



ECEY6005
Regaining paradise -
Sustainability in the
Early Years
2105738

CWm Nant Yr Arllwys Farm

- My Family Farm



THE JOHN MUIR AWARD

JOHN
MUIR
TRUST

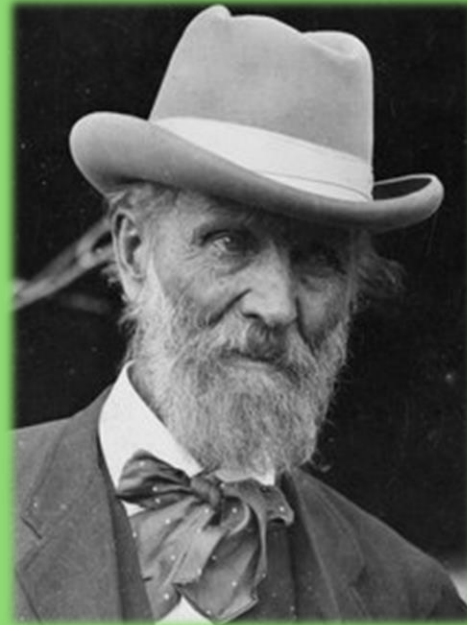
FOR
wild LAND &
wild PLACES



Doing this John Muir Award has allowed me to take the time to explore my family's farm more in-depth and discover new and wonderful things about this beautiful environment. The Photos taken in this scrapbook were taken during 4 separate explorations. I have thoroughly enjoyed this experience and will be sharing it with the children and teachers in my school in the hope of inspiring others.



What is it?
The John Muir award encourages individuals of all ages to get out and connect with nature. You will Explore, Discover, Conserve and Share during the John Muir Award and learn how to care for our environment.



HISTORY



Growing up here meant I was able to develop a strong connection to nature and animals. I also had to learn about responsibility, hard work and the importance of sustainable living. I have helped my grandparents grow different vegetables, learn how to take care of the animals, and help as my family would grow, cut and bale up the hay in the summertime, ready for the animals to eat during the winter months. This experience has provided me with valuable life skills such as problem solving, independence and a deep appreciation for the environment.

Within my own practice I would love to encourage children to engage with nature more, as this offers many learning opportunities, sparking curiosity and new conversations.

I have chosen to do my John Muir experience on this farm as it is a very special place to me. This farm has been in my family for almost 75 years! My great, great grandfather had a tenancy on this farm from the Jersey estate back in 1950. My grandparents then bought the farm in 1962 and lived there for the rest of their days. My father and his brother were born and grew up here. Then I was lucky enough to grow up here, which I believe offered me a unique and enriching experience.

The above photo was taken back in 1980, therefore it has changed and evolved over the years. A few more stables and sheds were built and back in 2006 my father built a new house on the farm, which meant that my parents, myself and my brother were able to move to live on the farm right next door to my grandparents.



EXPLORE



Having grown up on this farm I have had plenty of opportunities to explore and discover the nature and wildlife that inhabits here, and to see how it has changed over the years. During my John Muir experience I threw on my wellies and took my dog for a stroll through the woodland, until we reached this reservoir. I have always loved walking down to this reservoir as I believe it is a wonderful way to connect with nature and take in the beauty of this peaceful environment. Since doing my John Muir Award it has allowed me to explore even deeper into this beautiful place and appreciate all that it has to offer.

This reservoir and the surrounding area is home to many insects, amphibians, fish and birds. If you are lucky enough you may just spot some when visiting!

