

**Dysgu yn yr  
Awyr Agored  
Cymru**

**Outdoor  
Learning  
Wales**



## Outdoor Learning Wales August 2019 Bulletin

**Outdoor Learning Wales (OLW) is a national network, facilitated by Natural Resources Wales. OLW aims to increase the understanding, appreciation and sustainable management of natural resources in relation to Wales by drawing expertise, knowledge and inspiration from a range of partners, leaders and educators.**

The aim of this bulletin is to update our members in Wales on news, projects and initiatives related to sustainable management of natural resources (SMNR).

### OLW Update:

Most OLW network groups will now be meeting in September after the school summer holidays.

**Carmarthenshire OLW** network group is offering a FREE training on *Wellbeing in the Outdoors*.

Date: 25th September

Time: 9.30am - 3pm

Venue: UWTSD Cynefin Centre, Johnstown

Contact: [carms@tircoed.org.uk](mailto:carms@tircoed.org.uk)



Outdoor Learning Wales has provided feedback on the "Have Your Say" draft Curriculum for Wales consultation to advocate for the inclusion of learning in, about and for the natural environment and to strongly recommend that overarching guidance on quality outdoor learning provision.

Keep us posted about your outdoor learning activities over the school summer holidays by sharing with us with us via: [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)

### NRW

*Promoting Health and Well-being through Outdoor Learning* course

Want to learn how to use your setting's green spaces, local parks, woods or beaches as a natural intervention to promote health and well-being?

Date: 16th October at Clawddnewydd, near Ruthin.

Cost: Free

Venue: Clawddnewydd, near Ruthin

Times: 9.30 – 3.00pm

Contact: [education@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:education@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)

We enjoyed showcasing the importance of trees and woodlands at Natural Resources Wales' forestry themed **Royal Welsh Show** exhibit this year at the showground in Llanellwedd. Families had the chance to try out their ID skills, learn how to do some basic tree measuring and found out about products made from trees.

### Recipe of the month

*Chocolate Mug Cake*

2 tablespoons almond flour

2 tablespoons egg powder

2 teaspoons cocoa powder

1 teaspoon caster sugar

teaspoon baking powder

pinch of salt



15ml coconut oil or similar  
60ml water plus additional water for steaming



Mix all dry ingredients in a medium-sized zip lock freezer bag. Option to complete this step before leaving.  
Pour water and coconut oil into the bag.  
Seal the bag and knead the mixture until smooth.  
Put container in the bottom of a small cooking pot.  
Cut off the corner of the bag and squeeze the batter into a greased mug or silicone muffin cup.  
Pour enough water in until it is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  high on the mug/muffin cup.

Set the pot on a grill over an established campfire and cover with a lid.

Steam-bake for about 10-12 minutes or until ready.

Use toothpicks or wooden sticks to test readiness – if a toothpick inserted in the center of the cake will come out clean, the cake is ready to be taken out.

[www.trail.recipes/recipes](http://www.trail.recipes/recipes)

### Quote of the month

*"Instead of starting a TO DO list, I'm starting a TO BE list!"*

Anon

### Activity of the Month

#### *Shrinking Ice*

This activity looks at the effects of global warming on frozen habitats.

You will need a small tarpaulin.

- 1 Lay the tarp on a flat area.
- 2 Explain to the group that this represents the ice floe (a sheet of floating ice) habitat that some creatures live on.
- 3 Discuss what these creatures might be. How do they stay warm?
- 4 Explain that the group is going to act as penguins who swim in the sea around the ice looking for food to eat – ask the group to run around the designated area.
- 5 Either choose a learner to act as a predator – polar bear, or take the role yourself.
- 6 Explain that when the 'polar bear' shouts 'hunting for food' every 'penguin' must jump quickly onto the ice floe to escape.
- 7 Unfortunately, due to global warming the ice keeps shrinking – fold the tarp in half then repeat the swimming, hunting and shrinking step.
- 8 Eventually the 'penguins' will need to use team work (stand on one leg, link arms) to get as many of themselves as possible on to the tarp as the ice decreases in surface area.
- 9 'Penguins' that can't get on are 'eaten' by the predator and can form their own group to one side. Extend the activity by tasking the 'penguins' to try to turn the tarp over without getting off it.

### Fact of the Month

Did you know that crows can easily recognize human faces?

### Collective noun of the month

Horses - team, harras, rag (colts), stud (a group of horses owned by one person), string (for ponies)

### Species of the Month

#### *Fen raft spider*



The fen raft spider is one of Europe's largest and rarest aquatic spiders and was only discovered living in Wales in 2003 in the Tennant Canal at Pant y Sais Fen but have probably been here for at least 100 years. Pant y Sais Fen is a limb of Crymlyn Bog and translates as 'The Englishman's Hollow' and is a nature reserve alongside the village of Jersey Marine in Neath. Up until a few years ago, this species was only found in two locations in the whole of Britain and they were both in eastern England.

