

**Dysgu yn yr
Awyr Agored
Cymru**

**Outdoor
Learning
Wales**



Outdoor Learning Wales Bulletin April 2015

Outdoor Learning Wales is a national network, drawing expertise, knowledge and inspiration from a range of partners, leaders and educators. Outdoor Learning Wales (OLW) aims to increase the understanding, appreciation and sustainable use of Wales' natural environment.

The aim of this bulletin is to update our members in Wales on news, projects and initiatives related to natural resource management.

OLW Update:

With the June round looming, a small additional question has been added to the online project grant application form. This follows comments from the GB decision panel that not enough information was available on how project progress would be evaluated since the form was simplified.

All applications for this round need to be with the OLW Coordinator by the 1st June at the very latest.

South Powys OLW network group are putting the finishing touches to the resource that has come out of their "where my writing takes me" project, linking literacy to outdoor learning. The group collected a range of writing and poetry based activities that really engage learners in developing their creative language skills. The resource will be available to download from the website shortly.

For more information contact: aled.hopkin@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk.

Now that the weather is improving several groups are currently organising events for members to enjoy some CPD. Cardiff OLW network group who are having a skill share event in the shadow of Cardiff Castle and will be running a range of workshops from providers including Out to Learn Willow, Free Range learning, Pontcanna Allotments as well as sessions from group members who will be sharing some of the activities they do with their own groups. May 15th 2015, 2pm – 6.30pm - Join us for as little or as much as you can! Everyone is welcome, from Cardiff and beyond, OLW member or not!

There is no charge for this event but booking is essential. Parking costs will be reimbursed

Contact: sheena.oleary@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

Monmouthshire OLW network group are looking forward to a skill share event under the theme "Music in the Outdoors" at Magor Marsh in June 2015. This will be held in conjunction with their neighbouring Newport OLW group

Vale OLW Group are having a training session on cooking on a fire on June 3rd at Porthkerry Country Park and are already planning more training sessions for July and September on different topics.

www.outdoorlearningwales.org

Don't forget OLW has a Facebook group and Twitter presence with lots of practical activities and interesting discussions.

Natural Resources Wales Education Team Update:

The team are delighted to welcome back Peter Morrison after a year's secondment as an Environment Officer.

Two of our team have impending nuptials in May. Juliette Staples is getting married at the beginning of the month and Llinos Richards a little later so good luck to both!

The team have been working on producing a list of adult training events for the whole year, offering a range of opportunities throughout Wales. Upcoming events include:

20th May – Science and Numeracy at Whixall Moss NNR, North Wales
17th June – Science at Tredegar House, Newport
25th June – Literacy and Numeracy at Scolton Manor, Pembrokeshire

For further information contact: sarah.jones@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

Quote of the month

“The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice.”
Peggy O’Mara

Fact of the Month

Did you know owls can’t move their eyes from side to side?

Collective noun of the month

A graft of tree surgeons

Activity of the Month

Clay Leaf Impressions

You can do this activity outside using air drying clay, plasticine or even mud!

Collect interesting leaves and flowers. Consider the impact on the local environment while you do this.

Shape your medium of choice and place on a flat surface. Apply your leaf or flower. You can experiment with how to make the best impression from pressing with hands to placing a bit of cloth and using a rolling pin.

If you are using air drying clay you could get creative with paint or make a pendant from the finished product

www.artfulparent.com



Plant of the Month

Cow Parsley / Anthriscus sylvestris

This is a short lived herbaceous plant belonging to the parsley family and are related to other plants from the Apiaceae family such as carrot, parsley, hogweed and hemlock.

These plants are also known as Wild Beaked Parsley, Wild Chervil, Queen Anne’s lace and Keck. They are often called Mother-die especially in the United Kingdom. It is a native of various parts of Europe, Asia and Africa

These herbaceous plants have an attractive appearance with dark green leaves and small white flowers.

They are among the most commonly seen plants in British countryside and grows to about 60 and 170 cm in height. The Stem is a hollow, slightly hairy branching into umbrella like flower clusters with small white flowers.

The triangular tripinnate leaves grow between 15 and 30 cm in length with ovate and subdivided leaflets.

These fern like leaves grow directly from the stems. They bear 6 mm long smooth lanceolate fruits.