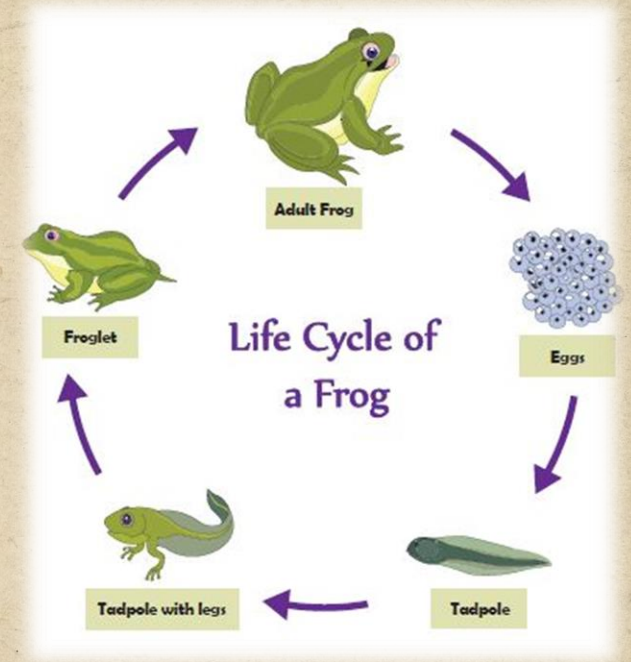
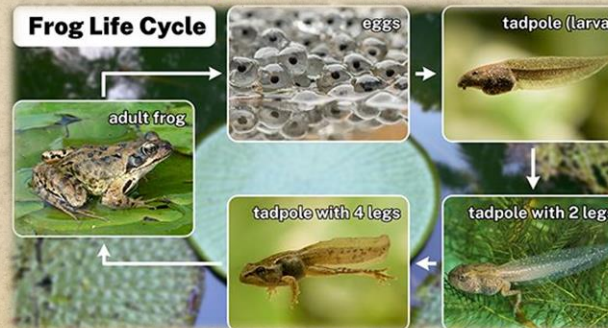
DISCOVER



During my recent visit to the reservoir, I was thrilled to have discovered some tadpoles in the water. I closely observed as these tiny creatures swam around.

Upon discovering these tadpoles, I wondered how long it would take for them to turn into frogs. I decided to research this and found out that the process usually takes 6 to 12 weeks. During my research I discovered that tadpoles undergo a fascinating process called metamorphosis, where they gradually develop legs, lose their tails and transform into frogs.

This would be a wonderful opportunity to teach young children about the life cycle of a frog and how they become the creatures they are. It would be amazing and educational for young children to check up on the tadpoles daily and observe this natural transformation process. Something I would like to focus more on in my own practice with young children is to bring them out into nature more to observe events like this one.



PLANTING FLOWERS



These flowers are planted in the garden on the farm. I really love how colourful they are and during the summer the garden is full of bees!

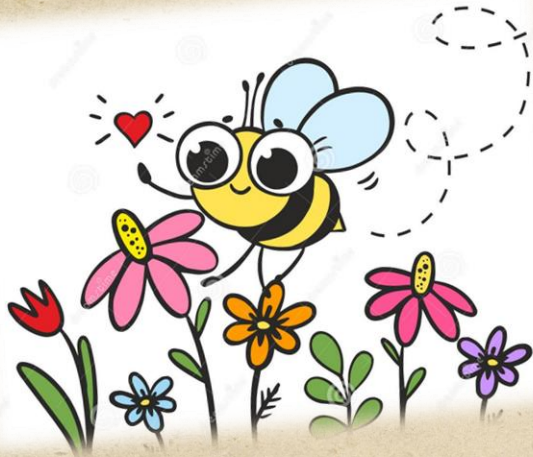
Planting these flowers promotes sustainable development because it helps to support pollinators like bees and butterflies. These are essential for the farm eco system. These flowers have been planted in the garden to create a habitat for these pollinators, as well as beautifying the surroundings. I learnt that this ensures we contribute to biodiversity and the health of our environment. During my research I also learnt that they help to improve air quality and reduce soil erosion, making it a sustainable practice that benefits both nature and our well-being.

I would like to ensure in my own practice that children have the opportunity to plant their own flowers and observe as they bloom in different seasons. I believe this would be a good opportunity for children to learn about photosynthesis. They can learn that the flowers they plant help to improve our air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. Having this hands-on experience will have a direct benefit on a child's holistic development, as well as promoting their well-being.

Admiring these flowers and learning more about why they are important for the sustainability of our environment inspired me to write a short story about the pollination process. I will share this the children in my setting in the hope that this will spark awe and wonder.

