



Sustainability in the Early Years



EAEE6005





My Beautiful Town, Pontypridd, South Wales

I am very lucky to live in a beautiful town in Rhondda Cynon Taff, called Pontypridd....

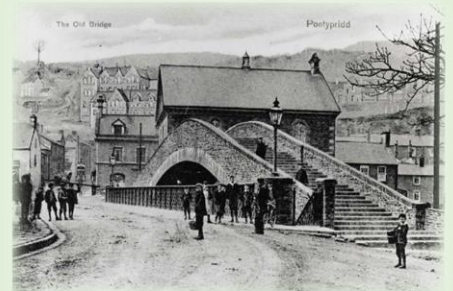


Pontypridd is home to the wonderful 'Old Bridge'

Built in 1756 by William Edwards, The Old Bridge (Yr Hen Bont), is also known as the William Edwards Bridge or Pontypridd Bridge.

It is an arched single-span footbridge spanning over the River Taff at Pontypridd in Wales.

It has upheld many a flood, the most recent happening in February 2020, when nature provided a visit from 'Storm Dennis'



Devastation of Storm Dennis:

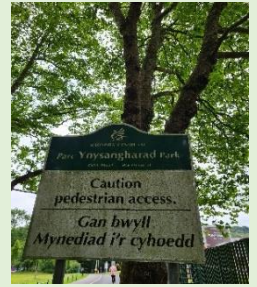


Storm Dennis: The picture on the right shows the river taff on a sunny day. Picture on the left Shows some of the devastation of the storm. (Pictures both taken from the top of the old bridge).



Ynysangharad Park Pontypridd,

There is many a *beautiful* area to visit in Pontypridd, one of those places is Ynysangharad War Memorial Park...



Memorial statues for the town's own Evan James (1809-78) and his son James James (1832-1902) can be found at Ynysangharad Park. Erected in 1930, later becoming a Grade II-listed structure.



The Father and Son were famous for writing and composing the Welsh National Anthem:

'Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau'

Some of the lyrics for the anthem are quite poignant...

Hen Gymru fynyddig, paradwys y bardd,
Pob dyffryn, pob clogwyn, i'm golwg sydd hardd;
Trwy deimlad gwladgarol, mor swynol yw si
Ei nentydd, afonydd, i fi.

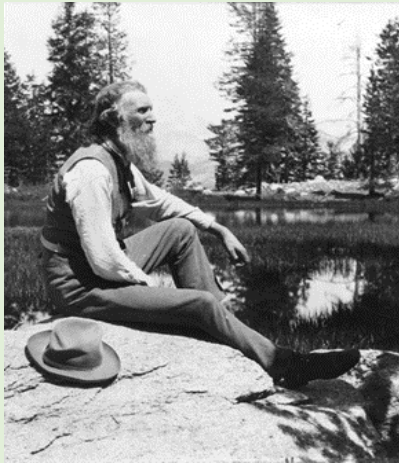


*It is easy to see how Ynysangharð Park offers a home
to an abundance of wildlife..*



I love the trees, and so did the birds and squirrels!





*'When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it
attached to the rest of the world'*

John Muir

As I walked around Ynysangharad Park I was overjoyed to see many
trees with bird boxes...



!



I also found a large bug hotel. . .



A Robin's favourite meal include insects including beetles and mealworms and invertebrates such as earthworms. Therefore a bug hotel not only provides a home for bugs but also acts as a Restaurnt for hungry birds



