uneaten soggy bread can cause algae to grow around the water, which can lead to more diseases and pests such as rats. Instead, learn healthy ways to feed ducks from the [Canal and River Trust](#).



## 21. Be a bug defender

Often overlooked or unloved, invertebrates are crucial to our planet.

Looking after them can be as simple as not swatting them when you find them in your home. Instead, guide them outside by opening your windows or catching them with a glass and a piece of paper.

There's so much you can do to support their habitats, but you can start your journey by learning what's out there. Check out [BugLife](#).

# Take action in your garden

# Take action in your garden

## 22. Clean your bird feeders

Nature needs help with the washing up too—especially during the summer months, when risk of infection is far higher among birds. Keep an eye on feed levels, and when topping up, be sure to empty and clean thoroughly (taking appropriate personal hygiene precautions) before refilling.

It's also recommended that you move your feeder each month to avoid an accumulation of droppings.



## 23. Build a 'bug hotel'

Some habitats already exist in our gardens without even trying. But you can also give bugs and insects an extra helping hand by building them a home yourself. This is a great way to get children involved, too.

Bug hotels take many forms, but the simplest is recommended by the [Woodland Trust](#): Make a log pile.

Bugs and insects love nothing more than setting up shop in a warm, damp, moss-covered environment that keeps them safe and sound from hungry predators. Find a shady spot in your garden and pile up fallen leaves and branches, and soon you'll find your hotel bursting with new guests.

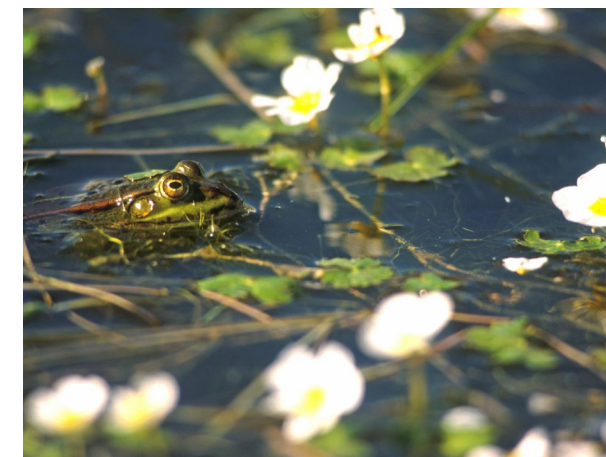
## 24. Make a frog pond

As well as attracting bugs and insects to your garden, you can also make a home for frogs and toads.

Ponds provide a vital habitat for amphibians, because this is where they reproduce.

All you need is a shady spot, a container, gravel, stones, and rocks for safe entry, and a variety of pond-loving plants. Learn how from gardening influencer [Marf](#).

You can also turn this into a community-based action by encouraging your neighbours to do the same, ensuring your new visitors have other ponds to move safely between. The more readily available, the more frogs you'll likely attract.



## 25. Don't kill the buzz

Avoid swatting flying insects such as wasps, bees, and flies. Insects and pollinators are fundamental to the health of our environment and rural economies, but the UK's flying insect population has declined by as much as 60% in the last 20 years. You can [read more](#) about this issue and educate others, too.

## 26. Learn about local birds

Familiarise yourself with local bird species so you can take part in the Big Garden Birdwatch, in which you can help monitor trends. Being aware of species in your local area means you'll be more likely to notice if numbers start to decline, and then you can take steps to help.

Your local library may have some great birding books that discuss local species.

# Take action in your garden

## 27. Build or install a bird box

Bird boxes provide a place for birds to build their nests. Learn how to build one from the [RSPB](#).

Once you have your bird box, make sure to follow the [guidance](#) on where best to position it in your garden to give you the best chance of attracting local birds.



© Hwange Tyson Mayr



## 28. Fill your garden or window sills with wildlife-friendly plants

Choose wildlife-friendly plants for your gardens and window-boxes such as pollinating plants (which will differ depending on your location), which are often wildflowers that attract bees and butterflies, such as hawthorn, honeysuckle, and buddleja, also known as the butterfly bush.

As well as native wildflowers for pollinators, you should also consider what trees and shrubs will help care for nature for years to come. Fruit-bearing trees and shrubs prove particularly successful, from apples (which have the added benefit of sweet-smelling blossoms in spring) to berry bushes like blackberries and sloes.

## 29. Create a compost heap

Creating a compost heap in your garden from kitchen waste is not only a great way to reduce what goes to landfill, but they're also a haven for minibeasts. Minibeasts are small invertebrates such as millepedes, woodlice and spiders.