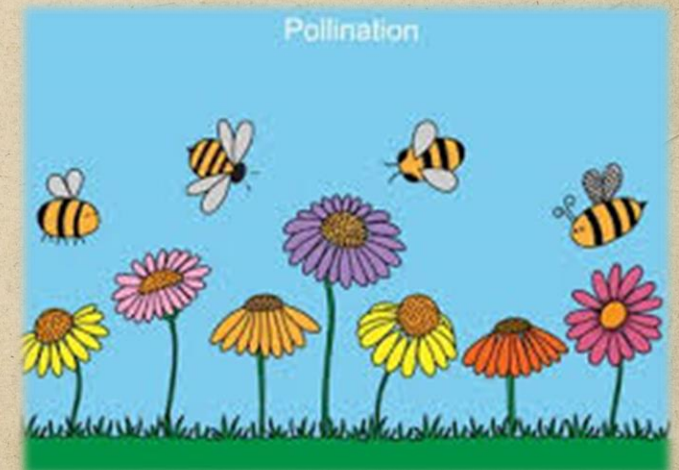


BEE'S LOVE FLOWERS



In the magical garden full of flowers and bee's, let's imagine beautiful colourful flowers blooming in the warm sunshine. Busy bee's buzz around, visiting each flower to collect delicious nectar. As the bee's move from flower to flower, they help the flowers by carrying tiny grains of pollen on their bodies, which helps the plants grow and produce delicious fruits and seeds. The flower and bee's work together in harmony, creating a vibrant and thriving garden full of life and wonder.

Bee's love flowers, yes they do.



EXPLORING HABITATS



Whilst exploring in the woodland I stumbled upon some different habitats. It made me wonder what type of animals would inhabit here. This inspired me to do some research into this subject. I learnt that animals create many unique habitats, such as burrows for small animals like rabbits, or hollow trees for birds, underground tunnels for moles and dens for foxes. Each of these habitats is specially adapted to suit the needs of the different animals that call the woodland their home.

The tree to the right looks as if a woodpecker has created the hole with his beak. Birds like woodpeckers often nest in hollow trees like this.

Taking children to the woodland to see where different animals inhabit can be an enriching learning experience for them. This can help children connect with nature just as I did when growing up, which has had a lasting positive effect on my life. This experience can also help children understand the importance of wildlife habitats and encourage curiosity, empathy, and a sense of wonder about the natural world. Whilst also allowing them to foster a love for nature and conservation from a young age. I am so passionate about outdoor learning in nature with young children, as I believe it is a great way to spark their interest in the environment and wildlife.



HABITATS & CONSERVATION

We can teach children about conservation in a woodland area by bringing them out into nature. This will spark new conversations where children can learn about the importance of preserving natural habitats for animals and how they can help to protect the environment for future generations. I believe that having this hands-on experience in nature can be a powerful way to instil a sense of responsibility and care for the environment in children.

Ways in which I would like to teach the children in my practice about conservation is by engaging them in activities like litter picking. We could discuss the reasons as to why we should recycle our rubbish and the consequences on the environment and the wildlife for not doing so. It is important for children to understand the process of recycling and know that we can make a difference to the environment.

Another activity we could do is create bird feeders to hang in the trees. This is a great way to teach children about wildlife and conservation, I remember making birdfeeders when I was in primary school. I have fond memories about engaging in these activities, and it was extremely rewarding when I could see the birds eating the food I provided.

Engaging in this activity would also be an opportunity to teach children about different bird species, and understand the importance of providing food for birds, especially during poor weather conditions or when food is limited. This is also a great way to encourage creativity in

children and allows them to feel a sense of accomplishment when they see the birds using them. The bird feeder in the picture above was made by myself in one of my lectures. Engaging in this activity proved just how easy it is to re-use unwanted materials for a new purpose. This is a hands-on and rewarding activity that links with several cross curricular skills whilst also promoting children's well-being.



DISCOVER



Every year I have spotted these geese nesting down by the reservoir. I first spotted these geese on the left in the field which is just up from the reservoir. I decided to go and investigate as they would just sit in this field. The photograph on the bottom left is what was left of one of their nests after they had finished using it. Geese typically build their nests in well-hidden locations near water, such as on the edge of ponds, lakes, or a reservoir in this case. This had sparked my curiosity, and I was eager to learn more about them, therefore I could share my knowledge with the children in my practice. I learnt that geese prefer to nest in areas that provide some protection from predators and allows them easy access to the water for food and safety. It is fascinating to observe these nesting habits, and the care they take to select the right location for their nest.