Raft spiders prefer slow moving water and live in fens and marshes in lowland areas and require warm, sunny conditions.

The spiders can actually perch on the water surface using the surface tension of the water to keep themselves afloat hence the name 'raft spider'.

These semi-aquatic spiders can grow up to 7cm in length and are a rich chocolate brown colour with a distinctive cream stripe along the sides of their body.

The short, velvety, water-repelling hairs covering the body and legs then allow these large spiders to do the seemingly impossible - walk on water like pond skaters.

The spider feeds on small fish such as sticklebacks and tadpoles and other aquatic invertebrates.

When prey is located they can run across the surface of the water to attack and can even hunt underwater by running up and down sedge reeds.

They can be spotted when the females are raising their young as the large nursery webs, full of baby spiders can be easily spotted on long, stiff reeds.

Fen raft spiders are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981.

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

### **Plant of the Month**

*Ivy Broomrape / Orobanche hederæ*

Relatively uncommon but present in Wales, this wildflower, like all Broomrapes, is a parasitic plant without chlorophyll, mainly living off the roots of other plants.

As a parasitic plant it is totally dependent on its host, which is mainly common ivy.

As the plant does not contain chlorophyll so there is no green pigment.

It is an upright plant with a slender purplish stem up to that grows up to 60 cm, with stems in shades of brown and purple, sometimes yellow.

The leaves being replaced by pointed leaf-like little scales which spiral up the stems. The tubular flowers (10-20mm long) are cream with purple veins, and bloom from May to July.



It helps when trying to identify Broomrape if you look at the plants on which it is growing. The Broomrape attaches itself to the host plant by a lumpy node called a 'rape' – which is another word for a turnip.

Its habitat is that of its host and includes walls, roadside verges, waste ground, coastal cliffs, open rocky woodland, quarries, hedge banks and other similar habitats.

[www.wildflowersofireland.net](http://www.wildflowersofireland.net)

### **Courses/Events:**

***Welsh Wildlife Trust - recommended Outdoor Learning Training Network member***

**Award in Outdoor Learning Practice (Level 2)**

Date: 18 & 25/09/19, plus 04.12/19

Venue: Environmental Resource Centre, Ebbw Vale

Cost: £300 per person

**Assist at Forest School (Level 2)**

Date: October 2019

Venue: Tredegar House, Newport

Cost: £400 plus VAT

**Forest School Leader (Level 3)**

Date: October 2019

Venue: Tredegar House, Newport.

Cost: £800 per person (plus VAT)

Contact: [www.cambiumsustainable.co.uk](http://www.cambiumsustainable.co.uk)

**Plas Derw Trust – recommended Outdoor Learning Training Network member**

Forest School Practitioner level 3

Dates: 11. 12. 13. 19. 20. 26. 27 September

Contact: [anjela@plasderw.co.uk](mailto:anjela@plasderw.co.uk)

**Forest School Swansea Neath Port Talbot – recommended Outdoor Learning Training Network member**

Forest School Leader Level 3

Date: 16, 17 & 18 September and 14, 15 & 16 October

Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre

Cost: £900

Forest School & Coastal School Leader Level 3

Date: 16, 17 & 18 September and 14, 15 & 16 October and 2 & 3 October 2019

Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre

Cost: £1100

Coastal School Leader Top Up

Date: 2 & 3 October 2019

Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre

Cost: £240

Outdoor Learning Practitioner

Date: 25 Sept and 9 & 23 October

Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre

Cost: £300

Outdoor Paediatric First Aid

Date: 7 & 8 November

Venue: tbc near Swansea

Cost: £125

Contact: [info@forestschoolsnpt.org.uk](mailto:info@forestschoolsnpt.org.uk)

**Magor Marsh**

Marshy Mondays

A fun afternoon for families with pond dipping a, bird watching and crafts at Magor Marsh

Date: 29/07/19 and 05/08/19 – 1-3pm –. £2.00 per child

Contact: [magormarsh@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:magormarsh@gwentwildlife.org)

**Ray Ceredigion**

Ray Play Day – family friendly day out with over 30 different activities

Date: 07/08/19 11.30am – 3.30pm

Venue: Square Field, Aberaeron

Contact: [rayceredigionadmin@btconnect.com](mailto:rayceredigionadmin@btconnect.com) / 01545 570686

**Red Squirrels Trust Wales Fundraiser with Iolo Williams**

Date: 24/09/19

Venue: Pontio Lecture Theatre

Cost: £12

Tickets available at <https://redsquirrelstrustwales.eventbrite.co.uk>

**International Bat Night 2**

4-25 August



**Contact Us:**

Karen Clarke

OLW Coordinator

Natural Resources Wales

0300 065 3609 / 07721 302667

[outdoorlearningwales@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:outdoorlearningwales@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)



**Contributions:**

Please submit suggestions for content or items of interest for upcoming bulletins by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. All submissions are subject to Coordinator approval.

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