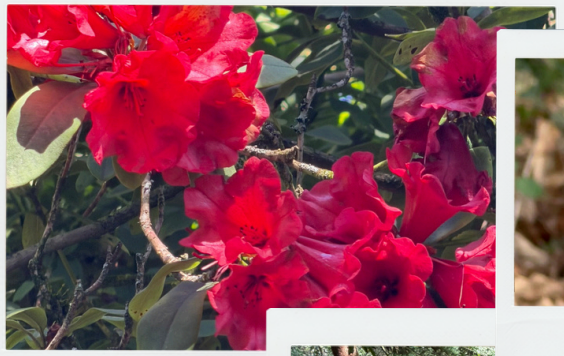
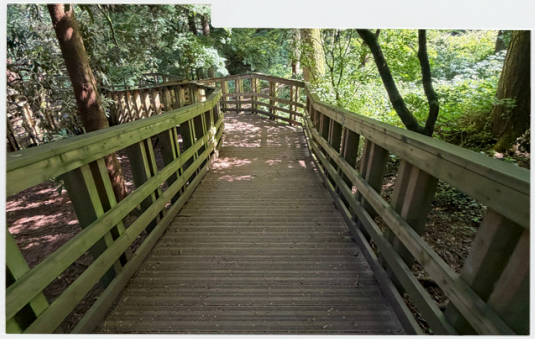








ECEY6005

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE EARLY YEARS

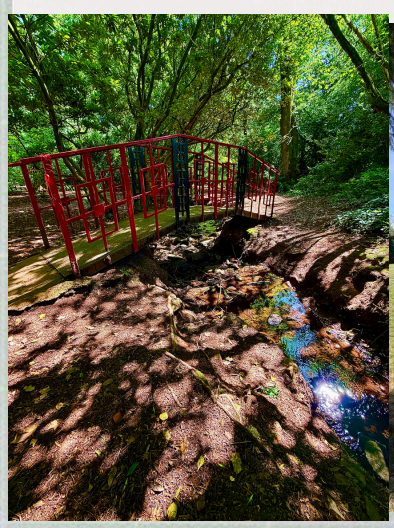
DISCOVER

During my childhood I was lucky enough that I was surrounded by many green spaces and enjoyed playing outdoors, however growing up this sense of joy within nature has been overshadowed by busy schedules and it meant I never had the time to stop and admire the world around me. I often walk through nature areas and miss out on opportunities to appreciate the wildlife, plants and trees.

As part of the John Muir award, I have chosen to explore the area, Parc Cefn Onn in Cardiff. It is a grade 2 historic woodland park, meaning it is a protected site of historical importance that must be preserved. The park is well known for its wildlife and the various trees, plants and flowers that can be found throughout the woodland.



Parc Cefn Onn

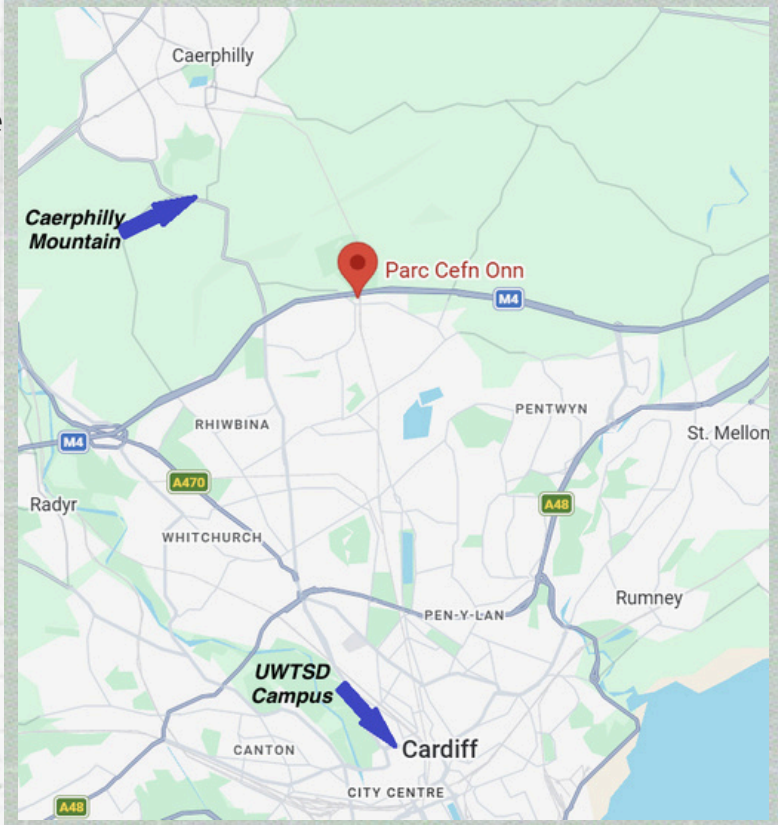




Parc Cefn Onn is located in Lisvane, just over Caerphilly Mountain, making it close to my home and easily accessible. I have included a map below to show the location of the park. Because it is so close to home it somewhere I regularly visit to take my dog on walks. Although I have been there several times before, I have never taken a step back to appreciate the environment and enjoy everything the park has to offer.

I chose Parc Cefn Onn because its local, free to visit and has a wide variety of green spaces. It is mainly a woodland but also has a wide-open field and a pond meaning there is a range of wildlife to explore. This diversity within nature here makes this area ideal for exploring and gaining a better understanding of the importance of sustainability.

Completing the John Muir Award has encouraged me to spend more time exploring everything nature has to offer and how I can incorporate this into the Early Years. This experience has made me realise how valuable outdoor spaces like Parc Cefn Onn can be in helping children develop.



