

REGAINING PARADISE? SUSTAINABILITY IN THE EARLY YEARS (ECEY6005)

SANDY WATER PARK LLANELLI

1909154

Discover





As part of my John Muir award, I have chosen Sandy Water Park to discover, explore, and conserve. When we were children, my sister and I would often go for a walk with my Nanna and Grampa to Sandy Water Park, as they only live five minutes away.

Years after going for a walk or a run around Sandy time and time again, it has never got old.

A loop around the park is around 2km, but it never hurts to go around twice!

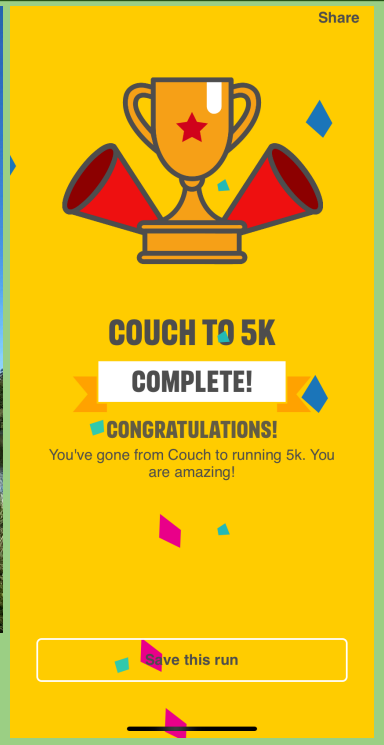
Discover

Sandy Water Park is an area that holds a lot of lovely memories for me, during lockdown I would go down there for a walk often. During this time, I decided to start 'Couch to 5K', and have never looked back. I would run around the park through the guidance of the app. Then when it came to completing the last run, I have fond memories of it being a lovely sunny morning and completing the challenge.





A lovely peaceful morning the day I completed Couch to 5K



I remember early in the mornings seeing swans and ducks, more so than when I go for a walk there now - as well as dog walkers or other runners!

I remember more moments from being at Sandy Water Park in the sunny weather and enjoying it more compared to when it is blustery and miserable.

Explore

I was walking to my Nanna and Grampa's house after dropping my car off at the garage, and although the fastest route was to use the pavements on the main road, I decided to take a little detour through Sandy – even though it was raining!









Not that long ago I noticed this new area on the water for the wildlife at Sandy, and whilst walking through there I saw this bird on the little stand. When I walked on a little bit further, I noticed this board, which shows what birds can be seen at Sandy. Although it is difficult to see, I would be confident in saying that I spotted a Cormorant bird! I tried to look out for the other birds and animals that can be spotted here on the rest of my walk.

Explore

Whilst walking around, I was thinking to myself how clean/tidy the area surrounding the water is. I had noticed there was a bin at one end of the park, but near to where the ducks get fed by the public and by the picnic bench, I noticed some litter in the corners of the water.







Explore

I came back to the same part of Sandy Water Park another day, in the sunshine to see if there is anything I can compare. Unfortunately, just a couple of feet away from this bin, I spotted another piece of rubbish – an empty packet of Danish bread.