I would love to organise for the children in my setting to go on a nature walk to an area where geese are present. This will allow them firsthand experience as they observe the geese's behaviour and nesting habits. We could learn new interesting facts about the geese, such as their nesting habits, migratory patterns, and the different sounds they make. We could also investigate the webbed footprints that were by the nest in the photo to the right and find out why geese and ducks have webbed feet. When back in school I could show the children pictures and videos of geese nesting and explain how they protect their eggs and care for their young. This would be an interesting way to spark curiosity and appreciation for geese and their nesting habits in the wild.



ARTS & CRAFTS

Going on nature walks has inspired me to take the children out to collect natural materials for us to make some art creatures together. We could use what we have learned about the geese and other wildlife to engage in this fun activity. Using natural materials to create wildlife animals with children is not only fun but also educational. This is a good way to teach them about nature, all whilst sparking their creativity.

We could use leaves, twigs, pinecones, fruit, flowers and scrap paper to bring these animals to life, whilst exploring the animals' unique characteristics. This is a hand-on activity that will allow children to appreciate the environment around them and all the wildlife that inhabits there.

These pictures are taken from google images to be used for inspiration. Having discovered the different wildlife that lives on the farm, my John Muir experience has inspired me to get creative with the children and the art and crafts in these pictures is what I will use as inspiration for the children.

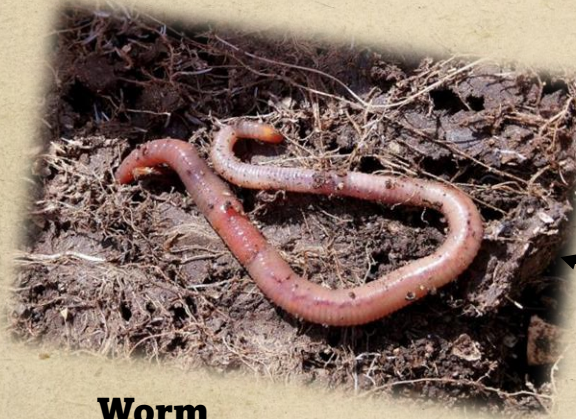




Butterfly



Woodlice



Worm



DISCOVER INSECTS WITH ME



Bumble Bee



Lady Bird



Caterpillar

CONSERVATION



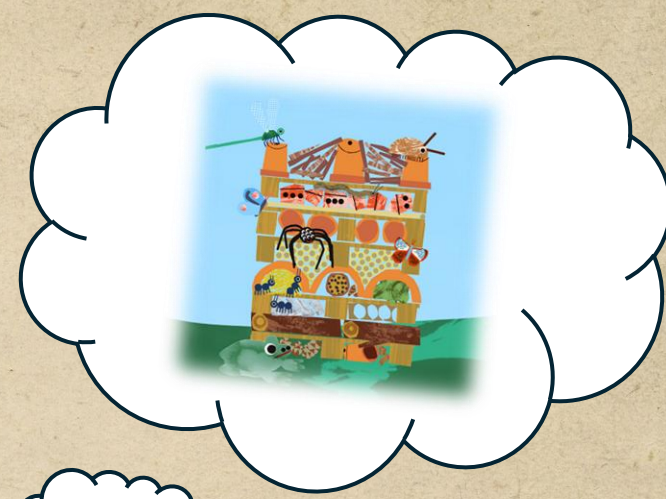
There are so many insects that live on this farm therefore, not all of them can be seen depending on what season we are in. This inspired me to research fun ways to encourage children to get involved in conservation in woodland areas, by creating a 'bug hotel'. This can be done in a woodland area, a park, or even your garden at home. We can gather natural materials like wood, sticks, leaves and pinecones to build a structure that provides shelter for insects.

This is a fun hands-on activity that I can use to teach young children about the importance of providing habitats for insects to thrive. Children will be able to deepen their understanding of why bug hotels are important, as they provide shelter and

nesting spaces for insects, which helps support biodiversity on the farm. By creating these bug hotels, we are providing the woodlice, ladybirds, caterpillars, spiders and all other insects a safe place to live, which is crucial for the maintenance of a healthy ecosystem. This is a simple, yet effective way to encourage insect populations and contribute to the overall balance of nature. It is also an engaging and enjoyable way for children to learn how to care for the environment and conservation. The photo to the right is taken from google as inspiration for my own bug hotel, although the other photos are more natural bug hotels that we have on the farm.