These attractive plants are popularly grown for decorative purposes in wild flower gardens and as a companion plant for various types of ornamental grasses. They are cultivated as hardy biennials or short lived perennials.

Full sunlight is ideal for their proper growth.

However, these biennial plants also grow well under light shade. Warm temperate climates are ideal for them to grow properly.

These herbal medicinal plants have numerous health benefits to offer:

- The leaves and stems of Cow parsley have anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antioxidant, antiseptic, antispasmodic, anti-epileptic, antiviral and fungistat properties.
- The expectorant properties of these herbs make them beneficial for cough, cold and asthma.
- These plants are also believed to be able to prevent cancer.
- These anti-depressant, anti-anxiety and anti-stress herbs are beneficial for insomnia and sleeplessness.
- They are believed to be able to fight infertility



- Various researches show these plants to have the potential for working as an alternate medicine for various health disorders such as alzheimer's disease, crohn's disease, parkinson's disease.
- They are also beneficial for diabetes and leukemia.

These herbal plants are quite rich in various nutrients that help in the growth and immunity of human body. The leaves, flowers, stems and roots are used for various culinary and medicinal purposes. The leaves are widely used as herb despite having a strong and unpleasant aroma resembling that of carrot.

- These edible leaves are used in cooking as herbs.
- Cooked roots of these edible plants are consumed as food.
- The common name of these herbal plants Wild Chervil denotes that they are sometimes used as a substitute for the cultivated herb called Chervil even though they have a stronger aroma.
- Dried leaves of this plant are used for making herbal tea.

Other Uses

- A brilliant green dye can be obtained from the leaves and stems of Wild Chervil.
- This herb is directly applied to skin as a mosquito repellent.

There are no known side effects of using this herb in moderate amounts. However, they can cause different side effects in some people. One should be very careful while selecting and using the fernlike leaves of these herbal plants, as they look very similar to another poisonous species.

- The Cow Parsley seeds should not be planted around common carrot seeds as they ruin the carrot seeds by hybridizing with them.

www.onlyfoods.net

Recipe of the month

Wild Garlic Pesto



- 1 large bunch of wild garlic, washed
- 1 small bunch of curly parsley, washed
- 60gms pine nuts, toasted
- 60gms parmesan cheese
- 150mls olive oil (I mixed half extra virgin, half normal)
- Squeeze of lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

Place all the ingredients into a food processor apart from the olive oil and blitz for a minute or two then slowly pour in the olive oil until blended. Use for pasta, mash, dipping etc.

www.greatbritishchefs.com

Species of the Month

Hoverfly

Hover Flies (known in America as Flower Flies) belong to a large family of small to big flies.

They are true flies or Diptera, with only one pair of wings in the Family Syrphidae. (Wasps and bees have two pairs). Although these brightly-coloured insects look like bees or wasps, they do not sting.

Hoverflies are excellent examples of Batesian mimicry (named after H W Bates who first described it in 1862). They generally mimic bees and wasps – insects that sting and also taste unpleasant, so are avoided by predators. Drone-flies mimic honey bees, Volucella Bombylans has several different forms mimicking bumblebees, while others species are very convincing wasp mimics.

In Britain there are about 270 species are known at present, but significant species and numbers can migrate.

Hoverflies have spots, bands or stripes, of yellow, brown against a dark-coloured background, sometimes with dense hair covering the body surface (emulating furry bumble bees). Their fast flight, motionless flight and, in some species, their size are astonishing feats. Some Hovers are among the biggest flies of Central Europe. Many species are very colorful. It is not always that easy to identify hover flies. Some thick-headed flies and bee flies are similar and dark coloration makes it hard to identify them correctly at a glance. Bee flies tend to be longer hairy, have snouts and are a study in themselves! The Marmalade Fly is one of the most common hoverflies to be seen in the garden. The distinctive double stripes on the abdomen make it almost unmistakable.

Hovering is a speciality although other flies can also hover - the head of the insect remains absolutely still whilst in flight.

Many are seen in the summer season in number mixing with butterflies, bees, bumble bees and other flower dependent insects. Male Hovers tend to emerge and mature first, earlier in the season to ensure reproduction is successful. The degree to which they contribute to pollination is also ironically poorly investigated but no doubt are important for Carrot, Onion and fruit Trees.