Inside the bug hotel was a beautiful Robin



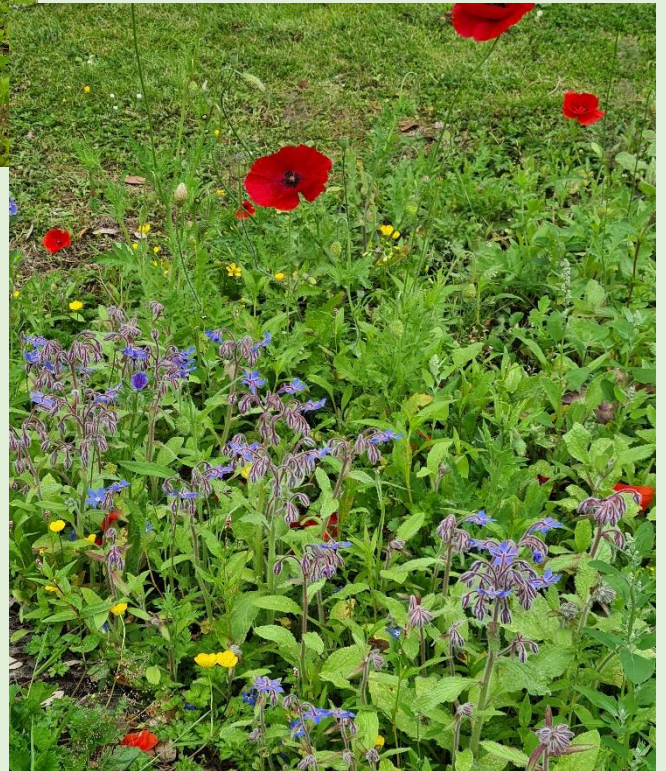
I love to see Robins as they remind me of my nan who passed away recently.

I felt inspired to draw a Robin

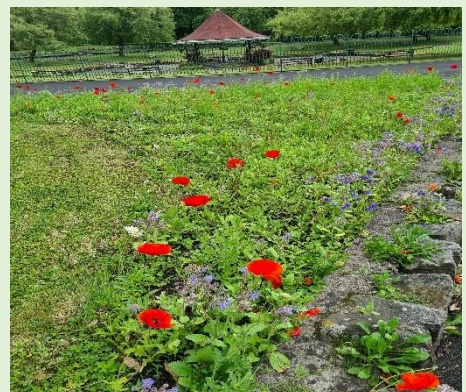
Wild Flowers...



Rhondda Cynon Taff Council have planted many *Wild Flowers* in the grounds of Ynysangharad Park.



Wild Flowers are fundamental for biodiversity –an intrinsic part of the food chain for most insects and animals.





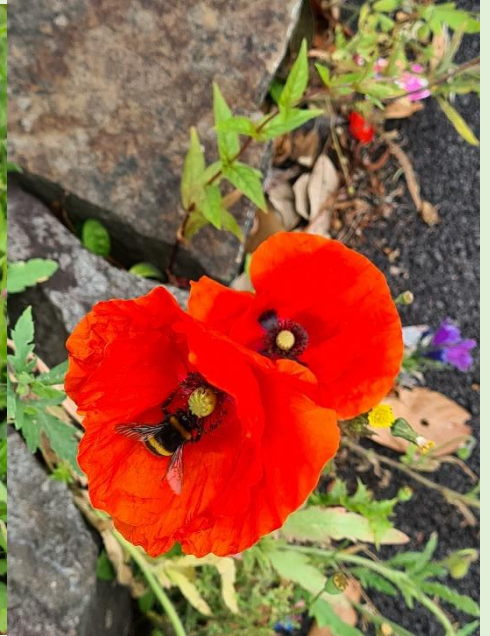
I love wild flowers.

I decided to research why they are so important for Sustainability of our planet and found the following:

1. Highly attractive food source for pollinating insects
2. Many species of butterfly only lay their eggs on wildflowers
3. Like all plants, wildflowers absorb CO₂ and pollution from the air
4. Root systems help stabilise the soil and prevent erosion
5. Wildflower seeds are an important source of food for birds in wintertime
6. Help to raise interest and interaction with the natural world which in turn leads to less littering, better care of the environment and better mental health.



The Honeybees loved the *Wild Flowers* and I counted at least 15 as I watched in fascination as they visited each flower one after another.



Bees pollinate the food we need to survive.

They also pollinate many of the trees and flowers that provide habitats for wildlife.



Beautiful Honeybees Busy at Work!