THE BUZZING BUG HOTEL



On the farm that's so green,
Tiny insects can be seen.
Building homes with care and spree,
In a bug hotel, buzzing you see.

Leaves and sticks, pinecones too,
Insects work together.
Creating a space safe and snug,
A nice hotel for every bug.

In this cozy hotel, they stay,
Content and happy every day.
Insects living safely together,
It does not matter what the weather.



SUSTAINABLE LIVING



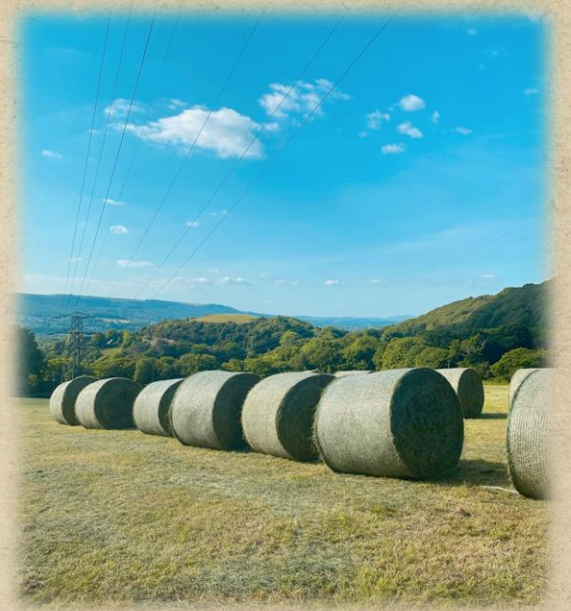
Every year on the farm, twice if we are lucky, we will grow enough grass to chop and make into bales of hay. This has always been an enjoyable process, and one that I have fond memories of. It is a time where my family would all get stuck in and help out.

This experience has made me research more into how us growing hay each year is sustainable and there are many reasons why this process promotes sustainable living on the farm. Grass is a renewable resource that can be grown and harvested several times, providing a consistent food source for the animals. Making hay also preserves the grass for use during the winter months, when fresh grass is not available, ensuring a continuous food supply.

Feeding animals with hay made from grass helps to reduce the need for processed feed, which can be cost effective and more environmentally friendly.

Additionally, this process promotes the farms soil health by cycling nutrients back into the ground, ensuring we are a sustainable farm.

With there being so many farms in Wales, this would be a great topic for children to learn about when learning about sustainable living. I believe this is a great way to efficiently utilize resources and support the farm's ecosystem.



CONSERVING WATER

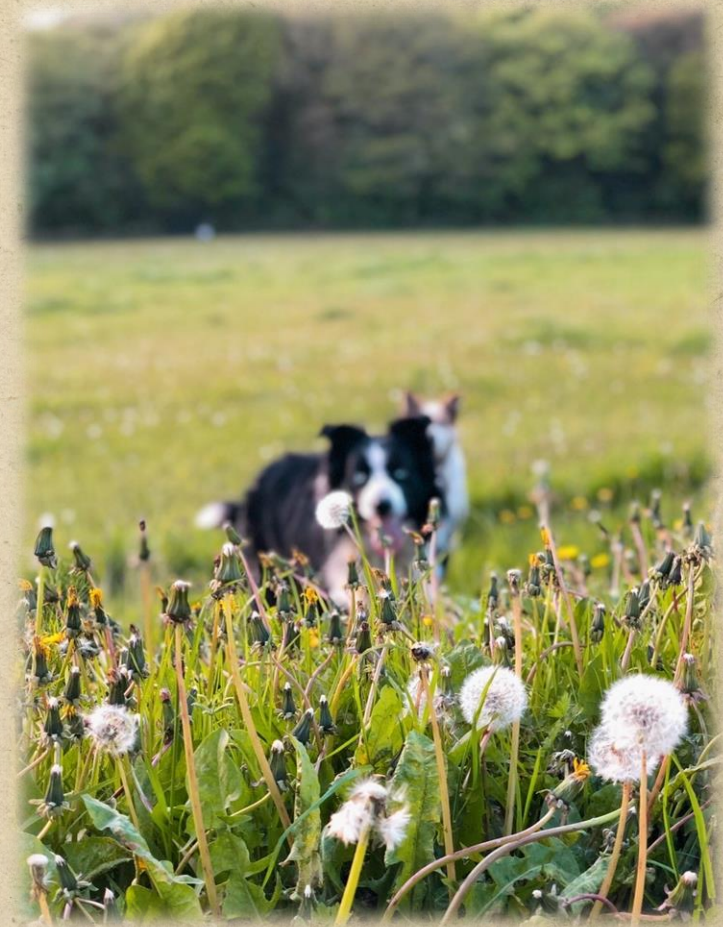
A way in which we conserve water on the farm is by utilizing natural resources, such as using water that drains off the mountain. We collect and redirect this water, reducing the need for additional water sources, which helps in conserving water and promoting sustainability in agriculture. It was my grand-father who decided to provide this natural water source for the animal's. In turn we are also helping prevent soil erosion which contributes to the overall health and well-being of the farm ecosystem.



