

**Dysgu yn yr  
Awyr Agored  
Cymru**

**Outdoor  
Learning  
Wales**



## Outdoor Learning Wales April 2017 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:

#### OLW Project Grant

We are delighted to be able to offer an additional £2000 OLW Project Grant Scheme application round in June for this year only, so get together and develop your outdoor learning project ideas.

Once you have thought out your project please contact your NRW staff support person to discuss and get your application online for comment approximately 2 weeks prior to the final submission date of 1st June 2017.

The grant money will need to be match funded and, as well as cash, you can use "in kind" project development time and delivery time against this.

Only groups with completed and returned admin forms will be eligible.

#### OLW Small Grant

The wording and title of this form have been changed to comply with NRW finance requirements. The chair's or treasurer's contact details can be used to process the form with monies sent directly to the group account. We are trialling this system so apologies for any delays that may occur. The form will be available to download from the OLW website shortly under the title of OLW Service Application Form. Only groups who have returned a completed admin form will be eligible.

#### Network Group Meetings:

**Egin Conwy** OLW – Date: 05/04/17, Venue: SLlanrhos Woodland, Time: 4.30pm

**Dyfi** OLW – Date: 06/04/17, Venue: White Lion Pub, Time:

**RCT/Merthyr** OLW – Date: 06/04/17, Venue: Pontypridd Library, Time: 4.15pm

**Cardiff** OLW – Date: 25/04/17, Venue: Lanishen Fach Primary, Time: 4pm

**South Powys** OLW – Date: 27/04/17, Venue: Mount Street Primary, Time 4.15 PM

#### Training

**FREE training! From Raindrop to Kettle:** River systems, flooding, water resource management and much more

Date: 12th May 2017. The course will provide educators with the skills and knowledge to teach elements of the ICT, Numeracy, Literacy, ESDGC, Science, History and Geography curricula using the Rivers Dee and Tryweryn as the vehicle for learning.

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

#### Developing Your Natural Resources for Learning

In partnership with Techniquest

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> April - North Wales

Contact: [andrea@techniquest.org](mailto:andrea@techniquest.org)

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

[www.outdoorlearningwales.org](http://www.outdoorlearningwales.org)





### Recipe of the month

#### *Corn Pancakes*

This makes a great breakfast or a nice snack.

#### Ingredients

330g can of sweetcorn, drained  
2 medium eggs  
5 tbsp. milk  
25g butter, melted  
85g self-rising flour  
2 spring onions, finely chopped  
4 tbsp. sunflower oil, for shallow frying

#### Method

- Whisk the eggs, milk and butter together.
- Whisk in the flour and a large pinch of salt until smooth
- Mix in the corn and the spring onions.
- Heat the sunflower oil in an iron frying pan, fire wok, fire griddle or bottom of a Dutch oven.
- Add 4 large spoonfuls of the batter and fry for 1-2 minutes on each side until the pancakes are puffed up and golden.
- Lift out on to a plate lined with kitchen paper and cook the remaining 4 pancakes.
- Serve with sliced tomatoes, crispy bacon or with a dipping sauce of choice.

[www.bbcgoodfood.com](http://www.bbcgoodfood.com)



### Quote of the month

“In any given moment we have two options:

1. To step forward into growth
2. To step back into safety”

Abraham Maslow

### Activity of the Month

#### *Magic Flames*

This activity can be linked to potions, magic, chemistry, creative writing, etc.

- First off you will need to collect some pine cones. Why not try to ID the trees that they have come from?
- Pour salt into a large bowl of water until the water can absorb no more.
- Soak the pine cones in the solution for at least several hours.
- Remove and leave to dry overnight on newspaper or similar.
- Once dry they can be added to small campfires where the pine cone will burn with a yellow flame.
- Other substances will give different coloured flames e.g. borax = green flame, potassium chloride = purple flame.
- Differently treated pine cones need to be stored separately prior to use.

### Fact of the Month

Did you know giraffes can't swim?

### Plant of the Month



#### *Thrift*

This perky pink wildflower has been a favourite of gardeners since the 16th century. However, there is nothing to match seeing it in its natural habitat: atop dramatic coastal cliffs or astride craggy islands.

The globular heads of pink flowers have stalks 5-30cm long with flattened, linear, dark green leaves.

Thrift can be found across wild, coastal areas throughout the UK.

As well as rocky cliffs, Thrift can also be commonly found brightening up saltmarshes and other sandy areas. It has also started to appear inland on roadsides as salting creates favourable conditions.

Best time to see this plant is between April to July when it flowers.

Thrift is the county flower of Pembrokeshire/Sir Benfro, Bute and the Isles of Scilly.