You can generally see plenty of adults on flowers throughout spring, summer and autumn. Hoverfly larvae are varied too – some even resemble small slugs. They all have different feeding habits. Adults eat drink nectar and eat pollen and honeydew. Some species feed on dead insects. The larvae of different species eat different things. Some eat aphids. Some may eat plants, feed on rotting wood and fungi, attack bulbs or parasitise other insects. They may be seen "nectaring" on many wild and garden flowers where they are amongst the most frequent of visitors

They can be seen between March and November, depending on the species. Hovering near and resting on flowers. Many seem prone to entering conservatories and greenhouses.

This group is a useful indicator for evaluating site ecology, being a day active, with a varied range of larval habitat specialisations

www.rspb.org.uk
www.microscopy-uk.org.uk

Landscape of the Month

Marine Protection

Our seas are home to some of the best marine wildlife in Europe, with a wide diversity of underwater habitats and species. Many of our marine habitats and species are particularly rare and therefore of international importance.

Marine reserves aim to protect habitats and species in our seas by contributing to an ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas. The marine environment is coming under increasing pressure from human activity, which can damage and further threaten marine ecosystems.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are places at sea where human activities such as fishing are restricted. They are a tried and tested means of conserving habitats and wildlife at sea and there are many around the world.

MPAs don't just protect wildlife. They can have an influence beyond their boundaries, as growing wildlife populations spill out into the surrounding (non-protected) sea. In the UK there is a well-researched example of this at Lundy in the Bristol Channel where lobster in a 'no-take' zone were growing to be larger than those in the surrounding fished area as they were protected from fishing. Eventually the lobsters in the surrounding fished area became larger as they spread out from the area excluded to fishing.

If they are in the right place and part of a wider well-managed network of protected areas, MPAs can bring even greater benefits, improving the overall health of the marine environment and helping it recover from past impacts and sustain current pressures – living seas.

To achieve this, MPA networks must protect not just rare and threatened wildlife, but the whole range of 'typical' habitats and wildlife found in healthy seas. For us in the UK this includes habitats like our cold water reefs, seagrass meadows, kelp forests and sandy, gravelling or muddy sea floors.

In the UK Marine Protected Areas is the name we give to all types of protected area at sea.

However there are a number of different sites which make up our network of MPAs.

Marine protected areas are any area of sea, seabed or shore reserved by law or other means for the protection of the environment within. In Wales this includes:

- Special Areas of Conservation
- Special Protection Areas
- Marine Conservation Zones
- Ramsar Sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Marine Nature Reserve
-

The current network of marine protected areas in Welsh waters is extensive, covering 36.6% (5,834.68 km²) of Welsh Territorial seas. Because of this, the emphasis in Wales is on securing good conservation management of our sites, both individually and as a network of marine protected areas.

By protecting our marine environment now, we can ensure that our seas, which are a common resource, will continue to contribute to our society for generations to come.

www.naturalresourceswales.gov.uk
www.wildlifetrusts.org

Courses:

iWild North Wales

NatureSpy's exciting new project, funded by the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#), kicked off in February 2015. The iWild North Wales project seeks to directly introduce and connect local people to the wildlife living in their communities across North Wales (Wrexham, Flintshire & Denbighshire), primarily using wildlife camera traps. Come along to any of the [events](#) in the parks and nature reserves near you for a day learning about wildlife camera traps and the natural heritage in your area. We'll be placing camera traps during each event and collecting them 3 weeks later to see what animals call your community home!

The next iWild events are: Alyn Waters, Wrexham on the 25th April 2015 & Coed Cilygroeslwyd, Denbighshire on the 26th April 2015. All events are completely free and there is no need to book* - but you can always let us know you're coming along!

Contact: <http://www.naturespy.org/projects/iwild-north-wales/>

Paediatric First Aid for Outdoor Settings Course – First Aid International

Two day course for Outdoor Learning/Forest School Practitioners.

21st & 22nd May 2015 – Blaenavon Heritage Centre, Torfaen

Cost £120

Contact jonesoutdoors60@yahoo.com



Forest School Wales

16th May, Exploring Emotional Development and Facilitating Emotional Literacy in the context of Forest School (introductory) 10am – 4pm This day is open to all.

