



John Muir Experience
Student Number:
1904209



When we were asked to complete the John Muir Award I thought it would be easy. However, I struggled to think of where I could discover. I went into the garden to get some inspiration and started to look around. I thought I would find something interesting in the area we had left to grow wild. I noticed the daisies growing happily in the sun, then I noticed an insect fly over and land in the long grasses. Nothing else really gripped my attention. I wondered around some more and began to look at the oak tree.



The Oak Tree



I began exploring this magnificent tree, looking at it's trunk and closely at the bark I noticed the moss and lichens growing on it. I also saw a little bug crawling up the bumpy bark he was quite tricky to see due to being camouflaged with the trunk, then he disappeared in to one of the many crevasses.

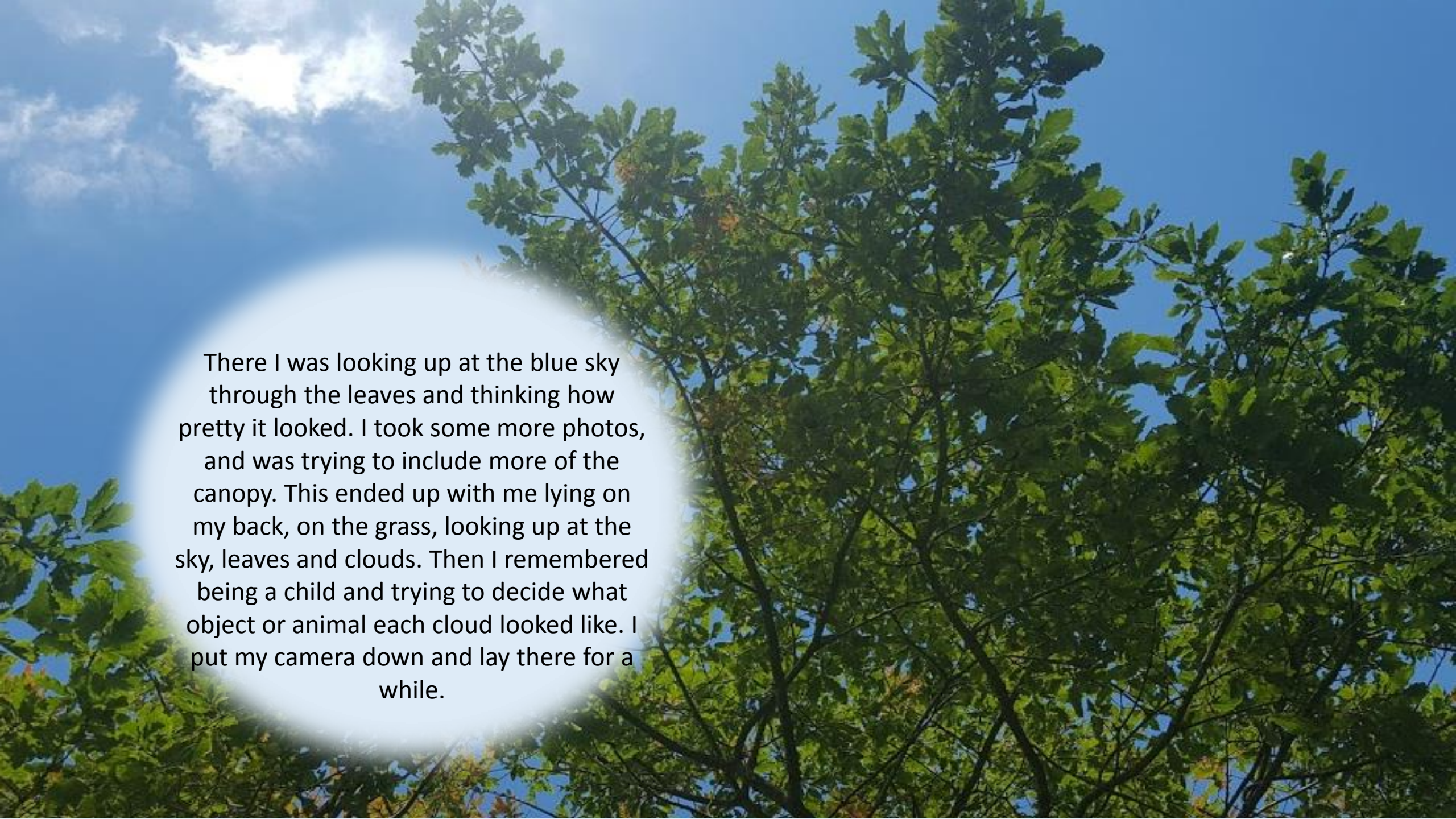


The big discovery

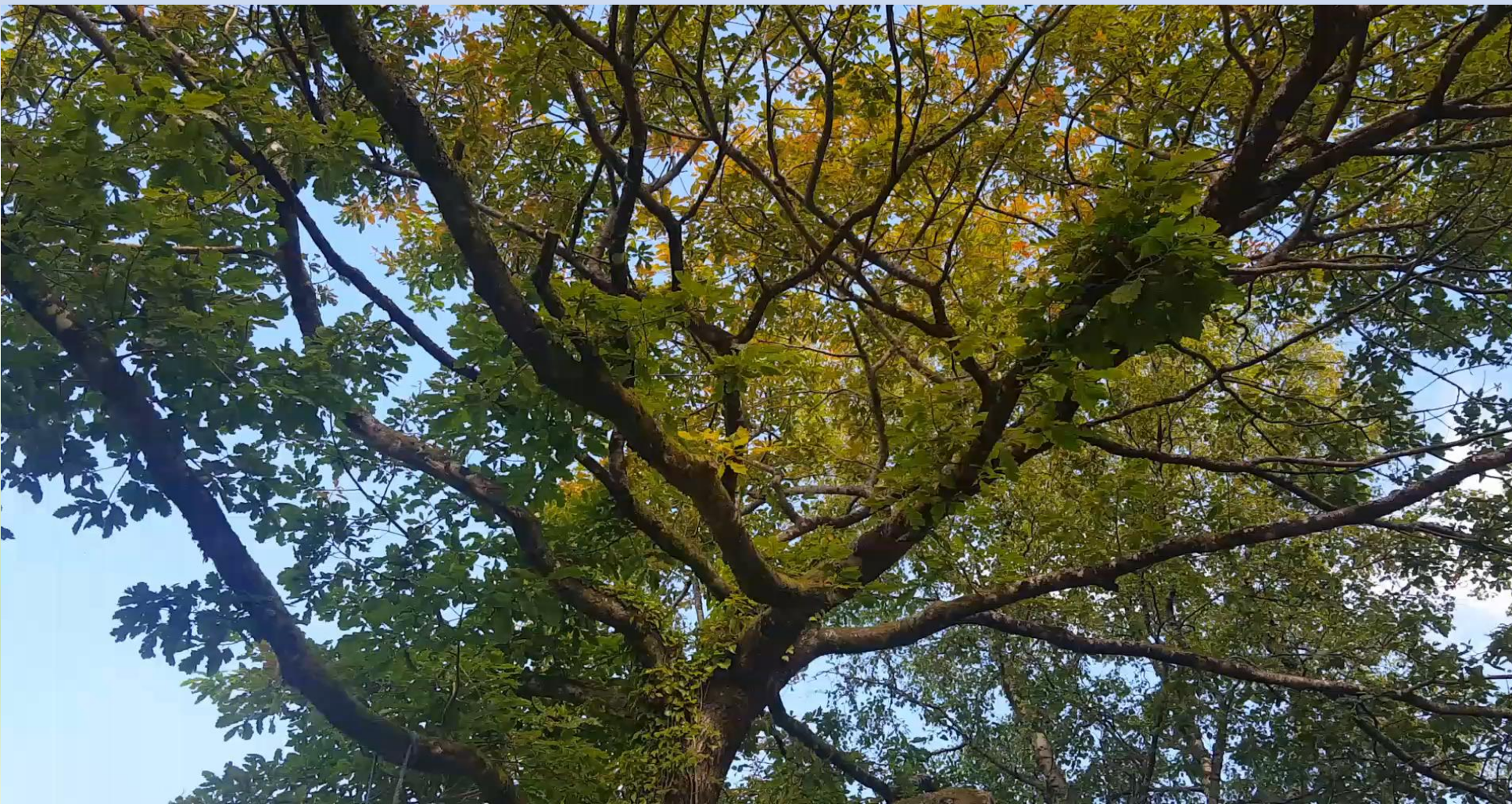


The ivy vines growing up the trunk of the oak tree sparked my imagination. I began thinking back to my childhood and remembered the story I read and fell in love with called the 'Magic far away tree'. I loved that story and have thought about it before when I have been looking at trees with the children. I took some photos of the trunk and moved my gaze up the tree following the vines thinking of them as little ladders leading to the top of the tree.





