



My Garden

John Muir Award





Growing up in the hills on a farm, I was surrounded by wildlife every day, birds nesting in the hedgerows, foxes darting through the fields, and the distant croak of frogs near the stream. Nature was all around me, woven into daily life. But like many things we grow up with, I took it for granted. I never really stopped to notice or appreciate the richness of the environment I was living in. It was just there—a quiet, familiar backdrop to farm chores, school runs, and everyday routines. Looking back, I realise how much I missed by not truly paying attention. Taking part in the John Muir Award has given me a second chance to reconnect with that world, to observe it with fresh eyes, and to understand the value of the nature I once overlooked.



See Video Above



Types of Flowers and Plants



Lavender



Red Rose



Climbing Rose



Lupin

Roses

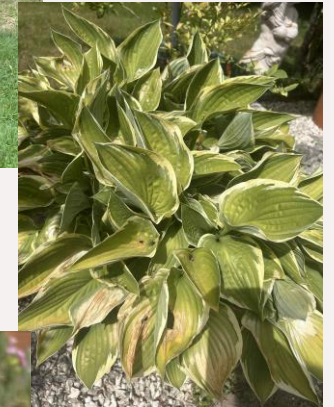


See Video Above

Phoenix
Canariensis



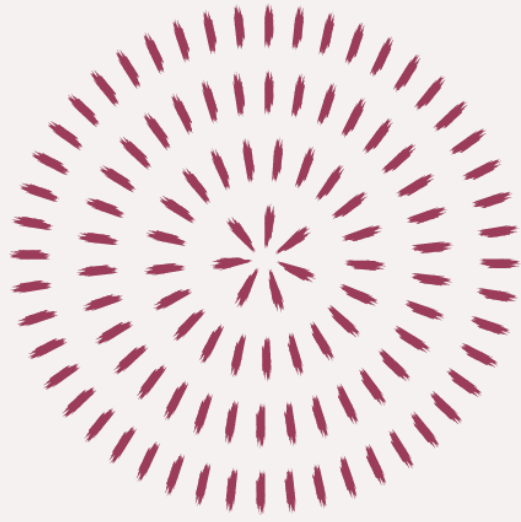
Lily



Entire Plant



Dahlia Pinnata



A rock garden, like the one in my photo, is not only beautiful but also great for the environment. It's low-maintenance, needing less watering and weeding than regular flower beds, which makes it ideal for busy people.

These gardens are perfect for drought-tolerant plants like succulents, thyme, lavender, and alpine species that thrive in dry, well-drained soil. The rocks create micro-habitats that support insects and small animals year-round, even in winter when other plants fade.

Rock gardens also boost biodiversity. Flowers like sedum and creeping thyme attract bees and butterflies, while the crevices between rocks provide shelter for insects, frogs, and small mammals. Lizards bask on sun-warmed stones, and ants, snails, and spiders make their homes beneath them. Even birds visit to hunt bugs or enjoy a drink.

Adding a simple water feature, like a bird bath, can attract more wildlife. Leaving a few log piles or untidy corners can also create safe hiding spots for nature's smaller visitors.



My Story

Sailboat in the garden

Sailboat in the Garden

By Ellie

 [See Video Above](#)