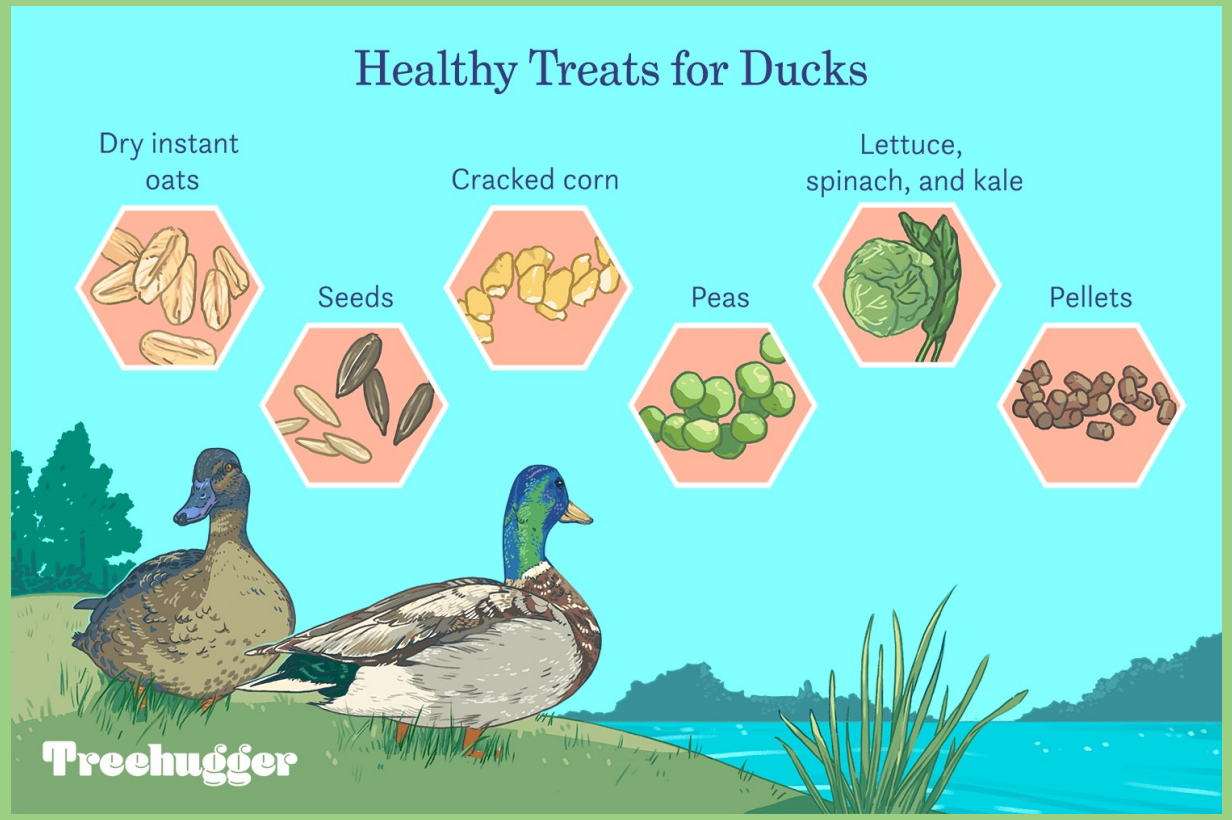


The park was quiet on this day, and the ducks weren't being fed, therefore the rubbish must have been there in the sides of the water for a while. The bin was almost opposite the packet too.

I have fond memories of throwing bread into the water for the ducks to eat. However, I recall reading that ducks cannot digest bread easily, which led me to find out more.

Explore

One of the best ways to enjoy interacting with ducks, swans, and geese is to feed them. It is a great approach for everyone to re-establish a connection with nature and to introduce young children to wild animals for the first time.





Water birds can eat bread as long as it makes up a minor portion of their diet. In the spring and summer, when an imbalanced diet can cause developmental issues for growing young birds, moderation is crucial.

However, judging moderation is difficult when there's a chance that other people are also giving the same birds bread at other times. Therefore, it's usually safer to give the birds other, healthier foods, like:
chopped or torn green veggies, and grain of wheat.

Explore

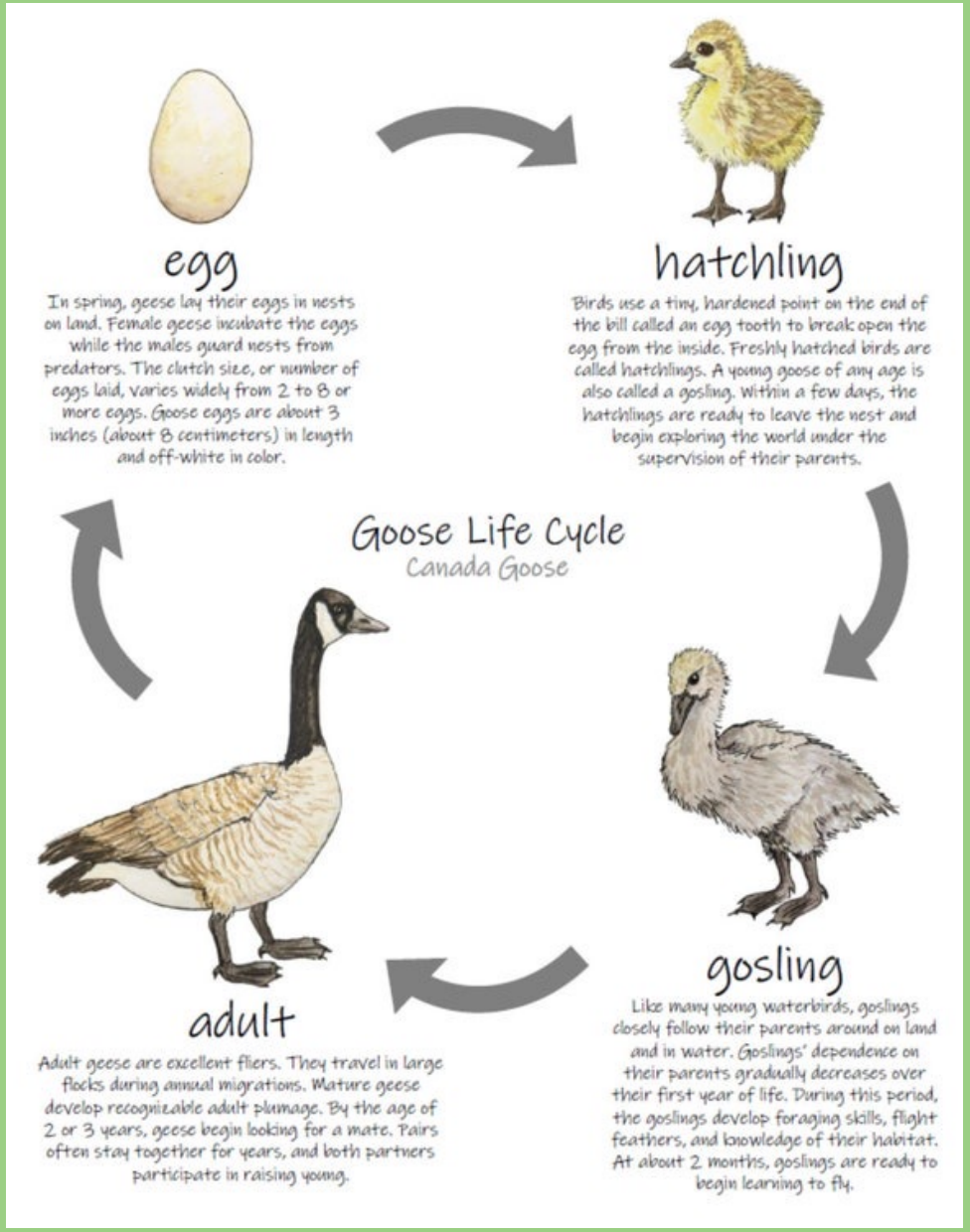
As I walked around the park a little more in the sunny weather, I turned a corner and came across this duck and their 5 babies!