In the Language of Flowers thrift stands for sympathy.

In Welsh Thrift is called clustog fair, Mary's pillow.

In Gaelic thrift is known as tonna chladaich, meaning 'beach wave'.

It is also known as Sea Pink, Rock Rose and Our Ladies Cushion.

Thrift was used as an emblem on the threepenny-bit between 1937 and 1953 - the Mint no doubt aware of the double meaning in its name.

[www.plantlife.org.uk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk)



### Species of the Month

#### *Sparrowhawk*

British sparrowhawks are largely resident, but migrants from northern Europe both pass through and winter here.

While the sparrowhawk is now one of the most widespread birds of prey in Britain, until a few decades ago it was more or less extinct in many eastern counties. This was partly due to persecution, but also due to pesticide use in agriculture. As well as killing individuals, the accumulation of harmful compounds thinned their eggs, which increased breakages during incubation. This led to a population decline.



Since bouncing back, sparrowhawks have spread into many suburban parks and gardens. Due to their efficiency at catching small birds, they have come into conflict with some garden birdwatchers, and have been blamed for the widespread decline of many songbirds. However there is little scientific evidence that supports this and other factors, such as habitat degradation, are more likely to be causing the declines.

Sparrowhawks prefer to nest in dense woodland and breed between May and July. Until the chicks are old enough to be left alone, the male does all the hunting, feeding the young and the female. Then both parents hunt for the juveniles, and continue to do so up to a month after the young have left the nest.

Sparrowhawks rely on the element of surprise and as such will often follow a regular route to get close to potential prey, which in gardens means using the cover of a hedge or shed. By moving feeding stations around your garden and keeping them close to cover, you can reduce the chance of a sparrowhawk attack. Sparrowhawks hunt by surprise, but frequently crash into windows when pursuing their prey, usually with fatal results.

Sparrowhawks are specialist hunters of birds. Despite this preference for feathered prey, they have been recorded taking a wide variety of small mammals, including bats captured in flight. Many of their victims are plucked and eaten while still alive. Contrary to popular belief, sparrowhawks do not control the numbers of their prey, but the numbers of prey control the number of sparrowhawks. Sparrowhawks do ensure that the populations of their prey are healthy by weeding out the sick and unwary. In medieval falconry, the sparrowhawk was deemed to be a bird for a priest.

Sparrowhawks frequently fall prey themselves to goshawks, who will not tolerate the smaller birds in their territory. Tawny owls are also major predators of young sparrowhawks.



Female sparrowhawks are typically 25% larger than males, but often twice as heavy.

Because of the size difference, male sparrowhawks court the females with caution, as the female can (and sometimes does) kill her suitor. The female is dependent on extra food provided by the male to produce sufficient fat to allow her to lay eggs.

In falconry the male spar has long been known as the musket. The name was later used for the small handgun used by soldiers (hence musketeers).

Most young sparrowhawks will breed within 20km of where they were raised.

Birds which use the same nesting territory in successive years will usually also have the same mate.

While a male sparrowhawk does well to live to seven or eight, the female may survive until she is ten or 11.  
Sparrowhawks gained full protection in Britain in 1961.  
[www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)



### **Collective noun of the month**

An ostentation of peacocks

### **Courses/Events:**

Mid Wales nursery with surplus apple trees - end of season bargain!!!

Surplus apple trees available at £4 each. Trees are grown in large cells, so can be planted anytime through the spring, or even kept till next winter.

They are a mix of eating, cooking and a few cider varieties  
£4 each

Trees are in bags of 15 or so so that's the minimum order size.

About 150-200 apple trees left.

Location Mid Wales.

Contact [gareth@welshtrees.co.uk](mailto:gareth@welshtrees.co.uk)

### ***Flytipping Action Wales***

#RCTWasteWeek starting on the 8th May

Resources and lesson plans for taking part in this eco school linked themed week will be accessible shortly.

Contact: Jayne Carter on 03000 65 3129.

### ***Plas Derw Trust – Outdoor Learning Training Network Wales Member***

Site Development;

Date: 4th April

Cost: £75

LNF in the Outdoors

Date: 25th April 2017

Cost: £50

### ***Cambium Sustainable – Outdoor Learning Training Network Wales Member***

Level 2 – Outdoor Learning Practitioner Training

Dates: May 18th & 19th + twilight on 28th September

Cost: £250 + VAT

Venue: Forest Farm, Cardiff

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

### ***Forest School SNPT- Outdoor Learning Training Network Wales Member***

Level 3 Certificate in Leading Forest School

Dates: 3-5 April 2017

Venue: Swansea

Contact: [info@forestschoolsnpt.org.uk](mailto:info@forestschoolsnpt.org.uk)/ 01792 367118