Types of Wildlife

Ladybird

Muralis

Wall Lizard

Hedgehog

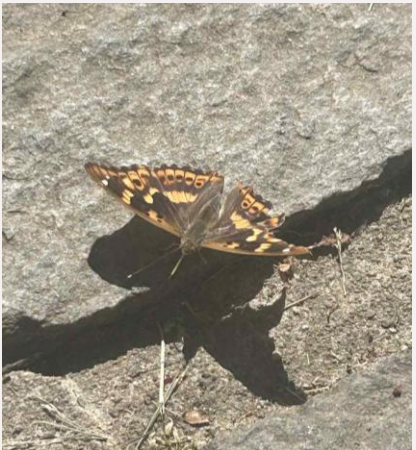
Tortoise

Tortoiseshell

Eristalis

Butterfly

Hoverfly

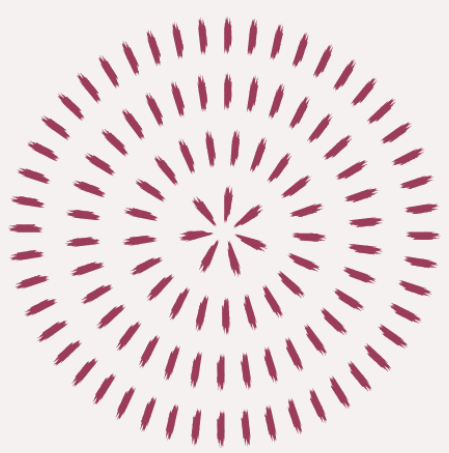




Bug Hotel

This image captures the early stages of a bug hotel, a fantastic way to encourage biodiversity right in your garden. Constructed from natural materials like logs, twigs, and branches, bug hotels provide essential shelter for a variety of insects, including ladybirds, beetles, woodlice, solitary bees, and spiders. The moss-covered wood and tangled sticks offer perfect nooks for hiding, nesting, and hibernation. Positioned beside long grass and shaded by a tree, the location offers protection from harsh weather, making it an ideal habitat. Beyond supporting insect life, bug hotels offer a brilliant opportunity for both children and adults to connect with nature and learn about the vital roles these small creatures play in processes like pollination and decomposition. Over time, this simple pile can develop into a vibrant, living micro-habitat that helps create a healthier, more balanced garden ecosystem.

 **See Video Above**



Cress Caterpillar

How to make-

Step 1-Cut an egg carton in half lengthwise. Trim the sides to make them even and paint the carton red.

Step 2- Fill the egg spaces with cotton balls. Sprinkle seeds onto the cotton balls, water gently and cover with paper until they sprout.

Step 3- Make a face for the caterpillar and glue it onto the body. The seeds should take about a week to grow, Make sure they are watered daily.



Fun Facts



Plants & Flowers

- **Sunflowers follow the sun!**

Young sunflowers turn their heads during the day to track the sun's movement, a behaviour called heliotropism.

- **Lavender helps keep bugs away.**

While we love its smell, many insects (like mosquitoes and moths) dislike it, making lavender a natural pest repellent!

- **Dandelions are edible!**

Every part of the dandelion, leaves, flowers, and roots—can be eaten and is full of vitamins.

- **Some flowers close at night.**

Flowers like tulips and daisies "go to sleep" by closing their petals when the sun sets to protect their pollen.

- **Plants can 'talk' to each other.**

Through their roots and chemical signals, plants can warn nearby plants about dangers like pests.

Garden Animals & Insects

- **Worms are garden superheroes.**

They help keep soil healthy by breaking down organic matter and creating tunnels that air and water can flow through.

- **Bees can recognize human faces!**

Research shows bees can remember and recognize individual human faces, just like we can.

- **Frogs don't drink water through their mouths.**

They absorb moisture through their skin, especially their belly.

- **Ladybirds eat hundreds of aphids.**

A single ladybird can eat up to 5,000 aphids in its lifetime, making them excellent natural pest controllers.

- **Some butterflies taste with their feet.**

Their feet help them "taste" a plant to see if it's the right place to lay eggs!



Whispers by the Water

By the edge of a quiet, whispering stream,
Sits a warm red-roofed cottage, like part of a dream.
With horses that graze in a pasture so wide,
And tall pine trees swaying just off to the side.

A boat waits calmly, tied to the shore,
Its oars once paddled, now resting once more.

A curious cat by a bucket of fish,
Watches the ripples and makes a small wish.