SHARE



I will be sharing my John Muir experience scrapbook with the children and teachers in the school I work in, in the hopes that it can inspire them to go out on a nature walk, where we can explore and discover the beauty of the natural world. There are so many learning opportunities for young children on this farm, however we do not necessarily have to visit a farm to discover all that I have whilst being here. We could go to the local park or woodland area near the school, where there will be countless learning opportunities for children to engage in nature, all whilst learning how to make a positive impact on the environment around them.



RECYCLE

I would like to share my good practices about recycling with the children in my setting, as this will be beneficial because it will help instil important values of environmental responsibility and sustainability from a young age. On the farm we do not get much litter because only my family use it. However, if we took the children to a public park or woodland area, I am sure there would be plenty of litter for them to see. I would like to share my John Muir experience with children and organise a trip to a local park, woodland area, or the beach for us to have a group litter pick.



This would be a great opportunity for children to learn hands-on about how their actions can have a positive impact on our environment. This can encourage them to develop eco-friendly habits that can have a positive impact on their future behaviours. By teaching children first-hand about recycling, this can empower them to become environmentally aware, and understand the importance of reducing waste and preserving natural resources for future generations.



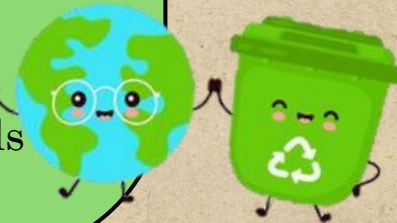
RECYCLING IS FUN



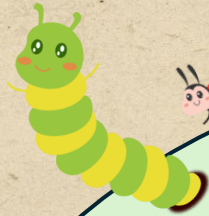
A good way to encourage children to be excited to learn about recycling is to turn it into a game. The children in my setting love to play games, therefore they will be able to play whilst also learning about such an important topic. Together we can create a sorting game where children can separate the rubbish into different bins. It is also crucial to explain to children why we should recycle and why it is important to take care of our planet.

Another idea is to encourage children to be creative when learning about sustainability by engaging in arts and craft activities. We could use the washed recycled materials

we have found. Another way would be to set up a rewards system or creating a recycling chart, as this can make the process enjoyable and motivating for young children. By making recycling interactive and exciting, children are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards environmental conservation.



SUSTAINABILITY ON THE FARM



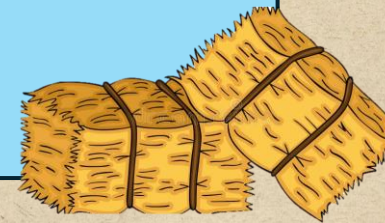
On the farm, where the sun shines bright,
Children learn how to farm just right.
Animal's graze, joyful and free,
On a sustainable farm, that's the key.

So, let's care for the land, with a joyous heart,
Sustainability on the farm, it's the best part.
Together we'll learn, grow and play,
In a farm that's green, every single day.





Y DIWEDD



Majority of the pictures in this scrapbook are my own personal photographs from the farm, however, some like the cartoon pictures for example, are taken from google images.