Wild Bird Cover

Why?

- giant bird table for seed eating birds
- habitat for tillage flora and fauna

Seed eating birds

- Declining:
  - Intensification
  - Specialisation
  - Loss of tillage in many counties

Need a variety of seeds:

- Small linseed or kale seeds - Linnet
- Large cereal seeds – Yellowhammer
  (likes mixed cereals)

Flowers in Wild Bird Cover

- Attract pollinators and insects

Birds and Bats

- Feed on insects

Birds

- Feed on worms

Birds of prey

- Feed on small mammals

Wild Bird Cover

- Provides cover for mammals
Oats & Linseed sown each year **Recommended**
- Grow in all soil types (including heavy, acid)
- Tolerates a low pH

### Kale
- Needs a high pH - lime important
- Fertiliser may be essential for establishment
- Club root risk (resistant varieties available)
- Biennial
  - Vegetative in year 1
  - Flowers and seeds in year 2
  - Remains in situ for 2 years
  - Sow every 2\(^{nd}\) year
  - Establish half the plot in kale and other half cereal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Half Plot</th>
<th>Half Plot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kale Yr 1</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kale Yr 2</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>Kale Yr 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>Kale Yr 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kale Yr 1</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wild Bird Cover

Sowing & Management

- Fine, firm seedbed essential
- Any cultivation method allowed provided successful crop establishment
- Pre-sowing weed control may be necessary
- Plough, harrow and roll as necessary
- Drill or broadcast - seed rate is less if drilling
- Fertilize at half prescribed rate

- Pre-sowing weed control if necessary
- After 15 March
- Animal access helps decomposition

- Wild Bird Cover crop
- Roll

- Broadcasting Seed Rates
  - Cereals: 110 kgs / ha
  - Linseed: 20 kgs / ha
  - Kale: 4 kgs / ha

- Sowing Depth
  - Cereals: 5 cms
  - Small seeds: 1 cm

- Broadcast linseed (with fertiliser)
- Roll

- Harvest
- Broadcast oats (or drill)
- Roll

- Wild Bird Cover (with fertiliser)
GLAS Requirements

- Sow by 31 May
  - each year for cereals,
  - every second year for kale
- Do not apply pesticides after sowing
- Spot treat noxious weeds and invasive species

Fence
- stock proof
- fit for purpose

Do not harvest

Retain until 15 March the following year
(2 seasons for kale)

Before replanting, livestock may enter from 15 March to help break down trash