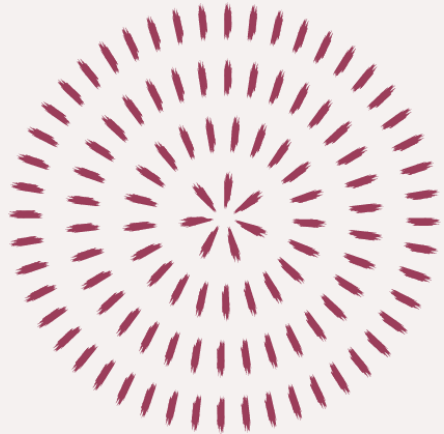
Two graceful swans, wings spread in flight,
Dance on the water, glowing so white.
While cygnets behind them paddle in line,
A picture of peace, so simple, divine.

Ducklings waddle down from the trees,
Through sun-dappled shadows and soft summer breeze.
The flowers lean in, reeds gently sway,
Greeting the magic of this lovely day.

Above the home, a golden bell gleams,
Ringing through clouds and echoing dreams.
Birds fly freely in sky-coloured blue,
Each one a whisper, each wing a clue.

So, hush now and listen, breathe in the air,
Nature is singing, everywhere.
A story unfolds in this riverside place,
Of harmony, stillness, and natural grace.





You will need-

- Plastic bottle
- String
- A pin
- Scissors
- 1 Stick
- Bird Seeds



 See Video Above

Tutorial

Recycled bird feeder.

Poke 2 holes at the bottom of the bottle for drainage, then use the scissors to widen the hole but not too big that the seeds fall out.

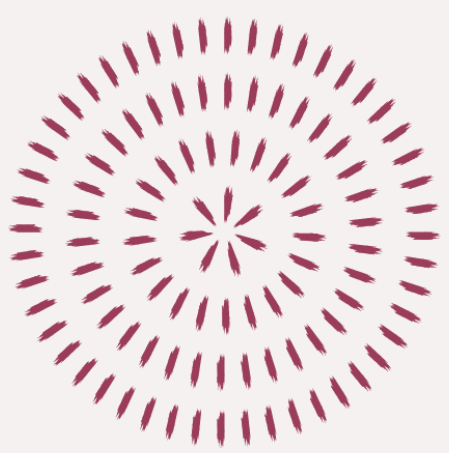
Next poke 2 holes at the top for the string to go through, starting with the pin then the scissors to widen the hole again. After that, feed the string through and tie a knot.

Next poke 2 holes across from each other towards the bottom for the stick which is going to be for the perch. Widen the hole with scissors but not too much so that the stick falls out.

Then make 2 holes across from each other again just above the perch. These are so the birds can eat the seeds so make sure that the hole isn't too big that the seeds will fall out.

Now your ready to fill the feeder with seeds through the lid of the bottle by removing it.





**Can you
spot the
bird?**





**Here are a few birds
that you may or may
not see in your
garden.**

Most Popular-

Robin

Blue Tit

Blackbird

House Sparrow

Wood Pigeon

Less Popular-

Wren

Long-tailed Tit

Greenfinch

Coal Tit

Song Thrush

Occasionally seen-

Great Tit

Dunnock

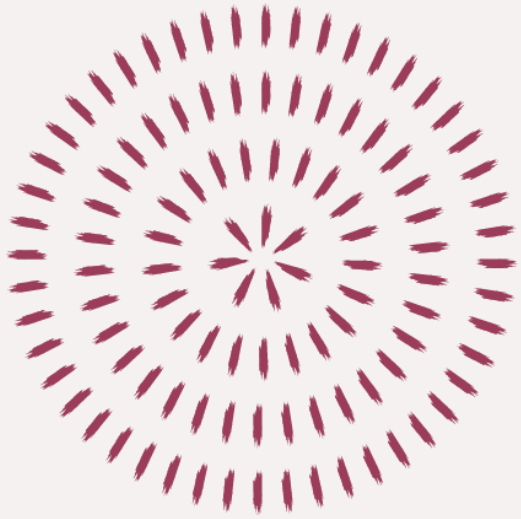
Goldfinch

Chaffinch

Starling

Sparrow

These are some of the birds and feeders I have found in my garden.



Thrush



Woodpecker



Robin