17th May, Deepening exploration of Emotional Development and Facilitating Emotional Literacy in the context of Forest School (for those who have attended day 1, or the previous CPD day held in 2013 on this topic). 10am – 4pm

The tutor for both these days is experienced Forest School Practitioner and Play Therapist, Maggie Fearn MA DATP. The course will be held at Pistyllgwyn, Carmarthenshire. Cost £25

Contact: www.forestschoolwales.org.uk

Plas Derw Trust

Literacy Numeracy Framework CPD (KS1) During these sessions the seasons are used as a vehicle for innovative stimulating ideas and activities covering large amounts of the Literacy Numeracy Framework in the outdoors. Activities used are mapped to the framework in the handouts to make planning your term more fun. Sessions are 9am-12noon 2015 dates are; Summer 13th May, Autumn 25th September and Winter 18th November 2015 and Spring March 16th 2016 Location: Glyndwr University, Northop, Cost: £50 per session **Contact:** www.plasderwforestschool.co.uk

101 things to do in the outdoors CPD (KS2) New for Key Stage 2 practitioners who would like to be inspired in ways to teach curriculum areas outdoors. Taking place over three sessions from March to September the sessions will include games and activities that will link to Maths, Creativity, developing writing, and PSE.

Activity handouts are included. Times: 10am-3pm. Dates: 14th May, 30th September 2015 23rd March 2016. Cost: £75 per session, discount for all three bookings. Location: Glyndwr University, Northop,

Contact: www.plasderwforestschool.co.uk

Ideas for using tools for Forest School, Often with our busy jobs and home life opportunities to take time and develop your own skills and ideas are few and far between. This one day course is designed for you to develop your skills become more confident in your tool use and develop ways to take it one step further within your settings. This course focuses on tools and the items you can make with them, small and large for young and older children. You will be given time to make your own examples to take back to your settings.

Date; 1st July 2015 10am-4pm. Location; Glyndwr University, Northop, Cost £75pp

Contact: www.plasderwforestschool.co.uk

Coastal School Practitioner Level 3, Uses the unique setting of our coastal regions to provide learning opportunities for your client group. It is an extension of the Forest School ethos applied to the coast. This unit can be an add on to a Forest School Level 3 practitioner award and past evidence can be adapted to cover elements of this course. It can also be a stand-alone qualification for those with no FS qualification.

Dates: 24th and 15th June 2015. Cost: £320 (for FS trained).

Contact: www.plasderwforestschoo.co.uk

Level 3 Forest School Course June 3rd 4th 5th 10th 11th 17th 18th - become a Forest School Practitioner take your groups out into local stimulating woodland or use and learn how to develop your own site. the course will give you confidence to safely teach; lighting and managing fires cook on a camp fire, along with using tools and gain skills to use the resources around us. This develops individuals to become more confident and skilled, increases personal, practical and social skills to name a few broadly. Glyndwr University Northop Cost £800

Contact: www.plasderwforestschoo.co.uk

Non-Native Species online training

Free online training in biosecurity is now available through the Non-Native Species Secretariat (NNSS) elearning site. The e-learning is based on an existing package developed by the Environment Agency and is ideal for use by anyone working in the field, including staff, volunteers and contractors. To take the training you will first need to register with the site. Once registered, you can take a test and download a certificate once you've passed.

Contact: <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/elearning>

Other News:

House Martin Count Survey 2015

This will involve volunteers visiting 2,000–3,000 'random' (i.e. pre-selected) 1-km squares throughout the UK.

By surveying random squares, we will be able to assume that our results are representative across a wider area, and produce a robust population estimate against which changes in the future can be measured.

How can I help?

We need volunteers who are willing to carry out two or three visits to a 1-km square between late May and mid-July, to look for House Martins and their nests.

