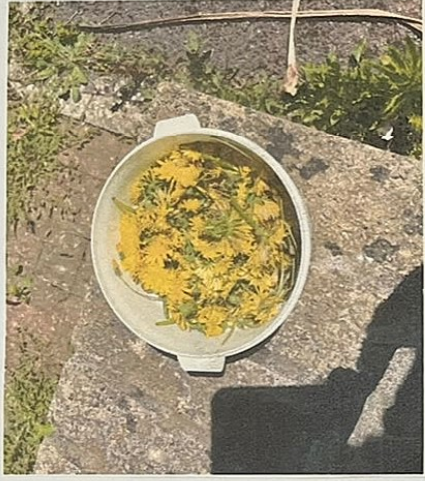
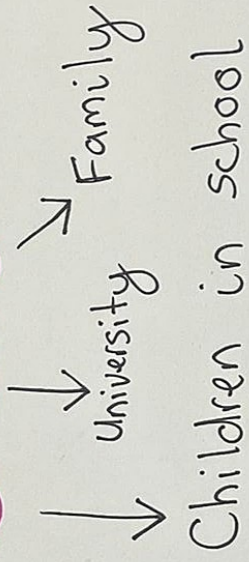


Share — Teachers



* This book will be kept in school for children to look at and use for future projects.

* I shared my honey with children in school and they were keen to make their own honey and possibly sell it at the school fete.

* I shared my experience with teachers who were keen to implement the John Muir award into their teaching.

* I shared my findings with my family who were fascinated with all the plants which could heal which I had discovered.

Share

I shared this video
and song with the
children.



Alice in Wonderland (1951) - The
Flowers Chase Alice Away



Alice in Wonderland (1951) - The
Flowers Chase Alice Away



Alice in Wonderland (1951) - The
Flowers Chase Alice Away



* I have always loved this song about 'Alice' wandering
around the flowers and being accused of being a
'weed'. This song came to my mind when I was exploring
the garden and I think it will help children to ask
their own questions about their gardens.

Rachel Basar 2024

29 Mon	11:30 Don't Be Late
30 Tue	
31 Wed	

Sustainability in the Early Years

My "John Muir Award"

When I first started thinking of different places I could go to discover more about the natural environment, I thought of many areas I could visit. Local to me is Sully Island which has a tidal causeway enabling you to visit the island, The beach is just a two minute walk from my house! A further 15 minute walk from my house is Cosmeston Lake which would also be a great area to explore. I am so lucky that I have these natural environments around me; however I didn't choose these places to explore.

