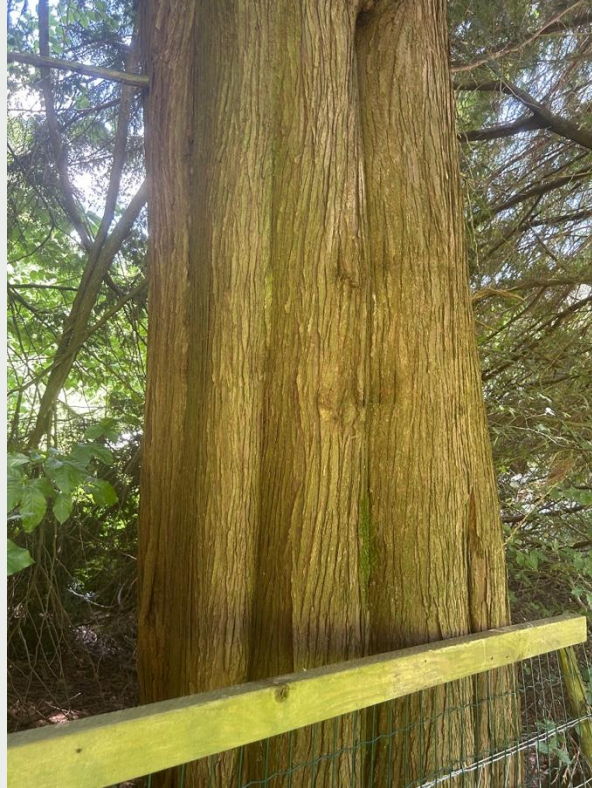




MY CHILDHOOD GARDEN, NOW I'M OLD

Sustainability in the
Early Years

Native tree species



The native trees of the garden
Holly, which feeds the birds with its berries in the winter.
Hornbeam, Beech, Holly and Conifer all grow in our garden.
As you can see by the trunk, they have been growing for many years and they will hopefully grow for many more.



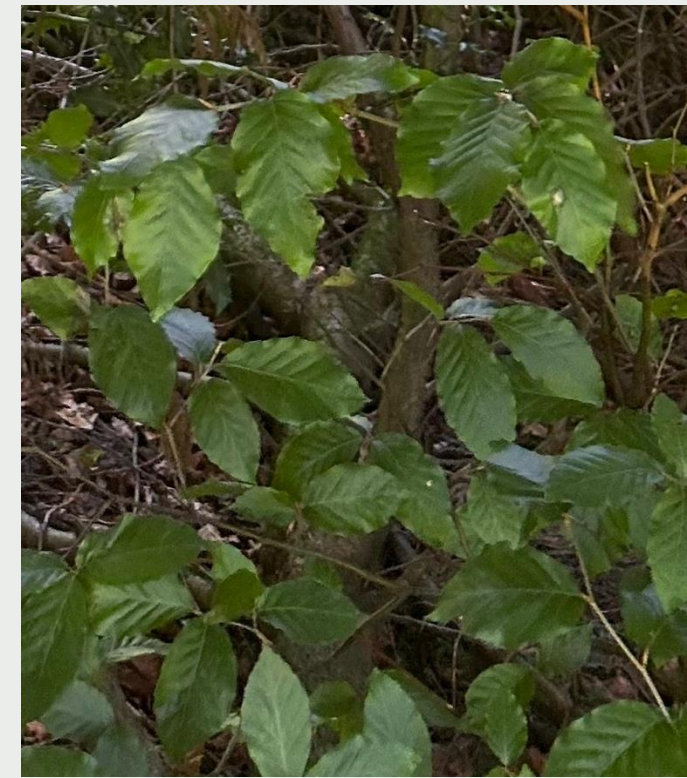
Holly
Distinctive dark green leaves, with wavy edges and spines on younger leaves



Beech
Oval shaped with pointed tips, slightly wavy edges and smooth to touch



Conifer
Scaly leaves with an almost waxy feel



Hornbeam
Often mistaken for the beech, these leaves are also oval with pointed tips, however, hornbeam leaves are deeply veined and almost corrugated to touch

