

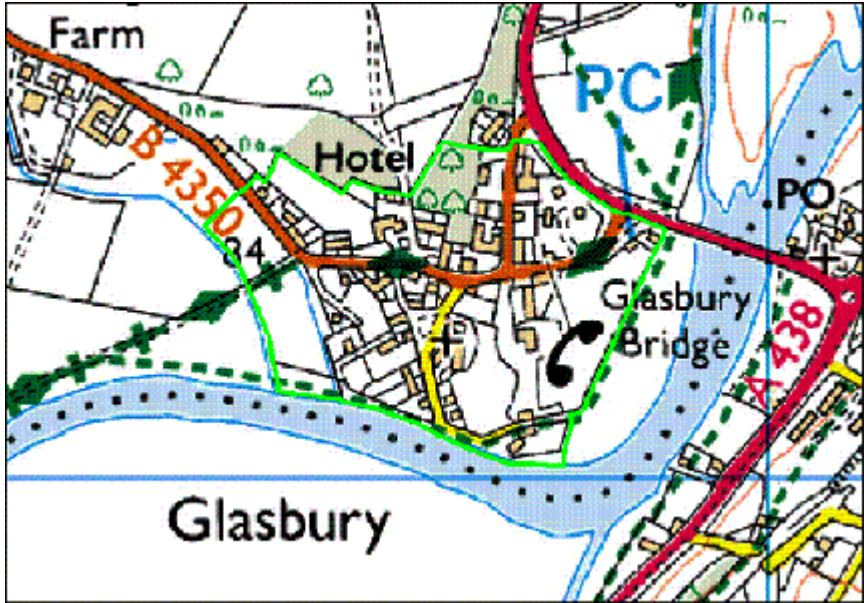
ECEY 6005

2405763

Sustainability in the Early Years

**John Muir
Scrap Book**

Discover



My chosen area is in Glasbury also known as Glasbury-On-wye. This is a village located in Powys. The place I have chosen is known as the Bont it was formally known as Glas-Y-Bont. This area consists of the River Wye with a shingle beach and a large open grassed area to explore. This is a special place for myself and my family as we have spent many days exploring down here over the years, especially when my daughters were younger. This place always helps with my wellbeing it makes me feel relaxed and happy.

Discover

- You can find the Bont just off the A483 that runs from Hereford to Brecon.
- The famous town of books Hay-on Wye is just over five miles away.
- Brecon is twelve miles away from Glasbury.
- The area consists of camping sites and b & bs.
- This area is very popular with local dog walkers.
- The Bont is a popular location for tourists, especially on hot summer days. This can cause issues with traffic as many park all over the village including the grass verges on the roadside.

Explore.



This area has several different ways to enter including gates and stiles. Natural resources Wales (NRW) stopped the rights for the launching of public canoes from the common beach in 2021, however just over the other side of the bridge a local company have the rights to launch from there.

Explore.



The ownership of the land at the Bont is divided between the public, local community and private rights.
The Shingle beach and the grassy surroundings are known as common land.

Explore.



The river Wye runs through here and has a protected status, which means this area is highly protected by the law as a special area of conservation (SAC).

Explore



I was lucky enough to spot a beautiful swan swimming in the river, the swans are often found here, and in the past, myself and my family have been lucky to spot them with their cygnets.

There are often ducks swimming in this part and searching for food.

Many different species of ducks can be found here which include:

- The mandarin duck (Which is pictured swimming in the river above).
- The mallard duck this is the most common duck found here (please see example above).
- Teal and wigeon which can be seen during winter months.

Explore

When I stood quietly looking into the clear water, I could see many fish swimming around, however many were too small to capture on my camera. This area is known to house many coarse fish and game fish.

Here are some examples of some of the types of fish that live in this part of the River Wye:

- Atlantic salmon are the wye's most famous ones, these lay eggs in the shallow bed found down the Bont.
- Brown trout.
- Sea, river and brook lampreys



Atlantic salmon.



Brown trout.



Lampreys.



Explore

Whilst walking around the damp banks of the river and exploring the undergrowth I could hear and see many insects. The distinctive zipping and ticking sounds of many crickets and grasshoppers hiding in the long overgrown grass. I could hear buzzing from the bumblebees exploring the wildflowers. As I walked through the woodland area we could see hundreds of midges dancing in the sky.



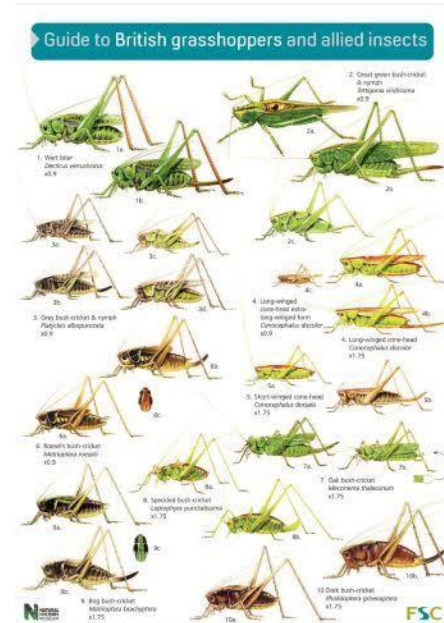
ECEY 6005 2405763



Explore insect life.



Examples of some of the insects I saw or that can be found in the area.



Explore plant life.

