JOHN MUIR AWARD
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DISCOVERING

I TOOK MY DOG MILO, FOR A LOVELY WALK ON MY CHOSEN PATH AS WE BOTH LOVE TO EXPLORE NEW PLACES AND BE INVOLVED WITH NATURE. THIS TRACK GOES FROM GORSEINON TO PONTARDDULAIS.











EXPLORING

THE BEAUTIFUL TREES, FLOWERS AND BERRIES ALONG THE ROUTE AND CAN HEAR THE TWEETING OF BIRDS IN EARLY MORNINGS.







THE CHIRPING OF THE GRASSHOPPERS IN THE DAY. IT WAS ALSO SO NICE TO SOLCIALISE WITH ALL THE PEOPLE WALKING ON THE TRACK AS FRESH AIR AND SOCIALISING HELPS MY ANXIETY







CALM
THE MO

TURES













THIS PLACE HAS A VERYSPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART AS A LITTLE BOY I LOOKED AFTER DIED OF CANCER RECENTLY AND WE DONE A CHILDREN'S SPONSORED WALK ALONG THIS PATH TO RAISE MONEY FOR HIS CHARITY, MORGAN'S ARMY.







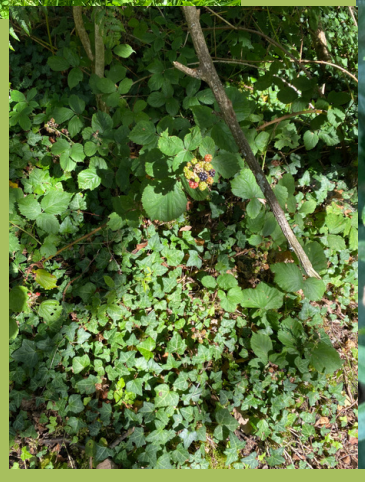


HE LOVED THE FLOWERS AND ESPECIALLY SHOWING ME ALL THE DIFFERENT COLOURS OF THE LEAVES AND LOOKING FOR WORMS

SEEN A ROBIN IN THE TREES AND MY MUM ALWAYS SAID THERE WAS A LOVED ONE NEAR BY, THIS MADE ME SMILE



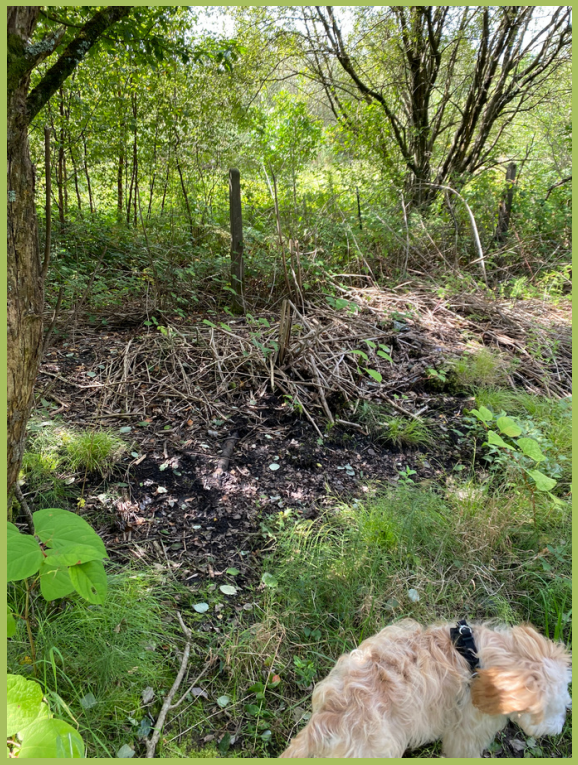




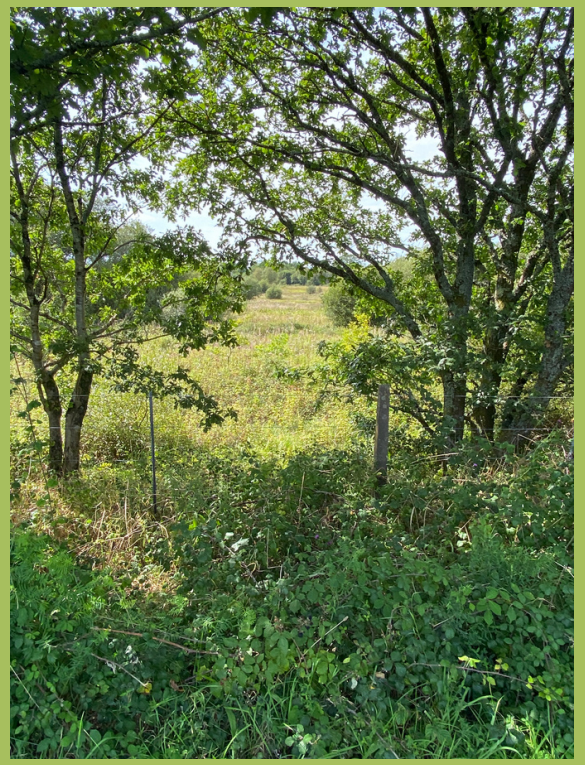




THE PATH IS VERY CALMING AND THIS ROUTE HAS A HISTORY BEHIND IT, I LOVE FINDING OUT THE HISTORY BEHIND EVERYTHING AND LOVE TO GOOGLE EVERY PLANT, CREATURE AND ANIMAL.









