



A Sustainable Future

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A New World

I have always had a passion for the outdoors since I was a young child as I am intrigued by the way nature can be magical and full of surprises. I would frequently spend time with my grandmother planting flowers and shrubs in our garden but the responsibility of adulthood takes you to a world which is full of hustle and bustle with little time to appreciate the wonderful world around us. I am grateful to the John Muir Award experience as it has taken me on a journey and opened my eyes to the incredible joys of nature.

Discover Discover Discover

My chosen area of discovery is Clyne Gardens which is a specialist botanical park of historical interest located to the west of Swansea between the City Centre and Mumbles.

Why Clyne Gardens?

The gardens have always held a special place in my heart and I would visit the location regularly with my family to share a picnic. More recently, the gardens have an increased significance for me since my friends organized to have a Silver Birch tree planted here following the loss of my son at the age of two. The tree represents life and as the tree has grown I can visualize my son growing. It provides an umbrella of hope and whenever I visit I feel that the tree embraces me and helps me look to the future that is sustainable as it stands tall and vibrant.



Features of Clyne Gardens

The gardens at Clyne consist of 19 hectares of land and include over 2,000 different plants including over 800 rhododendrons for which the gardens are renowned.

Clyne Gardens contains varied National Collections of plants set in beautiful parkland. The gardens offer a haven of tranquillity, wonderful planting and interesting features including a bog garden, a bluebell wood, a gazebo, a Japanese bridge and of course the castle.

The gardens were established over 150 years ago demonstrating historical sustainability, even more so, much of the gardens still remain the same.





The Striking Silver Birch

The Silver Birch is a medium sized deciduous tree. When fully mature they can reach 30 metres in height, forming a light canopy with elegant, drooping branches. The twigs are smooth and have small dark warts. The leaves are light green, small and triangular shaped with a toothed edge which fade to yellow in autumn.



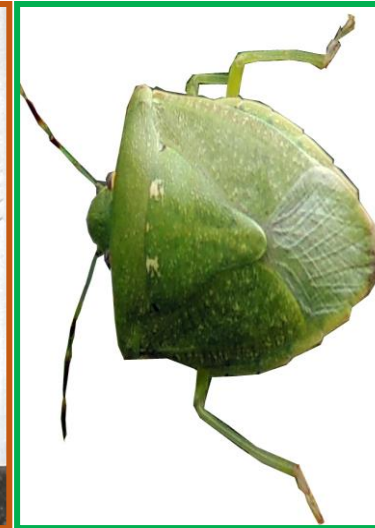
The Beauty of the Bark

The white bark sheds layers like tissue paper and becomes black and rugged at the base. As the tree matures, the bark develops dark, diamond-shaped fissures. This is a fact I was not aware of until beginning the John Muir Award. This makes it more attractive to birds and insects. Therefore it will figure higher in the sustainability chain.



The Bug Hotel

The addition of a bug hotel to any area outdoors assists in supporting the world around us since insects such as ladybirds, bees, spiders and woodlice are attracted to them as they feel like it is a safe place to set up home. These minibeasts then lay their eggs, raise their young and seek refuge from predators. Furthermore, it supports sustainability through supporting the life cycle of these insects but also support humans as they are natural waste processors. They can be used for food for other animals for example, chickens which are then eaten by humans and insects have a significant in a sustainable future.



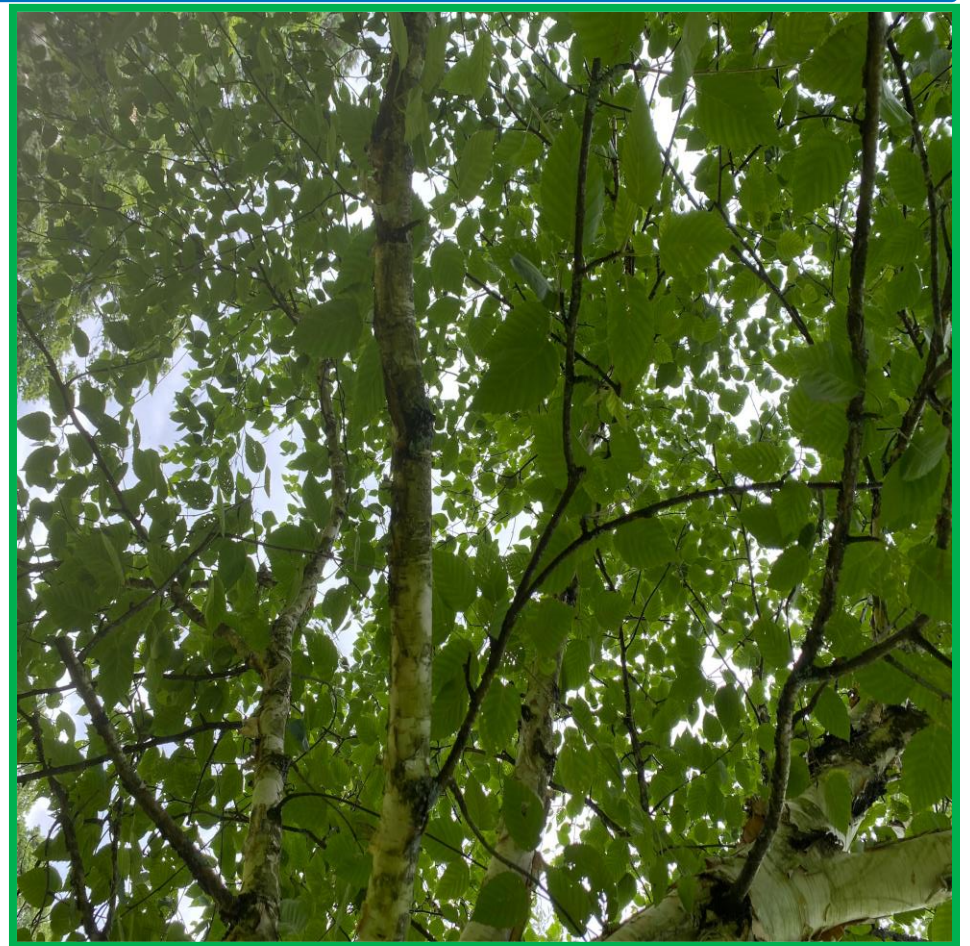
The Bird Feeder

I placed a bird feeder containing seeds on the branch of the silver birch to attract more birds. The benefit of a bird feeder is that during the nesting season birds require a reliable source of food. It has been proven that in areas where there are bird feeders present it increases the survival rate of baby birds by 38%. When I returned to the tree I viewed a varied range of bird species.



The Perfect Location

The silver birch stands directly in line with Mumbles Bay demonstrating the unique link between the living world at sea and the living world on land both of which are vital for sustainability and unless we as humans give them the care and consideration they deserve, we risk them being damaged or even worse destroyed



A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

WHO
IS
RESPONSIBLE?



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V
E
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Y
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"WE DO NOT INHERIT THE
EARTH FROM OUR
ANCESTORS; WE BORROW IT
FROM OUR CHILDREN."

Native American Proverb