Non-native tree species

Cherry Tree



Apple tree



Pear tree



Bay Laurel



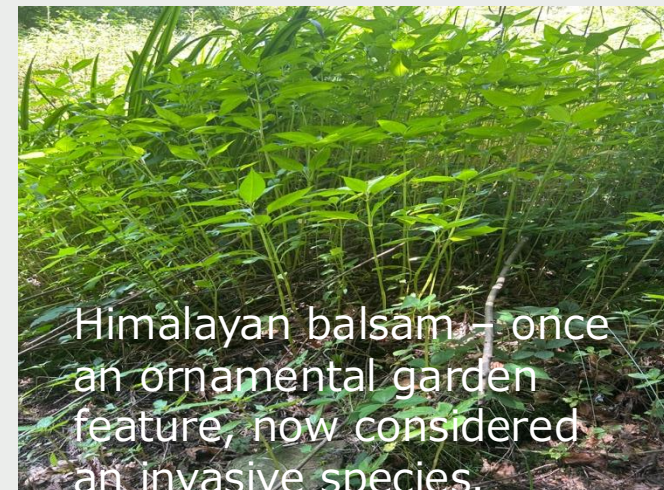
Pendulous Sedge –
can become
invasive



Foxglove –
Toxic to
animals and
humans



Hedge
woundwort – has
been used
medicinally as a
sedative



Himalayan balsam – once
an ornamental garden
feature, now considered
an invasive species.



Common male
fern – used
medicinally for
tapeworms



Hypericum androsaemum:
Has medicinal properties similar
to St Johns Wort.
Toxic – Do Not Eat!



Raspberries
and
Blackberries
Edible and
delicious



Cherry tree
We planted this tree about 5 years ago
This year is the first time we've had fruit from it



Apple tree
This tree began
giving fruit last
year, green apples
on this one
Look how many
there are



Green beans
Edible



Tomatoes
Edible and
very tasty

Bay Laurel
Leaves can be used in
cooking



My childhood garden now I'm old.

I sit amongst the grass so high,
Looking up into the sky.
I have no thoughts inside my head,
No feelings of the usual dread.

The ants are crawling at my feet,
Spiders and worms upon my seat.
I do not mind, it is their home,
I could be a garden gnome.

Memories of my childhood here,
Digging and rolling, full of cheer.
But now I'm grown, I don't have
time,
To dig or sit or notice snail slime.

I wish I was a child once more,
Laying in the grass to snore.
No responsibilities to be found,
Just embracing my bare feet on the
ground.

Nerys Thomas,
2025





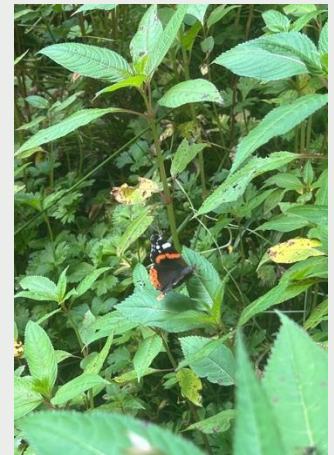
Wanda
A small squirrel
that had fallen
from her home in
the trees.