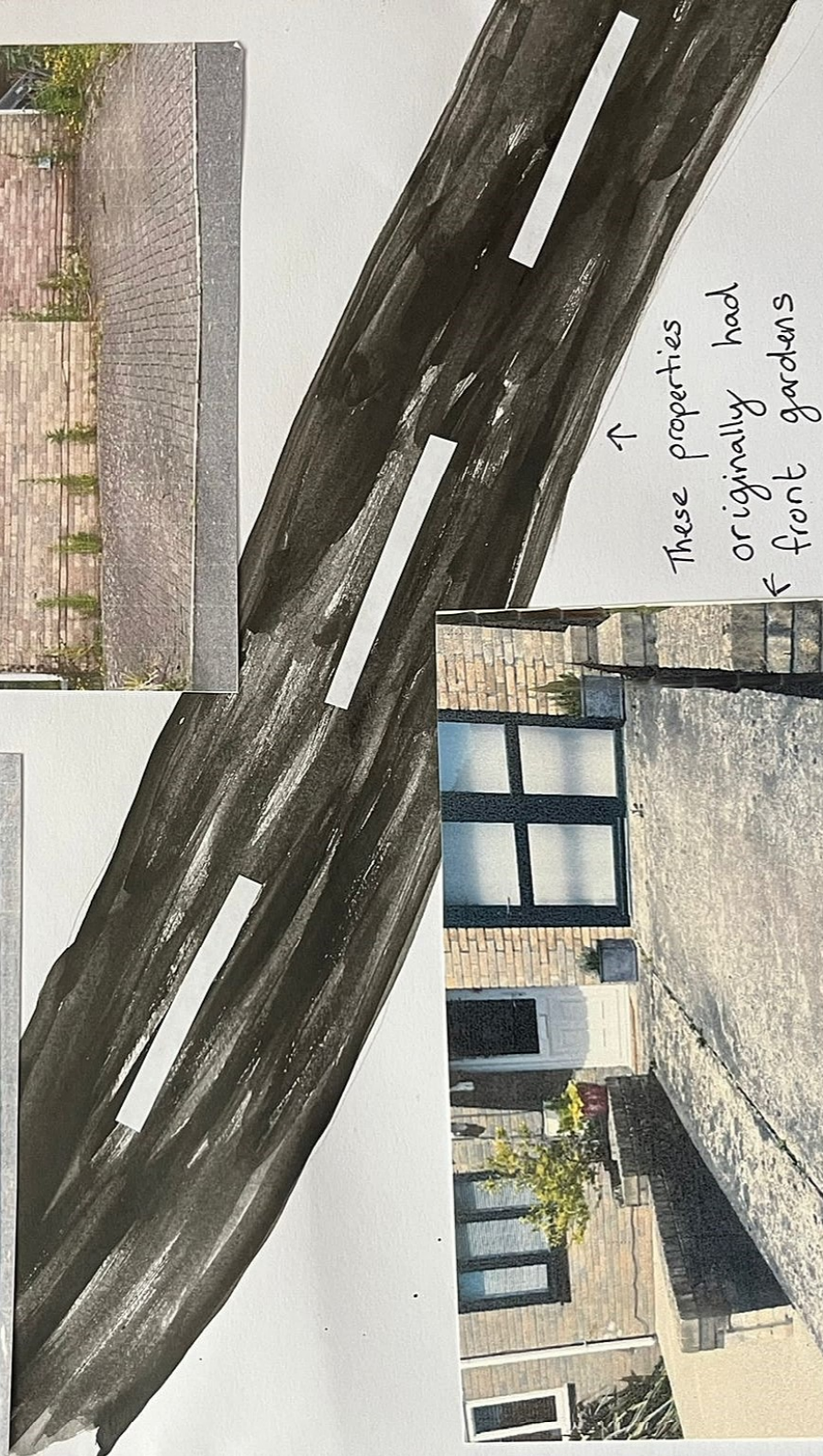
The following pages will take you on my journey of the entrance of my street where I live in Sully, in the Vale of Glamorgan to the front garden of my home which I will go on to explore and conserve as part of the John Muir Award.

By Rachel Basar

Discover



The start of my street
↙



↑
These properties
originally had
↙ front gardens

Discover



walk past these
house to reach my
one which is in
the middle of
the street,



A quick street survey of
front gardens.

[18 houses in total]

14 have paved/cemented over

3 have a small grass lawn

1 (mine) has a wild area/garden

[taken from my street]

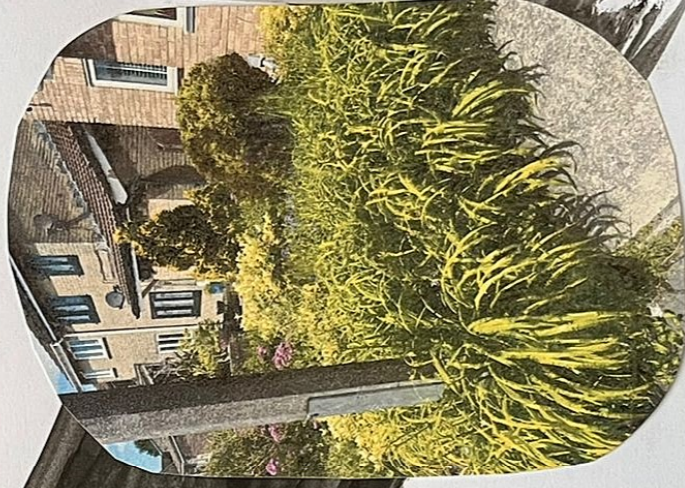


Discover

My front garden or 'wilderness' as I call it! ↓



I decided to explore this area for a couple of reasons; there is an ongoing family argument about getting the area paved to make extra room for parking. My 17 year old daughter is against this as she is a keen environmentalist. I am against paving over the area as it gives me such joy every day when I walk past the other houses and am met with a complete chaos of growth from my front garden. What makes this special is that each year something different appears, a new weed, a new plant and a new bug activity and I love the craziness of it among all the surrounding concrete. I have never planted anything in this area and I have never spent time looking after it, I just let it do its own thing each year. However, I am going to explore this area and find out if I was right to leave things or if I should have conserved/altered or enhanced what is already there.