There I was looking up at the blue sky through the leaves and thinking how pretty it looked. I took some more photos, and was trying to include more of the canopy. This ended up with me lying on my back, on the grass, looking up at the sky, leaves and clouds. Then I remembered being a child and trying to decide what object or animal each cloud looked like. I put my camera down and lay there for a while.



As I lay on the grass looking up at the sky and oak canopy above, I heard the beautiful sound of a bird singing. I decided to record this birds wonderful song and video the leaves gently blowing in the breeze with clouds floating by. Click on the photo and press play to see and hear what inspired me to write the little poem.

The Oak Tree

I lie on the grass watching the oak leaves dance gently in the breeze, I am glad it is summer because if it were winter I would defiantly freeze. The oak tree provided me with shade from the hot summers sun, just like it does for animals after their food and fun. I hear a bird singing from a tree and I wonder if he is singing to me. A black bird I guess? yes a black bird it is! his song so beautiful, would I listen again? Of course I would, yes

What else did I discover in my garden?

**A blackbird
who seems
to have
caught a
good
dinner.**



**A blackbird looking
for his breakfast.**



I always hear and see little sparrows flying near our hedge and thought there nest was in there. However, today I saw this little fellow fly from the hedge where I thought he lived, up to our gutters. I felt quite lucky to see he was carrying some worms in his beak. Now I wonder if they have made a nest in our gutters and just use the hedge to hunt for food.
Click on the photo above and press play to hear the family chirping.

I wondered around my garden some more and discovered a hole in the ground. I guess it may belong to a little mouse?

I also discovered some perfect holes in an old tree stump.

Then I went to pick some lettuce that I had been trying to grow, only to discover a slug (yuck) I said to myself, then I remembered the other day I saw a frog hopping near my vegetable patch (I wish he was still here to eat this slug).



Conserve

Bug Hotel

To help conserve our bugs I made a bug hotel. I looked up how to create one, then went into the garden to see what I could find. The RSPB recommended providing all sorts of different nooks and crannies and placing dead wood and loose bark for creepy crawlies like beetles, spiders, centipedes and woodlice in addition to dry leaves and sticks for lady birds and other beetles and bugs.

Luckily we had lots of dead wood and bark, leaves and sticks. I wondered how this would all stay in place, then I found some bricks. I used these to build up the sides and then filled the middle. I found some old tiles which could be good for frogs, providing them with a cool place to hide. I also used the tiles to make a roof to keep the hotel dry. I will be working on making the hotel a bit bigger with some bamboo canes to provide homes for the bees.





My first attempt at a bug hotel was small and would not have provided home to more than some little woodlice. I looked again at some hotel designs and realised I needed to add some more rocks, leaves and tiles. After a few more attempts I was satisfied that the last one would be a good home to a few bugs.





I love feeding the birds and seeing them in my garden. When the bird feeder on the left broke I tried to fix it, but it was missing pieces so I redesigned it rather than throwing it away.

My nephew made me the log bird feeder and I love it as it is very natural but not only that, it has also attracted a woodpecker to our garden.

I will be asking him to make me some more of these lovely bird feeders.



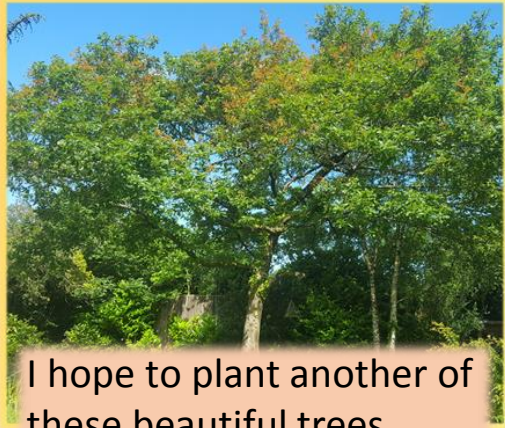
Conserve



Our cotton Easter is rather big, but the bees love it. To help conserve the bee population, we will keep this lovely bush for the bees to enjoy.

Honey Suckle and other sweet smelling flowers. I love them and so do all our visiting creature. We will defiantly keep these.

I have enjoyed the John Muir experience and i have learnt a lot. It has made me remember to take time, to stop and enjoy the nature that surrounds me in my own garden. It has also made me realise that just enjoying nature is not enough, we all need to do our thing to help conserve it and all the things we do no matter how small, all help to conserve this beautiful place for future generations.



I hope to plant another of these beautiful trees.



We had placed a bird box up a tree, however the birds never seem to use it. I intend to add a few more around the garden in the near future.