Whilst walking around I noticed the air was thick with a heavy honeyed fragrance. There were clusters of bright yellow marsh marigolds and delicate white water crowfoot flowers. When I looked closer, I saw what I can only describe as a wall of purple and pink Himalayan Balsam's they smelt strong yet sweet. All the times I had visited here I had never noticed all the different coloured flowers.



Discover trees.



There is a fantastic wood area on this site with a path that goes around the outside and then down through the middle. This area provides shelter and habitats for the wildlife. I stood in the middle of the wood and just stopped and listened I could hear so many birds singing high up above me. My children use to love watching the samaras fall from the trees and use to call them helicopters. These types of trees provide great shade for the fish in the river.



Sycamore trees.

In autumn when the seeds fall to the ground, they provide food for mice, voles and squirrels.



Sycamore trees provide nectar and pollen in the spring which is vital food for bees and aphids. Small birds such as blue tit eat the aphids so they gather in these trees to hunt them.

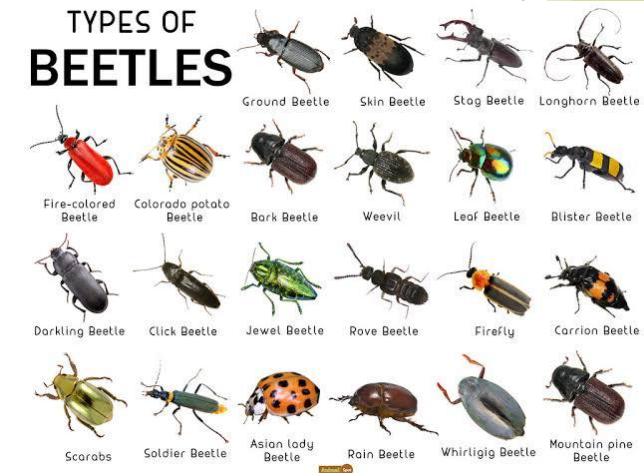
Discover trees.



There are many horse chestnut trees also known as conker trees in this area. These trees produce flowers in the spring that provide nectar and pollen for the bumblebees and honeybees. The conkers are a food source for many wildlife including squirrels and mice. The branches in these trees provide shelter for nesting birds and spots for bats too.



There is one weeping willow tree here these types of trees are often found near water. This tree supports many insects they can host hundreds of caterpillars, beetles and bugs. These insects attract many birds that flock here to find food. Otters use the roots to hide and build their dens in.



Discover Oak trees.



There are many oak trees in this area these support the ecosystem and provide food sources for many birds. The acorns that grow on here provide high fat food sources for mice, squirrels and badgers.

The hollows that appear in oak trees provide great roosting places for bats and nesting holes for owls.



Did you know that oak trees can support over 2,300 different types of wildlife species, this includes over 280 different insects.



Discover silver birch trees.



There are quite a few silver birch trees in this area. Silver birch trees support over 300 species of insects, caterpillars and ladybirds are examples that live in the leaves. In autumn and winter, the trees drop thousands of tiny seeds the colourful types of birds rely on these seeds to survive the colder months.



Silver birch trees have a paper like bark as it ages it hosts fungi. The dead birch rots providing the perfect place for woodpeckers to make holes for nests and hunt beetles.

Discover pollution.

There have been many things posted on social media, in the local newspapers and even on the BBC news about the pollution in the river wye. There is a group of local volunteers that regularly test the water down stream in Hay on Wye. They often find high levels of E. coli.



The causes of the pollution are apparently from:

- **Chicken farming-** massive amounts of chicken manure is used as fertilisers on fields and when it rains this washes the phosphates into the river. This is the largest cause of pollution in the river wye around 70%.
- **Sewage-** Welsh water regularly release untreated human sewage into the river wye.
- **Littering-** I have witnessed this myself after a busy hot day down the river the next morning there has been litter left behind. Plastic bottles and food wrappers break down into microscopic pieces called microplastic and then the wildlife such as fish, ducks and cygnets eat these which poisons their digestive system.



Conserve.

After undertaking this research, it got myself thinking about what I could do to help other local environments. I spoke to my work colleagues about a potential trip down to the Bont with the children and to make some bug houses and do some litter picking. After talking it through with management they decided that it would not be finically viable to take the children on a trip there so I decided to share with the children the importance of not throwing litter away and spoke about the impact it could have on wildlife.



I read this book to the children in my school to make them understand what dangers littering can cause to the wildlife.



After hearing this story, the children were inspired to create there own clean up crew and we went litter picking in the nearby woods.

Share.



I took my family and friends down the Bont with me to explore the area. We discussed the sounds of the wildlife and how it made us feel. We talked about the littering and the effects it can have on the wildlife.



I spoke to my class about my findings, and we discussed the importance of looking after the environment we live in. We read a story about pollution in another country which led us to decide to do our own litter pick in the local area to the school. We also have plans to make bughouses to place in our forest school area.



John Muir fact file

- Born in Dunbar, Scotland in April 1838.
- Family emigrated to a farm in Wisconsin in the United States when he was 11 years old.
- He had a passion for nature and in 1867 after an eye injury he decided to devote his life to studying the natural world.
- He took part in a thousand mile journey from Indiana to Florida.
- He spent many years exploring the mountains in parts of the United States.
- He wrote books, articles and gave speeches to help people understand why nature matters.
- He encouraged others to help look after nature.
- In 1892 he help form the Sierra club and was there first president. This remains one of the largest environmental group in the USA.
- He believed that people protect nature best when they have experienced it for themselves.
- He influenced so many to help protect nature.

