

ECEY6005

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE EARLY YEARS

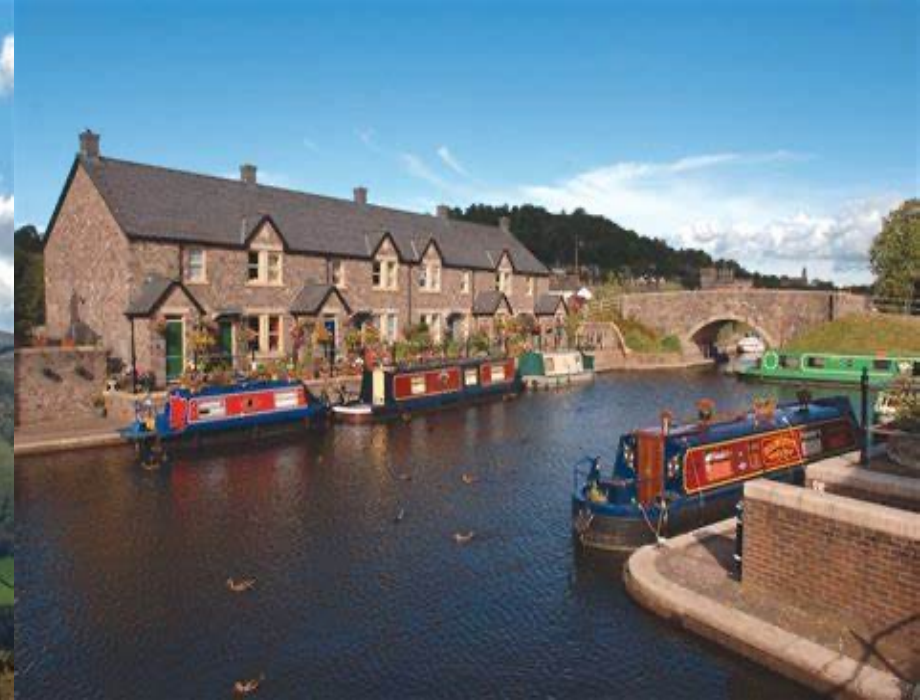
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Mia Darby

As a child, I grew up in a heavily industrial area in the north east of England. Because of this, I didn't have much appreciation for nature and all of the wonderful places to be explored. I try to go for a walk in nature at least once a week, however with how busy life gets around working and studying, I sometimes don't have the time to do this. Since I moved house, my garden has become a lot more wildlife friendly. The John Muir award has allowed me to look further into sustainability and a greater desire to explore the area I am surrounded by.



Living in the Brecon Beacons means that I am extremely lucky to have such beautiful views on my doorstep. From my garden, I have a wonderful view of Pen-Y-Fan and the mountain range. Looking closer to what is around me, we have the canal path which goes all the way from Brecon to Newport. We have the mountain centre, and the waterfalls. In the winter, we have an array of coloured leaves on the pathway. Then, in spring, Brecon comes back to life. There are beautiful trees and flowers that are brightly coloured and I get to hear the birds singing every morning.



DISCOVER

Below, you can see some of the plants we have put into the garden, the 1st photo shows a few different plants, the plant which has the purple flower budding is a Campanula. The middle photo shows a yellow flower called Chrysopsis Mariana which is also known as the Maryland Golden-aster. The final photo on the right shows our sage and basil which we planted a few months ago. I use these as much as I can when I am cooking!



PICTURES



In my garden, especially over the last 2 years since the pandemic started, I have been much more interested in planting flowers and herbs, I have also been planting different root vegetables such as potatoes and carrots which I don't have any photos of as we ate them all on a Sunday roast!

In the left photo, you can see chives alongside sage and rosemary which were shown on the previous slide. In the right photo, you can see parsley.





At the bottom of my garden, I have an untouched hedge which backs onto a farmer's field that usually has sheep grazing in it. You can see a rose which had grown around our garden gate, usually there are more but we had to cut some away as we couldn't get out of the gate!

Above the hedge, in the distance you can see Pen Y Fan and the beautiful Brecon Beacons.



CONSERVATION

As previously stated, my interest in growing my garden only started during the start of the pandemic when I had more time on my hands. Over the last two years with the help of my family and partner, we have installed a bird feeder in the garden. Since we installed the bird feeder, we have a ton of different birds come into the garden, usually very early in the morning. You can hear them singing and chirping all morning. With the help of my young niece, we have also created a bug hotel to give our friendly bugs and critters some shelter. We put some dry leaves and sticks into the bug hotel. Since we made the bug hotel, we have seen ladybirds and woodlice in there, some have even made their way into our house when we have left the back door open! Upon further research, I found that we could add some more things to our bug hotel such as straw and adding some more sticks or pine-cones into it to attract more bugs. I have attached example photos of bird feeders and bug hotels as ours are having some well needed maintenance.



CONSERVATION

How to make a bird feeder:

There is the option to purchase a bird feeder from a store, however, you can actually make them at home using products many people would have lying around that would usually be thrown away.

The first step of making a DIY bird feeder is to get a plastic carton such as an empty milk bottle, you'll then need to cut a large hole in the centre of one side of the carton.

Underneath the large hole, cut a small hole to poke a stick through. You can then create two further holes at the top on either side of the carton to put string through so it can be tied up.

All you need to do then is add your bird feed and you can put the bird feeder up in your garden.

Homemade bird feed recipe:

- Good quality bird seeds which can be bought from garden centres.
- Peanut butter.
- Finely chopped prunes.
- Finely chopped almonds or other nuts.
- Raisins.



REFLECTION

I have had an interest in gardening and conservation for some time now, however I didn't have as much knowledge as I do since completing the John Muir award. At the start of the pandemic, whilst being on furlough I was able to spend lots of time outdoors however, when life started to get back to normal, I started to spend less and less time outside. The John Muir award has given me more of a reason to go outdoors, even when the weather isn't as nice! I have been able to look at what I can do to improve my outdoor space to benefit the wildlife who call my garden their home. I will continue to plant my own vegetables and herbs where possible, in an attempt to have a more sustainable lifestyle.