They loved the blossoms of the tomato plants and adored the vibrant colours the flowers had to offer...



My Garden has many flowers and fruit trees that the Honeybees appeared to love! Thus, allowing me opportunity to capture some amazing photographs showing them busy at work!

They buzzed around visiting the many colourful flowers, collecting pollen and nectar as they went from flower to flower, blissfully happy and quite obviously in their element!

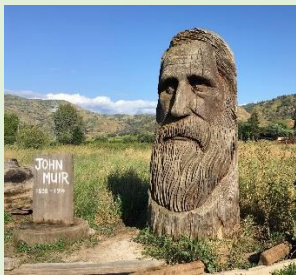


Photo: Sierracub.org

However, I am ashamed to admit that I have never really taken much notice of the Honeybees before embracing the John Muir Award. Instead of admiring their unique beauty and important position within our world I was more concerned with the worry of getting stung, though I discovered they only sting once and will only do so if they feel threatened.



I decided to investigate the life of a honeybee and was amazed to learn that they live in large colonies and have one queen bee! The queen bee lives for many years but the queen bees 'employees' live for just a few short weeks.



Honeybees are winged invertebrates who pollinate plants and are professionals at creating honey using the pollen and nectar extracted from the flowers. You will find them pollinating the plants found in nature, helping to keep our ecosystems healthy. However we must not forget that they are also valuable pollinators of many crops aka

our food and consequently have a tremendous value towards agriculture!

Buff-tailed bumble bee – A species of Honeybee



I managed to capture this photograph of a beautiful bumble bee. If you look closely, you can see the pollen on his back legs, which I found are referred to as pollen baskets!

Such a wonderful and thought-provoking sight!



I was sad to discover that there could be a day when bees are no longer a part of our world as they are in danger of becoming extinct. If this was to happen our planet would suffer enormously, due to the fundamental role honeybees play in most ecosystems.



The buff-tailed bumble bee loved the flowers of the tomato plant I have growing in my garden. Appearing to favour this plant over the other flowers and fruit trees I have. I looked into the reason why and found bumble bees have short tongues and thus find

obstracting pollen and nectur from larger flowers much easier.



How does your garden grow?



I have always loved flowers and have an abundance of pretty flowers and fruit trees in my garden. I've either bought the flowers or planted them simply for their pleasing athesetical look. However, I have never before thought about how they support the bees and thus our ecosystem!

Flowers do a lot more than look pretty! And when you actually sit down and take the time to think about the bigger picture, you realise what an important role each plant, insect and creature have in the world. Not to mention our role as humans, ensuring we act in ways to support sustainabilty for our children and our future world.

Beautiful Wild Flowers



Honeybees are not only drawn to the flowers and fruit trees we plant in our gardens, they are also drawn to the wild flowers and brambles.

I looked around me to see what wild flowers I could see and found an array of special plants. Equally as beautiful as the garden flowers that had been planted.



If only we took the time to stop and take notice and appreciate their unique beauty...



Wildflowers provide insects with food, nectar and pollen and a place to take shelter and reproduce. In return, insects pollinate the wildflowers, enabling them to develop seeds which are spread and thus grow in other places.

If you look closely, you can see the bumble bee flying toward the wildflowers I have in my garden.



Dandelion oh Dandelion...



As a child I would pick dandelions for my mother even though my grandparents would always tell me if I picked them, I would wee the bed!

They are often referred to as a weed, however, dandelion flowers are an important source of food for bees and other pollinators early in the season, as they are one of the earlier-flowering species. So maybe we should think twice before we pluck them from our gardens and tarnish them as a pest!



Fruit Trees, Bushes and Brambles



Blackberry Bush

This blackberry bush is growing in an unused part of my garden. It is the perfect plant for bumblebees to visit due to the large, open flowers. They also provide food for the birds (the berries) and caterpillars (the leaves). They are a firm favorite with butterflies too!