The Robin that
inspired my tattoo



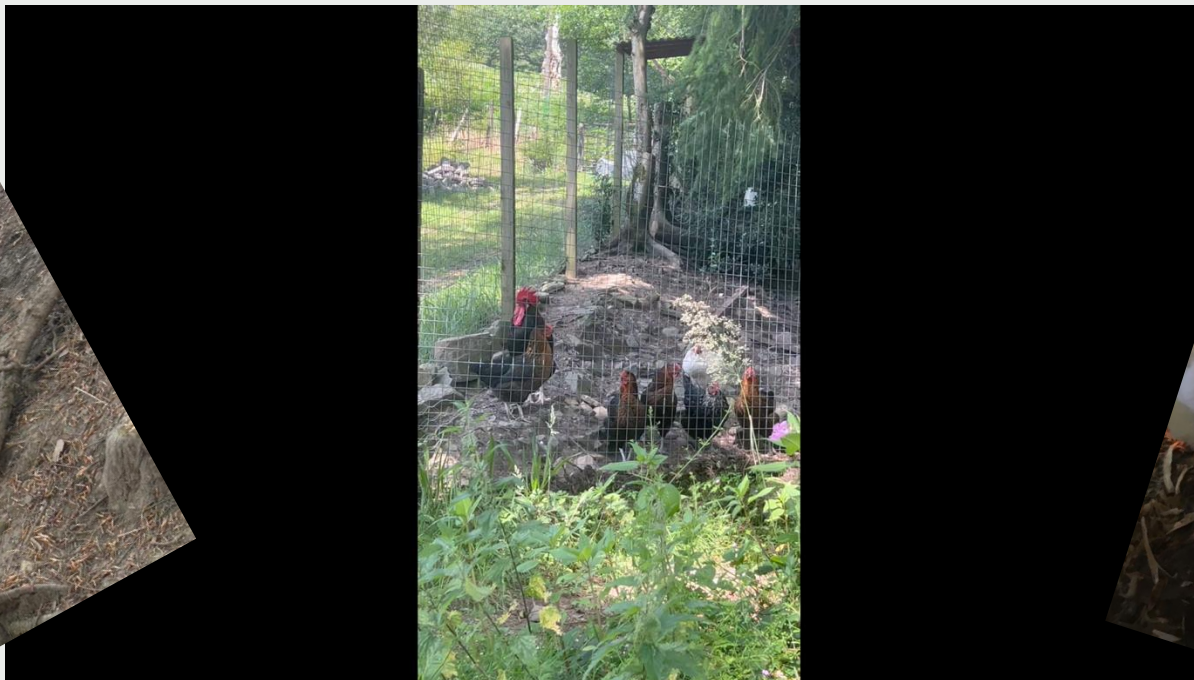
Our neighbours Llamas coming for a visit



Red Admiral
butterfly



A common
pipistrelle bat
that roosts in
the trees.



Meet the chickens (and the cockerel)

Chickens are very good contributors to sustainability.

Their foraging in their free range enclosure limits the use of grain feed. They also eat kitchen scraps and waste from the garden, limiting the need for recycling.

Their eggs are a good source of food.

Their manure reduces the need for chemical fertilisers.

They can also be a good educational tool for children learning about their life-cycle.



Time to feed the birds
We replace the seeds every
Saturday, so that on a Sunday
morning we can watch all the
different birds from the
window
Recycled bidet, reduces
landfill, reused as a birdbath





Trees that have fallen or been cut over the years have not been wasted. We have used the wood for our fire. Built a tree den for the children (and the adults). Made makeshift seats in the garden. Fencing for the chicken compound. And we also have a log pile beneath the overgrown grass, that will attract all the bugs and wildlife and also help to fertilise the ground for future growth.





Supporting sustainability by growing our own fruits and vegetables. Reusing rainwater to feed the animals and plants, cutting the use of running/plumbed water. Keeping chickens who supply us with fresh eggs daily.

We do not sell our produce for money; however, we swap with our neighbours when we can and gift any produce, we cannot use ourselves, to friends and family. Thus, reducing waste and costs.



Every gardening session is a learning opportunity. Here Ivan is showing us that the green beans have grown to over four feet tall.

Teaching the next generation about growing their own food and cutting the costs of living, ensuring they understand sustainability and our responsibility to protect our planet from depleting the resources required by the future generations.

Even though he doesn't enjoy the vegetables, every berry and fruit grown in the garden is given the taste test.

Iolo Williams

Iolo Williams is a Welsh conservationist, television presenter and ornithologist. He began presenting after spending fourteen years working for the RSPB, specializing in the conservation of rare birds.

Iolo is an advocate for many conservation trusts and has spoken in the Welsh assembly about the importance of conservation. He believes that education is the key to sustainability and leads by example, growing his own food, recycling, composting and keeping a wildlife friendly garden at his home. Using his platform as a television presenter, Iolo educates and inspires others about the importance of habitats and wildlife and protecting vulnerable species. In 2024 Iolo advocated for The Gwent Levels in a campaign to obtain full protection orders for the area. The area is known to be home to many rare species of flora and fauna.