EXPLORE

Visiting Parc Cefn Onn this time I slowed down and took the time to really appreciate and explore by surroundings, rather than taking my usual route and just walking without observing any of the nature within the environment. I realised that there is so much wildlife within this one small area.



BIRDS

Whilst visiting the park one of the many animals I saw was various types of birds. I decided to carry out some further research on the ones I saw the most at the park.

CARRION CROW



Carrion Crows are highly intelligent and will eat almost anything from insects to food waste, which speeds up nutrient recycling in the environment.

BLUE TIT



Blue Tits eat large amounts of caterpillars and act as natural pest controllers, which reduces the need for pesticides.

HOUSE WREN



House Wrens act as natural eco friendly pest controllers as they only feed on insects and spiders which also helps to control insect popuations.

ROBIN



Robins are natural bio-indicators for sustainability, the apperance of a Robin indicates a healthy ecosystem. Suggesting that Parc Cefn Onn is a healthy ecosystem.

MAMMALS

Everytime I visit Parc Cefn Onn, I always see squirrels no matter what time of year it is. This made me wonder what other animals might live here. From research other animals that could also be living here are hedgehogs, foxes and badgers. However because these animals are all nocturnal they are unlikely to be spotted during the day.

GREY SQUIRREL



Squirrels bury thousands of seeds and nuts in order to survive in the winter. They forget where many of these are hidden and therefore they regenrate new trees.

RED FOX



Red foxes prey on small mammals such as mice and rabbits helping to maintain a balanced ecosystem.

HEDGEHOG



Hedgehogs act as natural pest controllers as they feed on many insects. The presence of hedgehogs also indicates that the soil is healthy.

BADGER



Badgers burrowing behaviour means that they dig extensively, improving soil health.

AMPHIBIANS

As Cefn Onn Parc has a pond there is likely to be amphibian animals that I would not have seen such as frogs, toads and newts.



SMOOTH NEWT



COMMON FROG



COMMON TOAD



INVERTERBRATES

Inverterbrates are particularly important for ecosystems as they are the main animal species and food source for our ecosystems. Here are some of the ones I saw.

BUMBLE BEE



WORM



BUTTERFLY



DRAGONFLY



CONSERVE

To contribute towards conserving the area, I decided to make a bird feeder using an apple, bird seed and string. Whilst visiting the park I hung the bird feeder in a tree close to the pond. This will provide the birds with an additional food source which can also support the bird population. This will be particularly helpful if their food source is limited.

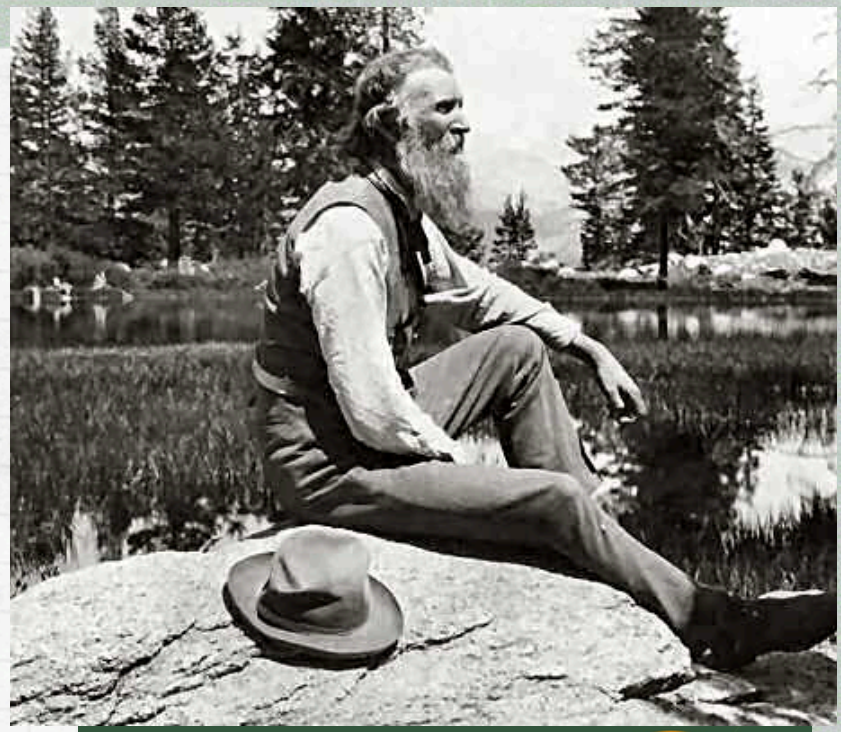


SHARE



I shared what I had found out with my peers during a university lecture and informed them of all the wildlife the park has to offer and how each of those animal species contributes to sustainability. I was also able to share and provide tips on how to make the bird feeder. Following on from making the bird feeder during one of my settings forest school sessions myself and the children were able to make several bird feeders using the resources I provided and then we hung them on the trees down in the forest. This was an enjoyable activity for the children and they understood that this would provide an extra food source for the birds. The children also brought to my attention that this is something that they would like to do again.

JOHN MUIR



John Muir is the founder of the modern conservation movement. He was born in 1838 and died in 1914 at the age of 76, and was raised in Edinburgh, Scotland.
John Muir was extremely passionate about wild place and advocated to protect it.
He is responsible for some of the worlds first national park systems, those being Yosemite National Park and Sequoia National Park.
John Muir was also a co- founder of the Sierra Club which took political action to protect wild areas.
Overall John Muirs work changed the way people see nature and encouraged them to conserve wild places.