Other animals like worms, slugs and snails may also be drawn to your compost heap. Slugs and snails are important recyclers so if you spot them elsewhere in your garden you can add them to the heap.

Avoid moving compost about during the winter months, it'll be a warm spot that animals such as hedgehogs choose to hibernate in.



## 30. Feed birds all year round

The winter months are particularly [tough for our local wildlife](#), with their usual food and water sources scarce or frozen over, but you can help garden birds by feeding them year round. In spring this can help birds feed their young, and in summer it can combat the challenge of dry ground making finding food difficult.

Whether it's a bird bath, dish, or window feeder, make sure their water sources are topped up.

---

## 31. Tread carefully on a nature walk

Having an adventure out in nature can teach you more about your local environment and the wildlife that calls it home.

But be mindful when you head out, as a wealth of wildlife call the forest floor, farmland, and beaches home, from ground-nesting birds and hares (who build dips in the ground as opposed to burrows) to foxes and badgers, who build dens and setts that wind beneath the roots of trees.

Tread carefully, and you might even spot some more elusive ones if you're particularly light-footed.

# Take action in your community

# Take action in your community

## 32. Help an injured animal

Have you ever spotted an injured or sick animal and wondered what you can do to help?

Take pictures or videos of the animal and contact a vet or wildlife rehabilitator like the [RSPCA](#). [The Garden Wildlife Health](#) website has pictures and videos of sick garden birds, which may be helpful to compare to a bird you see.

If in doubt, contact your local wildlife officer and note the details and location of the animal, so that they can come to the rescue.



## 33. Protect trees over winter

The winter weather can wreak havoc on our plants.

Oversaturation from heavy rains can cause root rot, while wind can increase cold damage or cause dehydration. If you can, transfer vulnerable plants to areas of better shelter. Move them inside or place them against walls, fences, or other plants.

## 34. Take part in community challenges

A brilliant way of getting to know your local wildlife reserves and the teams who work at them is by taking part in community-focused challenges, like [30 Days Wild](#) with the Wildlife Trusts.

This month-long challenge is for young people and adults alike, inspiring you to get out into nature with a variety of different activities, including closer-to-home activities like creating your own wildflower meadow and more adventurous ones like ranger-led nature walks at your local reserve.



## 35. Plant trees

If you want to help protect and restore woodlands, as well as get to know your local community better, planting trees is a popular and very hands-on way to do that.

Organisations like [Trees for Cities](#) are raising awareness for the importance of urban trees and are working hard to inspire the next generation of conservationists, turning concrete playgrounds into leafy-green havens.

## 36. Join a community beach clean

Litter from all over the world can wash up on our beaches, making this a truly global action.

Every year, [Surfers Against Sewage](#) host their Million Mile Clean, which brings local communities together to tackle plastic pollution head-on. With the obvious benefits of doing your part for nature, you also have the chance to breathe in some fresh sea air whilst making new friends in your community.





# Take action in your community



## 37. Go on a foraging walk

Nature always provides, often in ways and places you might not have expected.

Heading out on a forage, whether in a rural or urban setting, you'll experience new smells and tastes, and a very satisfying sense of achievement. Some of the more common plants you'll stumble across are the likes of elderflower in mid-spring, and blackberries in late summer/early autumn.

There are some important rules to follow when foraging: one relates to your own safety, in that you should always be sure of what you're picking. The other is for nature's benefit: never take too much, because you could be picking someone else's dinner.

## 38. Go on a tree ID walk

Have you ever been on a nature walk and wondered what the plants and trees you're surrounded by are? Thanks to the wonders of technology, you can take yourself and your friends on a self-guided tree ID walk, identifying the plants you see as you go.

Should internet connection be an issue, as it often is out in the wild, take photos of their leaves, flowers, or bark as you go, and set yourself the challenge of guessing them. Then load them into the app on your return to find the answers. These apps are often crowd-sourced, meaning fellow walkers will have helped along the way.

We recommend using the app [iNaturalist](#).



## 39. Fundraise for local animal shelters

There are so many local organisations quietly saving nature every day, from rehoming centres for unwanted pets to wildlife rescue centres in the most remote locations.

Get in touch with their teams directly and ask where they most need help, as this will differ depending on the time of year as well as their current resources.



## 40. Volunteer for nature

More than ever, employers are offering 'volunteering days' for their teams, providing the perfect opportunity for you to step away from your desk and give back to nature.

The sky's the limit with what you can do—tree-planting, scrub-bashing, beach cleans—choose the habitat that strikes a chord with you.

The mental health benefits of being out in nature are undeniable. By becoming a local conservation volunteer, you'll not only be boosting your own mental wellbeing, but also giving much-needed support to your local green spaces and the hard-working teams who look after them all year round.

