Garden and allotment wildlife: friend or foe?
1. The garden slug is a pest in the garden, eating leaves, stems and bulbs of a wide variety of plants. Slugs will even burrow underground to attack root crops like carrots and potatoes.
2. The ladybird has a reputation for being the gardener’s friend because both the larvae and adults eat plant-damaging aphids.
3. The robin eats insects, helping to control pests in the garden.
4. The wood pigeon eats vegetation so it can cause damage to crops. Because it is large, it will eat a lot of food and scare off other birds from the garden.
5. The white-tailed bumblebee pollinates many plants and crops, which makes it vital to preserving a healthy and sustainable environment.
6. The wasp pollinates plants and crops. It also hunts insects to feed to its young.
7. The earthworm burrows through soil, which allows air and water to reach the roots of plants. It also eats organic matter like grass clippings and dead leaves, and its excretions make the soil richer.
The larvae of the lacewing eat mites and insect eggs, which helps control the number of pests in the garden.
9. The garden spider eats insects and aphids that are damaging to the garden.
10. The bluebottle fly is a great pollinator that feeds on dead animals and waste substances often found in compost heaps.
11. The mole digs tunnels close to the surface, which can disturb the roots of plants. It leaves piles of excavated soil (mole hills) where it has dug. The tunnels can collapse, making lawns uneven.
12. The cabbage white butterfly lays its eggs on cabbages and other members of the cabbage family. Within two weeks, the larvae emerge and ruin the crop of cabbages.
13. The wood ant eats the eggs of many insects. It digs tunnels that enable air, water and nutrients to easily reach the roots of plants. It also distributes seeds by storing them in its nest.
14. The grey squirrel eats flowers, shoots, bulbs and bark. It will even eat small birds and steal eggs from their nests.