Explore

I decided that I needed a little help finding out what the plants were. I downloaded an app called 'Plant Snap'.



← This red/pink flower is called 'Red Valerian' (Centranthus ruber).

Fun Fact

It was used in Roman times to treat insomnia, migraine and stomach cramps.



I always thought that these plants were weeds. Finding out that these are used in other ways made me delve deeper into how plants can be used.



→ This blue flower is called 'Love-in-a-mist' (Nigella damascena).

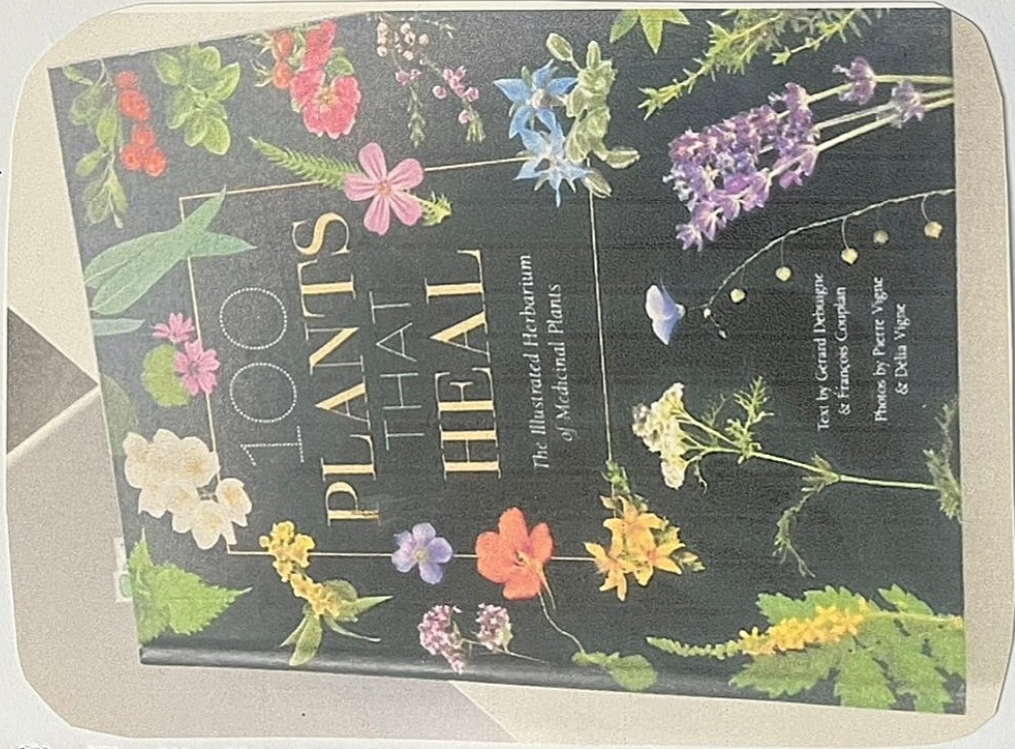
Fun Fact

The seeds have a spicy, nutmeg flavour which are used in Middle Eastern cuisines to flavor bread and rice.

* All photos taken from my garden

Explore

After chatting to my daughter about the flowers, she showed me her book "100 plants that heal" which I had forgotten about. Inside I found that 'Love-in-a-mist' is used to aid digestion and alleviates menstrual pains.



I also discovered amazing things about dandelions →

Explore

I was fascinated to discover that dandelions are so good for you! I have many growing in my patch and I do worry that they are a negative plant to have. However, I have read that bees love them and also they can be harvested for different reasons.