### ***Woodland Skills Centre***

Courses cover the following topics:

Managing a small woodland

Practical woodland tasks

Hedge laying

Timber processing

Home chainsaw

Know your trees

Basket making

Willow sculpture

Wood carving

Spoon carving

Greenwood crafts

Coppice crafts

Make a Longbow

Make a Coracle

Bush craft

Growing and using medicinal herbs

Venue: The Warren, Bodfari, Denbigh,

Contact: [enquiries@woodlandskillscentre.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@woodlandskillscentre.co.uk) / [www.woodlandskillscentre.co.uk](http://www.woodlandskillscentre.co.uk) / 01745 710626

### ***Assistant Dyfi Beach Ranger***

The sessions will run throughout the day, for six days, from the 14th August - 19th August 2017 and will be based on the beach in Aberdovey.

We are looking for assistants to work alongside the leader to help set up and run the sessions for children and their families.

Please email your CV to [info@teachoutdoors.co.uk](mailto:info@teachoutdoors.co.uk) or get in touch for further information

### ***Gwent Wildlife Trust***

Spring Fun Day

Date: 8th April 1-4pm

Cost: £2

Marshy Monday

Date: 10th April 1-3pm.

Cost: £2.

Venue: Magor Marsh Reserve

Contact: 01633 889048

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

### ***Centre for Alternative Energy***

Nature Connection

Date: 8th - 10th April 2017.

Cost: £35 - £55 per day.

Contact: [courses@cat.org.uk](mailto:courses@cat.org.uk) / 01654 704 966

### ***Rewilding Spirituality***

A spiritual exploration of our connection to the natural world

Weekend retreat

Date: 21-23rd April

Venue: nr Machynlleth

Cost: £85 to £130

Contact: [www.RewildEverything.org](http://www.RewildEverything.org) / (+44) 7795 311 414

### ***RSBB Conwy***

Have a Wild Time – free visits for primary schools

Contact: [ConwyLearning@rspb.org.uk](mailto:ConwyLearning@rspb.org.uk) / 01492584091

### ***Gower Hedgerow Survey***

Coeden Fach and the Gower Landscape Partnership are undertaking the ambitious task of surveying all of the hedgerows on Gower

Coeden Fach training days: 3rd & 22nd April & 4th May

Supervised Surveying days: 10th & 25th April & 11th May

Contact: [coedenfach.info@gmail.com](mailto:coedenfach.info@gmail.com) Tel: 07831 923244

### ***Llen Natur***

The latest edition of nature news in Welsh.

Contact: [www.llennatur.com/Drupal7/llennatur/](http://www.llennatur.com/Drupal7/llennatur/)

### ***Wales Biodiversity/Nature Week***

Celebrate the variety and beauty of our Welsh wildlife

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> June

Contact: [www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Wales-Biodiversity-Week](http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Wales-Biodiversity-Week)

British Wildlife Photography Awards

The 2017 competition is now open for entries and is open until 3rd June.

Contact: [www.bwpawards.org](http://www.bwpawards.org) -

### **Rooted Forest School**

Practical Skills for Forest School

Develop and expand your range of practical skills, including shelter building, fire lighting techniques, wild cooking, foraging, tool use and bush craft. A great top up for all Forest School Practitioners.

Date: 8th May 2017

Cost: £60

Venue: Queenswood Country Park, Leominster

Contact: 07891 173 950 / [samgoddard22@gmail.com](mailto:samgoddard22@gmail.com)

### **Actif Woods Merthyr**

Mindfulness in Woodlands—a one day introduction

Date: 14 April.

Venue: Taf Fechan Nature Reserve

Contact: [actifwoodsmarthyr@smallwoods.org.uk](mailto:actifwoodsmarthyr@smallwoods.org.uk) / 07765 213514

### **Ignite Up**

Ladybirds Spring Term Parent and Toddler

Date: April 10

Easter Adventure Camp (8-12yr olds)

Date: April 8-10 & 18 -20



### **Natural Resources Wales (NRW)**

Free rod licence for 12 to 16 year-olds, to encourage more young people to give fishing a go and boost the future of the sport. Junior anglers will still need to register online before they go fishing.

Licences can be purchased quickly and easily online now at “Get a Fishing Licence” on GOV.UK

### **The Ark of Taste**

@SlowFoodSEWales is launching a mouth-watering project to help us all remember, celebrate and continue to enjoy our favourite foods that make food in Wales so unique.

Date: 29th April

Venue: Cynon Valley Museum, Aberdare

### **Contact Us:**

Karen Clarke

OLW National Coordinator

Natural Resources Wales

0300 065 3609 / 07721 302667

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



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### **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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