



Dobbies unveils its Not Your Average Gardener Award winners **Four gardening enthusiasts from across the UK receive £4k worth of prizes**

Dobbies, the UK's leading garden centre, has searched the country for passionate gardeners of all abilities to take home one of four Not Your Average Gardener awards. Four lucky gardening enthusiasts have been selected by a panel of judges to secure titles across a range of different gardening themes.

Supporting those looking to better the green spaces around them, these awards recognise the passion, dedication and innovative sustainable gardening techniques in the community.

The highest number of entries was for the Wildlife Friendly Gardener category, showing the UK have been busy bees creating pollinator patches, ponds and bird friendly habitats in their garden space.

The Not Your Average Gardener winners are:

- **Roxy Fitzsimmons** (31) from Bristol **Wildlife Friendly Gardener**, judged by Leigh Biagi and Nick Trull, Project Coordinators at conservation charity RePollinate
- **Jenny Winnard** (47) from Wigan **Plant to Plate Gardener**, judged by social media gardening guru Michael Griffiths, aka The Mediterranean Gardener
- **Phillip Stewart** (29) from Magherafelt, Northern Ireland, **Creative Indoor Gardener**, judged by Dobbies' Senior Houseplant Buyer, Claire Bishop
- **Theodore Rumbold** (8) from Haywards Heath, West Sussex, **Little Eco Gardener**, judged by Dobbies' Horticultural Director, Marcus Eyles

The four winners have received a £1,000 giftcard to spend in their local store as well as advice from Dobbies' horticultural experts on how they can take their gardening project to the next level.

Dobbies' Horticultural Director, Marcus Eyles, said: "Each year we're amazed with the quality of talent entering our Not Your Average Gardener Awards and can't believe this is our fourth year. It's great to see novice gardeners to enthusiasts pouring passion into their green spaces by using sustainable products and practices to help impact the planet in a positive way. Our judging panel had a tough time whittling the entries down to four winners, and I'm exceptionally proud of Roxy, Jenny, Phillip and Theodore for taking home the crown for their chosen category."

Data Control Assistant, Roxy Fitzsimmons, impressed Leigh Biagi and Nick Trull of RePollinate, who both judged the Wildlife Friendly Gardener category, with the wildlife haven in her back garden of a rented property on a busy main road near the centre of Bristol. Roxy showcased extreme awareness of the importance of connectivity throughout her greenspace, creating multiple wildlife corridors to complement the wider landscape and support creatures of all kinds. Acknowledging the challenges of her greenspace has been vital and she's worked with the tricky dry environment by planting drought tolerant plants and creating multiple ponds to keep visitors hydrated.

Roxy explained how she got into gardening, she said: "It all started when I was kid, my parents would get me to help with the garden weeding, encourage me to spend time

outdoors and be at one with nature. This turned into my passion. I've been lucky enough to live in rented properties that have each had a garden space and landlords who have encouraged my passion and let me run wild with gardening projects. I'm quite a creative individual and love getting stuck into a new project. I've channelled my inner Monty Don, who's my gardening inspiration, and dove two feet in to do everything I could to attract wildlife to my green space. About two years ago I built a mini pond, introducing various water features, plants and foliage, and is home to a resident frog that enjoys hanging out in the toad abode."

Roxy shared some advice for those thinking about giving gardening a go. She said: "Start small and see what happens. Don't let living in a rented property put you off creating a green space for wildlife to flourish and everyone to enjoy, just make sure you're asking for permissions before giving your communal garden a makeover!"

Leigh Biagi, Project Coordinator at RePollinate, and colleague Nick Trull were truly amazed with the gardeners who have put wildlife at the forefront of their hobby. Leigh said: "We were very pleased to hear that the Wildlife Friendly Gardener category received the most entries and it has been a real pleasure choosing our winner. It was also extremely difficult as so many of the entrants are doing wonderful things to support nature with whatever greenspace they have available.

"If every gardener in the UK did the same what an amazing impact that would have. So, congratulations to Roxy and thank you to all our entrants for all your good work. Keep it up and see if you can get the neighbours on board too!"

For full details on Dobbies' Not Your Average Gardener Awards, visit [Not your average gardener award winners | Dobbies Garden Centres](#).

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About Dobbies

- Established in 1865, Dobbies is now the UK's leading garden centre retailer, with 76 stores
- Dobbies operates 70 mainline garden centres and six little dobbies
- Dobbies exists to enrich people's lives and nurture connections between people, the community, and the environment