The thousand benefits of Dandelion

- Dandelion stimulates the gall-bladder. It increases the quantity of bile produced while increasing the power of the gall-

Description

A perennial growing from a tap-root, common in meadows. Its smooth leaves grow in rosettes and are generally divided into sharp downward-pointing or slightly serrated lobes. Each hollow, flowering stem has a single flower head of golden rays. The seeds, which fly at the slightest wind, have poppi as parachutes. Elisee Reclus, the 19th-century French geographer said, "This flower that is a sun becomes a milky way, a world of stars, after it flowers."



- 58

METHOD OF USE

- **INTERNAL:** Dandelion leaf salad is highly recommended for people with liver or over-eating problems, gout or anaemia.
Decoction. Boll 30 to 60g (1 to 2oz) of fresh roots and leaves per litre (quart) of water for 30 minutes, then leave to infuse for 4 hours. Drink 2 glasses per day between meals for liver problems and constipation.
- **EXTERNAL:** **Root decoction.** Cleans and firms the skin.
Fresh Dandelion juice. The beautiful ladies of the Renaissance would use a mixture of equal parts dandelion juice and cream. They would rub it on the face to remove impurities and obtain a radiant complexion.



Explore

I found a recipe online for 'Dandelion Honey'

I collected some dandelions
mindful of leaving some for
the bees. ①



③ strain

the dandelion mixture and discard the solids then bring to a low boil. Gradually add the sugar until dissolved.
④ Simmer for 1 hour and pour into jars when cool and keep in the fridge. **It was lovely on toast!**



Recipe

- 2 cups of dandelion petals or heads + petals
- 2 cups of water
- 2 slices of lemon
- 1 cup of sugar

Explore

I started to wonder which plants were considered a weed and discovered that a couple of plants were actually flowers. I also discovered that a pretty white flower was in fact an invasive weed (Bindweed) which I later learnt could destroy other plants



↗ This purple flower is called Iberian Geranium

I found that the Oxford Dictionary defines a weed as "a wild plant growing where it is not wanted, especially among crops or garden plants". Interestingly, the term "weed" has no botanical significance. Wild plants growing where they are wanted would not be defined as weeds.

This white flower is bindweed.



On closer inspection I found the bindweed had completely grown around the stems of the orange lily plants, it had wrapped itself around both trees in my patch and had started to spill out onto the pavement by breaking through the tarmac. I actually didn't realise the harm it was doing.

Explore



↑ Bindweed climbing up all of my lily plants

Bindweed is a type of plant that contains poisonous alkaloids. This means it's a real problem for other plants because it's capable of outgrowing them and taking all the sunlight, nutrients, and water for itself. I realized that my patch had all its potential of being an amazing pollinating area restricted by the bind weed. This is why I probably have been seeing less bees, butterflies and even snails as the bindweed has been taking over under the guise of being a pretty flower.

Certain types of bindweed is toxic to
Certain types of livestock, horses in particular
can become poorly if ingested.

A little research on how urban
environments affect the natural world.

Lift
the
Flap ↓

Interesting Fact - PULL UP A PAVING SLAB!

Garden soils and perennial plantings play an important role in storing carbon. If 30 million gardeners pulled up a paver and planted 1m² of perennial plants (either herbaceous, shrubs or trees) in their community, school, workplace or garden and allowed it to develop to maturity, depending on the plants grown this would be equivalent to heating between 86,000 to more than one million homes for a year!



Explore



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ProKop (2024) carried out a study of the urban environment to see if it decreases pollinator availability and fertility. Results showed that urban flowers showed a reduced seed set compared to rural flowers. The drop in availability of adequate locations for insect pollinators to nest and forage in urban environments may be the cause of this drop in pollinator numbers.

The natural environment is changed by urbanisation, which has a detrimental effect on all living things. Urbanisation can also cause a decline in the variety and amount of invertebrates, which can upset plant-pollinator networks



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Conserve



Regular weeding
has brought the
area alive with
more flowers
blooming.

With the help of neighbours and
my plant book, I educated
myself on all the different
species and weeded
accordingly.



↑ There is a space now for
my cat 'Milo'.

