

**Dysgu yn yr  
Awyr Agored  
Cymru**

**Outdoor  
Learning  
Wales**



## Outdoor Learning Wales February 2020 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:

Great to see a brand-new decade of outdoor learning kicking off with so many OLW network group meetings in January!

The launch of very first **Wales Outdoor Learning Week (WOLW)** last year was an incredible success, so get the dates in the diary for 2020 and start planning how you and your learners can get involved!

This year's WOLW will run from the **30<sup>th</sup> March to 5<sup>th</sup> April**.

Use the hashtags [#WalesOutdoorLearningWeek](#) [#WythnosDysguAwyrAgored](#)

### **OLW Project Fund**

OLW funding is available to constituted OLW network groups and not individuals or organisations.

So, what is available this year?

The large project fund is available for applying for up to £2000 for an outdoor learning project are 1<sup>st</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> October. Each network group can apply at both opportunities. The online application form is available via the OLW network group's webpage.

OLW are offering each group a **themed project fund of £500** to get involved and deliver a small project/event linked to **Wales Outdoor Learning Week**.

The **small project fund** of £500 is available to every network group as of the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 to facilitate groups meetings, activities, small events/CPD/resources, etc.



All the funding forms are available on the [OLW website](#).

As usual, each network group will be required to complete and return the network group **Administration Form** to be eligible for funding.

### **Network Group Meetings:**

**Group:** Swansea NPT OLW, **Date:** 13/02/20, **Venue:** Gowerton Primary, **Time:** 4.15pm

**Group:** Cardiff OLW, **Date:** 27/02/20, **Venue:** Coryton Primary, **Time:** 4pm

### **Excellence in Forestry**

Lastly what better way to celebrate the achievements of your OLW group than by applying for this year's Excellence in Forestry Award run by the Royal Forestry Society. There is a section entitled **Education and Learning Award** which is open to all schools, colleges, universities and training providers. The closing date is March 3<sup>rd</sup> and details are all on the [RFS website](#).

### Recipe of the month

#### *Caramel Apple Bomb*

Ingredients (make 4 portions)

Apples

Caramel sweets

Foil

- Cut the apple in half.
- Remove the core
- Place caramel sweet in the space left of one half.
- Place both halves of the apple together.
- Double wrap the apple in foil.
- Cook in the banked camp fire for approximately 30 minutes until the apple has baked.
- Open the foil carefully, allow to cool and enjoy.



### Quote of the month

*"Anything you teach in an indoor classroom can be taught outdoors, often in ways that are more enjoyable for children"*

Cathy James

### Activity of the Month

#### *Habitat/Deadhead Fence*



Create a habitat that will become home to a micro menagerie!

Chose the site for your fencing which can be any size or length, e.g. as a boundary for a school edible garden.

Collect some hard wood poles or sticks such as Hazel.

Cut them to the height of the fence you want allowing for part of the pole/stick to be placed into the ground.

You can sharpen the ends before driving them into the ground in a line, leaving spaces in between.

The size of the space will depend on the height and length of your fence.

You can make an extra wide fence by making another line parallel to the first, with a space in between, for filling in with brash.

Collect some more long, flexible whips and sticks and weave them horizontally and haphazardly between the vertical poles/sticks.

Once you have enough structure experiment with brash to fill in the gaps. Small branches, cones, fallen leaves, etc, will provide useful homes and habitats for creatures as they rot down.

This fence will rot like a tree stump, enabling and creating biodiversity.

### Fact of the Month

Did you know that bees or the wind pollinate most plants in the world?

### Collective noun of the month

A cast of falcons.

### Species of the Month

#### *Coal tit / Periparus ater*

Coal tits prefer conifer woodland, particularly during the breeding season.

Although they resemble the larger great tit, they can be identified by the white stripe down the back of the head and the light brown flanks.

The Coal Tit is our smallest member of the Tit family. It is a regular garden bird and will visit feeders and tables frequently. If you use peanut feeders, you'll have a good chance of attracting one. especially if there are Pines or Spruce trees nearby.

Coal Tits are busy, hyperactive little birds. Both sexes are alike, with tail and wings being a pale blue grey. Wings show two white wing bars along with white tips to the tertial feathers.

The back and mantle are the same blue grey colour of the wings. The head is black and white and has large white cheek patches.

The most important identification feature is the white nape patch on the back of the head, the rest of the head is black, including the chin.

The underparts are a lovely buffy thorn colour, sometimes looking salmon pink in bright sunshine.

The bill is black, longer than Blue's and fragile looking, legs are dark grey, eye black.

Juveniles appear from the end of April onwards and look like a washed-out adult. Coal Tits live for about 2 years, have 1 to 2 clutches during their breeding life.

The Coal Tit is a very abundant breeding resident in the UK with around 600,000 pairs. The Coal Tit occurs in all counties throughout the UK. Coal Tits will nest in manmade nest boxes, these should be placed 2-4 metres up and facing North/East.

Coal Tits occur in all habitat types throughout the UK, however they do prefer conifers, pines, spruce woodlands, parks, gardens, farmland, hedgerows and any open country habitat with suitable scrub. In the garden, Coal Tits love peanuts, insects, seed mixes, mealworms, suet and fat balls.

Coal Tits have a few call notes; most often is a buzzy, 'tuu tee tuu e' which is repeated.