Contact: <http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/house-martin-survey/house-martin-survey-2015>

Free Size of Wales Rainforest & Climate Change workshops

Size of Wales is a unique organisation that has campaigned successfully to help protect and sustain an area of rainforest the size of Wales. We have a limited number of free assemblies and workshop presentations on offer to schools across Wales for the Summer term. Workshops are tailored to all age groups (F/P-KS4) and aim to raise awareness of the effects of deforestation on both the human and natural environment. School visits usually entail an assembly and two 1hr workshops. You're able to tailor your pupils' experience by selecting from the following:

Rainforests & Deforestation workshop (KS1-4)

Climate Change workshop (KS1-4)

Forest Elephant workshop (Foundation phase)

Size of Wales Forest School workshops (Foundation phase-KS2)

Floating Garden Challenge (Practical climate change activity for Yr5/6 upwards)

We are now pleased to offer our new school twinning service with partner schools in Mbale, Uganda (the location of our 10 Million Trees project). As our education work aims to empower young people to take positive action against deforestation and climate change we ask that schools undertake a simple fundraising event as a thank you.

Contact: education@sizeofwales.org.uk

Muddy Faces

Free "frog activities" information download

I hope our free froggy download will help to inspire you with some ideas. It includes frog pebble painting, making a clay frog, together with some songs and interesting links. As well as offering 10% off products in our Living World section, we are also offering 10% off our Gardening resources too (with code FRG15N). Have you a garden or school pond with spawn? Freshwater Habitats Trust needs your help. Why not take part in this year's Big Spawn Count by counting the number of spawn present and record your findings.

Contacts: www.muddyfaces.co.uk

BBC Wildlife

BBC Wildlife is on the hunt for schools that are leading the way in natural-history education. Our new Schools' Digital Wildlife Award will celebrate the most innovative teachers and the most enthusiastic classrooms around the country. We are asking classes to submit a digital presentation from the classroom. It could be in the form of a three-minute video or a concise Prezi-style presentation that can combine words,

video and pictures. As long as the presentation relates to wildlife, you can choose any topic you like. In fact we'd like you to be as creative as possible when deciding your theme, but we've suggested some ideas below to help you get started. Your school wildlife zone -Your digital project could focus on your school's wildlife zone, reporting on the different species that live there, the behaviour you've seen and any seasonal changes. International conservation -You could report on a conservation issue somewhere in the world using research that has been discussed in the classroom – anywhere from Africa to the Antarctic, from rainforest to desert. Species-specific - Whether you've been studying birds, mammals, ocean wildlife or invertebrates, you can create a presentation that looks at groups of animals or even just a single species. Local wildlife Report on a wildlife reserve nearby, local conservation efforts or a specific species that is found in your area.

Contact: <http://www.discoverwildlife.com/competition/schools-digital-wildlife-award-2015-call-entries>

Wales Biodiversity Week is an annual week of wildlife-themed events that takes place all over Wales. If you would like to take part and feature your event please get in touch. Join thousands of people across Wales for Wildlife-themed public events and be inspired by Welsh wildlife! Celebrate the amazing wildlife diversity in Wales. From birds and bees in our gardens, alpine flowers in Snowdonia and seabird cities on Skomer – Welsh wildlife is stunning in its variety. Events take place throughout Wales from guided nature walks, bumblebee days, green fairs, Go Wild festival, hands on activities and wildlife advice and encouragement from local experts. Suitable for all ages, events are a great way to learn about the natural environment on your doorstep and its importance to our wellbeing.

Contact: <http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/96/en-GB/Wales-Biodiversity-Week>

Biodiversity in the Biosphere - 6th & 7th June

Cors Dyfi Reserve (MWT) and Ynys-hir Reserve (RSPB)

To celebrate Wales Biodiversity Week in the Dyfi Valley Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust are joining forces with RSPB Ynys-hir to showcase as much of our wonderful wildlife as can be crammed into one weekend. A whole host of activities are planned including a moth morning, pond dipping, wildlife spotter lists for each reserve

<http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/WBPEvent/Details/886/en-GB/-Biodiversity-in-the-Biosphere>

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Contributions: *Please submit suggestions for content or items of interest for upcoming bulletins by the 20th of the month. All submissions are subject to Coordinator approval.*

Disclaimer: *OLW and NRW are not responsible for the content, standard or reliability of the linked websites, courses or resources from this bulletin from external sources. Listing should not be taken as endorsement of any kind. We cannot guarantee that these links will work all of the time and we have no control over the availability of linked pages.*

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