THERE WAS ONCE AN OLD RAILWAY TRACK GOING THROUGH THIS PATH AND UNTIL THEY STARTED CONSTRUCTING THE NEW ROUTE, THEY NEVER KNEW THIS WAS LEFT BEHIND AND FOUND IT WITHIN THE RUBBLE







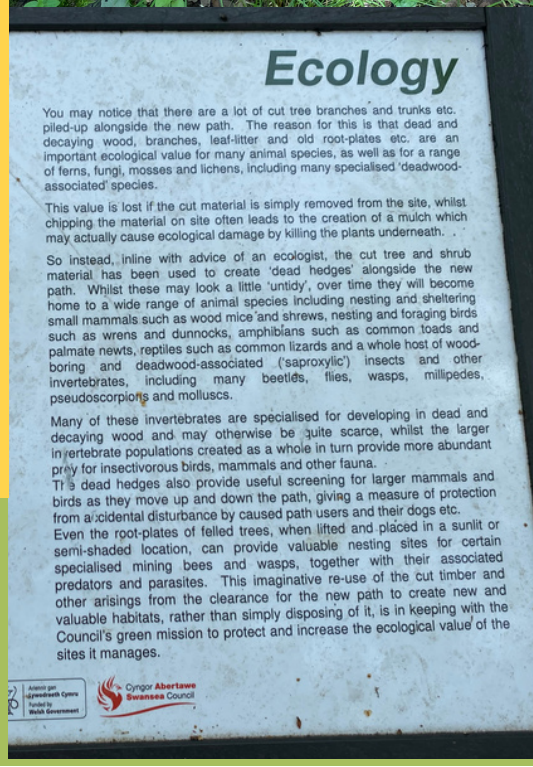


CONSERVE

ALONG THE PATH ARE BRANCHES, TRUNKS, DEAD DECAYING WOOD AND MOSSES. THIS IS DUE TO AN ECOLOGIST STATING THAT INSTEAD OF CLEARING IT UP, IT WILL BECOME VALUABLE TO ANIMALS AND CREATURES OVER TIME, DUE TO THEM BUILDING HABITATS OVER TIME. AS YOU CAN SEE WE TRIED TO MAKE A HOME WITH TWIGS, BRANCHES, MUD AND MOSS FOR THESE WILDLIFE.







Ecology

You may notice that there are a lot of cut tree branches and trunks etc. piled-up alongside the new path. The reason for this is that dead and decaying wood, branches, leaf-litter and old root-plates etc. are an important ecological value for many animal species, as well as for a range of ferns, fungi, mosses and lichens, including many specialised 'deadwood-associated' species.

This value is lost if the cut material is simply removed from the site, whilst chipping the material on site often leads to the creation of a mulch which may actually cause ecological damage by killing the plants underneath. .