Song is a loud repeated trill, similar to Great Tits.....'pitchoo pitchoo pitchoo pitchoo'

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

### Plant of the Month

*Whitebeam / Sorbus aria*

Whitebeam is a deciduous broadleaf tree that is compact and domed.

Mature trees can grow to a height of 15m.

The bark and twigs are smooth and grey, and the shoots are brick red in sunlight but greyish-green in shade. The oval, serrated-edged leaves are softly hairy underneath and dark green and shiny on top.

Identified in winter by the young twigs which start hairy and become smooth later. Only the edges of the buds are hairy.

Leaf buds are green and pointed and leaf stalks are short. Leaves are thick, oval and irregularly toothed, with the underneath covered in white, felt-like hair. When the leaves first unfold, they look like magnolia flowers. They fade to a rich russet colour before falling in autumn.

Whitebeam is hermaphrodite, meaning each flower contains both male and female reproductive parts. The five-petalled flowers appear in clusters in May and are pollinated by insects.

Flowers develop into scarlet berries, which ripen in late summer or autumn. These can be eaten in the same way as rowan, in jellies and jams.

The flowers are pollinated by insects and the berries are favoured by birds. The leaves are eaten by caterpillars of several moths.

Whitebeam timber is fine-grained, hard and white. Traditional uses included wood turning and fine joinery, including chairs, beams, cogs and wheels in machinery.

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



### Courses

#### **Forest School SNPT – recommended Outdoor Learning Training Network member**

Forest School Leader Agored Cymru Level 3

Date: 16, 17 & 18 March and 27, 28 & 29 April

Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre, Swansea

Cost: £900

Coastal School Top Up Agored Cymru Level 3

Date: 20 & 21 May

Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre, Swansea

Cost: £240

Forest School Assistant Agored Cymru Level 2

Date: 16, 17 & 18 March and 28 April

Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre, Swansea

Cost: £400

Outdoor Learning Practitioner Agored Cymru Level 2  
Date: 12 & 26 March and 23 April  
Venue: Bishops Wood Countryside Centre, Swansea  
Cost: £300  
Contact: [info@forestschooolsnpt.org.uk](mailto:info@forestschooolsnpt.org.uk)

***Cambium Sustainable – recommended Outdoor Learning Training Network member***

Award in Outdoor Learning Practice level 2  
Date: March 26th, April 2nd, and July 1st  
Venue: GWT Environmental Resource Centre, Ebbw Vale  
Cost: £300  
Contact: [magormarsh@gwentwildlife.org](mailto:magormarsh@gwentwildlife.org)

New courses on offer for 2020

- Dealing with Challenging Behaviour in the Outdoors
- Learning in the Outdoors - Qualifications for Young People
- Woodland Management
- Wellbeing in Nature

Contact: [info@cambiumsustainable.co.uk](mailto:info@cambiumsustainable.co.uk)

***Beach Academy Wales – recommended Outdoor Learning Training Network member***

Beach Arts & Crafts

Use sand as paint, water to sculpt, shells to scoop, drift to make marks.

Loads of Visual Arts activity ideas to take away with you that are sustainable and sensitive to nature and the seasons.

Date: 13th March, 1.30 - 3.30pm

Cost: £45pp (students 40% off)

How to Rockpool

Handling techniques, identification skills, what equipment to use and much more. Lots of activity ideas to take away with you that are sustainable and sensitive to nature and the seasons. Date: 21st March, 11-1pm

Cost: £45pp (students 40% off)

Beach Teaching the Basics

Build your skills and confidence. Training includes understanding tides, animal and plant identification skills, beach activity ideas and safety considerations.

Date: 25th March, 10-3pm

Cost: £75pp (students 40% off) (Non accredited)

Contact: [www.beachacademywales.com/training](http://www.beachacademywales.com/training)

***RHS School Gardening***

Explorify in the Garden with the Wellcome Trust

Date: 13/05/20

Venue: Llwynyrwn Primary School, Pontypridd

Cost: £40

Contact: [RHS School Gardening](#)

**Events and Funding**

**Local Schools Nature Grants Scheme**

Apply for £500 worth of outdoor resources, and a two-hour training session thanks to Postcode Local Trust, which receives funding from players of People's Postcode Lottery.

<https://www.ltl.org.uk/nature-grant/>

**Renew Wales**

Puts communities in touch with Peer Mentors who are willing to share their knowledge and experience to inspire, support and enable others, and stimulate action on climate change at a community level.

<https://renewwales.org.uk/about-us/how-does-renew-wales-work/>

## **Awards for All**

Funding for projects that involve and support communities:

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-wales#section-3>

## **Field Studies Council, Margam Park**

FSC Bursary provides support to individuals who are from disadvantaged backgrounds enabling them to take part in FSC curriculum focussed courses with their school class.

<https://www.field-studies-council.org/the-fsc-bursary-fund/>

## **International School Grounds Alliance Conference**

Date: 24-26<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Venue: Stirling

Contact: <https://www.itl.org.uk/ISGA2020>

## **PondNet Spawn Survey**

February- May (to be confirmed)

## **World Wetlands Day**

2nd February

## **Big Farmland Bird Count**

7-16 February

## **National Nest Box Week**

14-21 February

## **World Wildlife Day**

3 March

### **Contact Us:**

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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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