# Take action for pets and at home

# Take action for pets and at home



## 41. Make a hedgehog highway

One of the biggest barriers—quite literally—to hedgehogs is their lack of access in urban spaces thanks to fence panelling and walls.

The best way to overcome this? Make your own 'hedgehog highway' and encourage your neighbours to do the same. By making holes and access points in fences and barriers, you can link up the gardens in your neighbourhood, giving hedgehogs the best chance of survival.

And while you're at it, why not put some food out for them too? You'll find great advice on what best to provide from the [RSPCA](#).

## 42. Support cruelty-free fashion and cosmetics

Another way to support animals in your home is to actively seek out cruelty-free fashion and cosmetics.

The global gold standard for this is the Leaping Bunny, associated with [Cruelty Free International](#), a globally-recognised gold standard for cosmetics, personal care, and household products. You'll find the bunny emblazoned on the back of the products you're choosing.



## 43. Support animals in your grocery shopping

You can also take action for nature in your weekly food shopping by choosing to go vegetarian or vegan, even if it's just for a few days a week, considering the sources of food you buy, or even growing your own veggies!

Though seemingly small actions, the choices we make when planning our meals can have a huge impact on our global ecosystems. Shopping local is always a great place start.

## 44. Buy eco-friendly cleaning products

Cleaning products often contain chemicals that are damaging to both human health and ecosystems, directly impacting marine habitats.

Chemicals such as chlorine, phosphates, and nitrates cause pollution in the environment, which makes switching your household cleaning products to more sustainable alternatives a far safer, more sustainable option.

By using eco-friendly options, you'll also be actively reducing your carbon footprint, as reusable options result in a more sustainable global supply chain.



## 45. Use peat-free soil

By using peat-free compost or soil, you will be protecting vital wetland habitats and supporting the future of our planet. Plus, due to their high content of composted materials, peat-free composts are usually richer in beneficial microbes than peat-based composts, meaning it's better for plants and for the wider ecosystem.

So the next time you visit your local garden centre to plant all your new native plants, keep your eyes peeled for peat-free soil.

# Take action for pets and at home



## 46. Be a responsible tourist

According to The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), ecotourism can be defined as 'responsible travel to natural areas that conserve the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education'.

When booking your next adventure, make sure you do your research into what activities will support local businesses and the community as well as animals. Don't ride elephants, swim with captive dolphins, or pose with a chained primate.

## 47. Cut back on plastic

[Plastic Free July](#) is a global movement that helps millions of people be part of the solution to plastic pollution. By joining initiatives like this and refusing single-use plastics, you'll be actively benefiting our oceans and the creatures that call them home.

You can cut back on single use plastics and other materials by carrying your own coffee cup or using a refillable water bottle.

Many everyday items can be reused or recycled. Check out this [recycling tool](#) to see what items can be recycled in your local area.



## 48. Keep your dogs on a lead

During spring, when ground-nesting birds and grazing livestock are raising their young, it's important to keep your dog on a lead on countryside walks.

Research carried out by the [Wildlife Trusts](#) shows that 66% of ground-nesting birds are in decline in the UK, compared to 31% of other species.

Dog waste can also carry diseases, and it isn't nice to step in. Be a responsible dog owner and make sure you leave nothing but footprints behind on your next dog walk.

## 49. Put a bell on your cat's collar

The noise can help reduce the chance of your cat catching garden birds. Recent [RSPB](#) studies suggest that colourful collars may also reduce predation of birds, mice, and voles. The collar must be correctly fitted and should have a quick release mechanism to allow the cat to free itself, should it become snagged.

## 50. Book sustainable holidays

Being an 'eco-friendly' traveller can take many forms—from the way in which you travel to your destination, through to the activities you take part in whilst you're there.

'Slow travel' has risen in popularity, with employers offering more time for leave to allow for additional days spent getting to your destination more sustainably.

You can also do your bit by using 'reef-safe' sunscreen. When choosing your SPF, find one that uses only mineral UV-blocking ingredients like oxide and titanium dioxide. You'll find more detailed info via [Save the Reef](#).



# About IFAW

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) is a global non-profit helping animals and people thrive together. We work in over 40 countries around the world to conserve wildlife and rescue animals in need.

We recognise the problems we're up against are complicated, requiring fresh thinking. In addition to our on-the-ground efforts and international policy work, we partner with local communities, governments, non-governmental organisations, and businesses to jointly take bold action for animals. For more than 50 years, our innovative projects have had positive and profound impacts on animals and have also benefitted people and the planet.

**@IFAWglobal**  
**#1MillionActions**