Strawberry

This is one of many **strawberry** plants I have growing in my garden. I have noticed the honeybees visiting these regularly. Without their visits I would not have any **strawberries** growing! Thank you, **honeybees**!

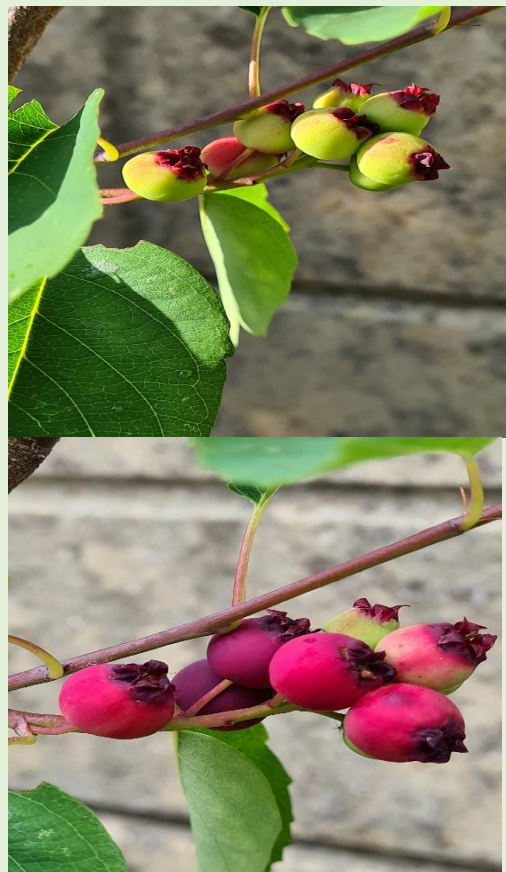


Western Serviceberry

Much to my husband's delight, the wild birds enjoyed these June berries!

They began life as white flowers, then green berries before turning to the beautiful red/pink colour. Wow!

They changed colour in a couple of days and as soon as they did the birds came and enjoyed a tasty snack as the berries contain many nutrients for the birds. They also provide an appealing nesting place for birds to breed.





Why Do Birds Suddenly Appear...

There are many birds who like to visit my garden. However, to my disappointment I was never quite quick enough to catch a photograph of them all.

The following are Birds I was lucky to see enjoying the plants and trees in the garden:

Blackbirds, jackdaw, song thrush, Chaffinch, Carrion Crow, Magpie, Wood pigeon, Robin and lots of Wrens!



The birds *loved* the trees in my garden!

Im sure there are birds nesting in these trees. I watched as they flew into the centre of the tree, hidden away from any predators, disturbances and prying eyes, singing their sweet song as they went about their day.



I sat in my garden, closed my eyes and listened to the beautiful songs of the birds.

In that moment all I could hear was their sweet song.

Feeling as one with nature, time stood still and my soul felt rested.





Pontypridd Common

My children and I explored the common, we have done this so many times. We love it here!



The Common overlooking Ynysangharad Park and Pontypridd Town.

My little boy looking out over Pontypridd.



We have visited here in all seasons!

Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter.



Autumn Leaves.



Exploring Natures and the wonderful opportunities it offers...

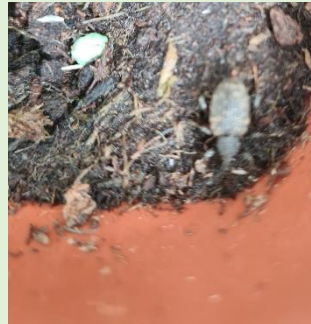


My Children and I explore nature no matter the season or weather.