So instead, inline with advice of an ecologist, the cut tree and shrub material has been used to create 'dead hedges' alongside the new path. Whilst these may look a little 'untidy', over time they will become home to a wide range of animal species including nesting and sheltering small mammals such as wood mice and shrews, nesting and foraging birds such as wrens and dunnocks, amphibians such as common toads and palmate newts, reptiles such as common lizards and a whole host of wood-boring and deadwood-associated ('saproxylic') insects and other invertebrates, including many beetles, flies, wasps, millipedes, pseudoscorpions and molluscs.

Many of these invertebrates are specialised for developing in dead and decaying wood and may otherwise be quite scarce, whilst the larger invertebrate populations created as a whole in turn provide more abundant prey for insectivorous birds, mammals and other fauna.
The dead hedges also provide useful screening for larger mammals and birds as they move up and down the path, giving a measure of protection from accidental disturbance by caused path users and their dogs etc.
Even the root-plates of felled trees, when lifted and placed in a sunlit or semi-shaded location, can provide valuable nesting sites for certain specialised mining bees and wasps, together with their associated predators and parasites. This imaginative re-use of the cut timber and other arisings from the clearance for the new path to create new and valuable habitats, rather than simply disposing of it, is in keeping with the Council's green mission to protect and increase the ecological value of the sites it manages.

Cyngor Abertawe Swansea Council

WE TOOK OUR OWN RUBBISH BAGS WITH US TO PICK UP ANY LITTER WE SEEN, BUT SURPRISINGLY THERE WAS NOT ANY AND THIS AREA IS KEPT CLEAN. ALSO LOVELY BENCHES AND PICNIC AREAS WERE AROUND, I SAT HERE AND TRIED TO DRAW A PICTURE OF THE TREES AND PATH. CREATIVE WISE, I AM NOT VERY GOOD, BUT I ENJOYED IN THE FRESH AIR AND PEACE, TRYING TO DRAW AND COLOUR THIS ROUTE.









DEFINITELY WILL NOT BE AN ARTIST SOON

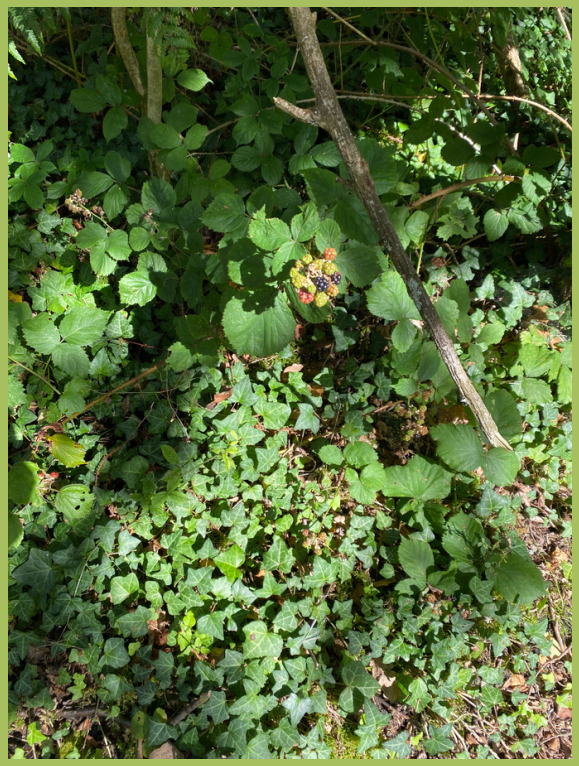






3000 AMERICAN SOLIDIERS CAMPED IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR HERE, COMING FROM SWANSEA DOCKS.









THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LITTLE AREA, SURROUNDED BY FLOWERS, ANIMALS, CREATURES AND RIGHT BY MY DOOR STEP.

TO CONCLUDE, BEFORE I HAD A DOG I NEVER REALLY WENT FOR WALKS OR EXPLORED, THE JOHN MUIR AWARD IS AN AMAZING WAY TO GET PEOPLE OUT IN FRESH AIR EXPLORING AND ACTUALLY THINKING ABOUT MAKING THE WORLD MORE SUSTAINABLE. I GOT MY FAMILY TO GO ON THIS WALK AND CHECK FRO RUBBISH AND EVEN MY 3 TEENAGE DAUGHTERS. I PUT MYSELF OUT THERE CREATIVELY AND GOOGLING EVERYTHING I SEEN AND THE HISTORY THAT RESIDES BY THE PATH.



