Time to Conserve



*We found many creatures in the garden,
including snails, honeybees, beetles and
woodlouse.*



*We wanted to offer them a
home so we placed a bug
hotel in the garden*

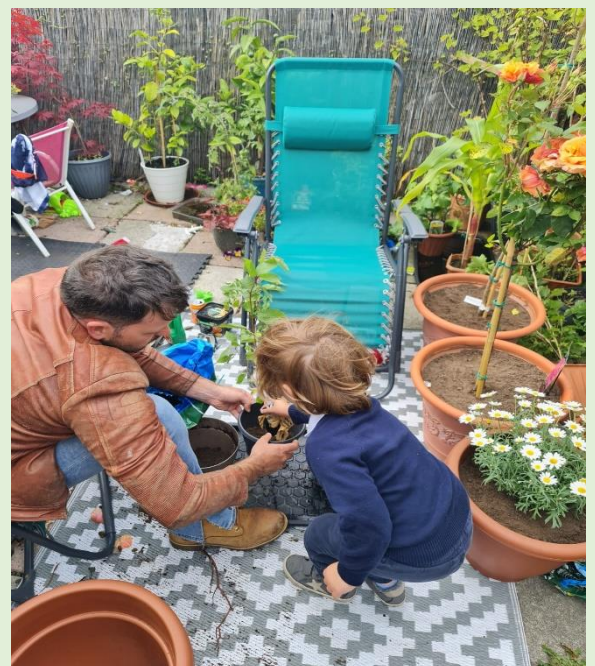


I purchased 5 Trees from the Woodland Trust, a Rowan, Silver Birch, Field Maple, Wild Cherry and a Bird Cherry

We planted them In the garden.



Once these trees are grown they will provide a home for many Birds and other insects and bugs. Not to mention they will help clean the air we breathe!





We refilled the bird feeders in the garden with bird seed purchased from Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

We also Made Bird Feeders!



We collected some acorns on one of our nature walks. We spread peanut butter over them and rolled them in bird seed! We then hung them from the trees in the garden using twine. A tasty treat for our feathered friends.



We placed a bird House in the Garden for the birds to have a safe place to nest.



We planted a plethora of new flowers.

We made sure to plant flowers we knew the honeybees would appreciate.



And we made sure we watered them every day, including the fruit trees...

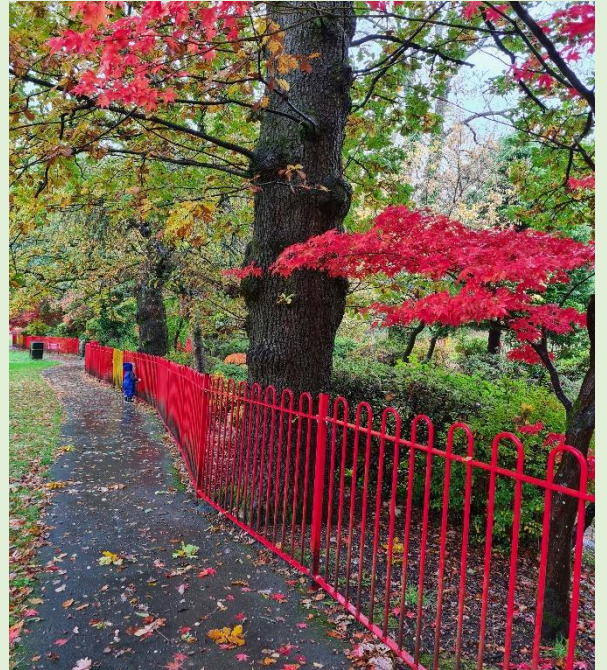


*We make sure they have a
drink every day!*

*'How does your garden
grow?'*



One Life, Live It!



*Let the children play and
explore in everything
nature has to offer...*

*Admire the old, tall trees and the beautiful colour of the changing
leaves through the seasons...*

*Talk about how they help to sustain the planet and human
life...*

*Build a relationship between your child and nature so they grow
up loving the world they live in, with a hunger to protect and
nourish it.*



*I believe the children are our
future...*

Teach them well...



And let them lead the way...



Many thanks to my children for helping me
on the John Muir Adventure...



Never stop Exploring!

In Memory of My Beautiful Nan Rose, who passed away 15th April 2021.



29/10/1929 – 15/04/2021

Thank you for always believing in me Nan.

I promised you I would do it!

Love you.