This intrigued me to find out more about the species. After a bit of research, through it's distinct orange beak and feet, I found out that this is a Greylag Goose. The greylag goose, the most common local goose, may be very protective of its nesting area, driving large birds and other geese away. After the chicks hatch, greylag geese become friendly once more, occasionally forming groups of multiple families of goslings.





Explore



All they need is enough water to create a secure breeding area apart from foxes and other predators. For the most part, the geese and their goslings forage on short-cropped grass, but when danger appears, they take to the water. They often build their nests on the ground in April. The female of the greylag goose spends four weeks incubating the 5 to 7 eggs that she generally lays. Their young can walk, swim, and feed themselves as soon as they hatch, but it will take them 7 to 9 weeks to be able to take flight.



Explore

On another visit to the park, I decided to park near a different entrance. As I was walking down I was greeted by a lovely view! Of shrubs, and the water park itself. I also spotted a recycling bin straight away, which looks as if it is maintained with being consistently emptied. I turned to the right and began my short walk, I had run down here a few weeks prior and spotted a goose laying on some eggs, so I was interested to see if they were still there or had hatched!







Explore

As I approach the swan laying on their eggs, I notice that lots of trees have been chopped down in roughly the last 2 weeks, and these barriers have been placed, near where the swan has laid her eggs! I was quite saddened to see this and felt for the swan as their environment has been slightly wrecked.

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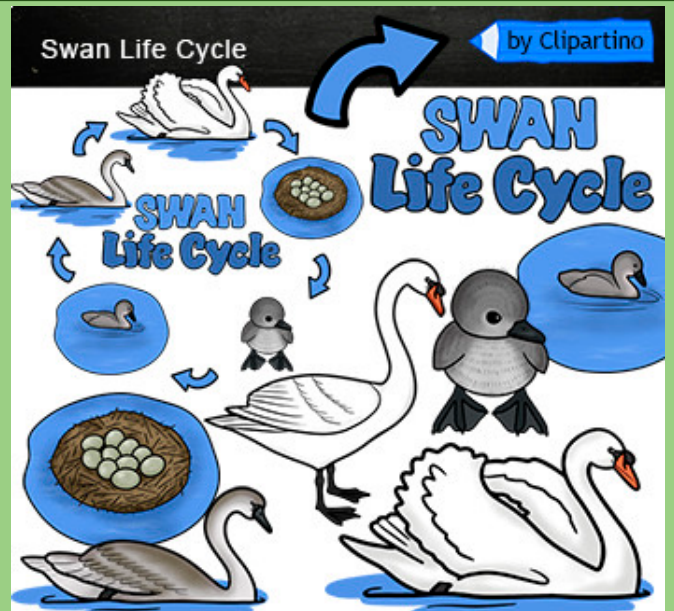





Explore

Facts about Swans:

- Swans' necks are long and curved.
- Swans have webbed feet and sleek bodies.
- A swan's body is covered in roughly 25,000 feathers.
- Swans come in seven species. Each has a unique size, colour, and way of acting.
- The largest members of the duck-goose family are swans.
- Swans range in length from 56 to 62 inches and can weigh up to 30 pounds.
- Swans have a 10- to 20-year lifespan.





Explore



As I'm walking back to the car, I enjoy looking at the scenery around me. I like hearing the bird tweet, and the sound of the grit moving as I walk along it on the path.

I could not see the birds around me singing, so decided to do some research on what bird it could potentially be.

After watching a few videos of different birdsong, I would say the bird in the video is a chaffinch.

If you scan the barcode, you can hear more chaffinch bird song.



Explore



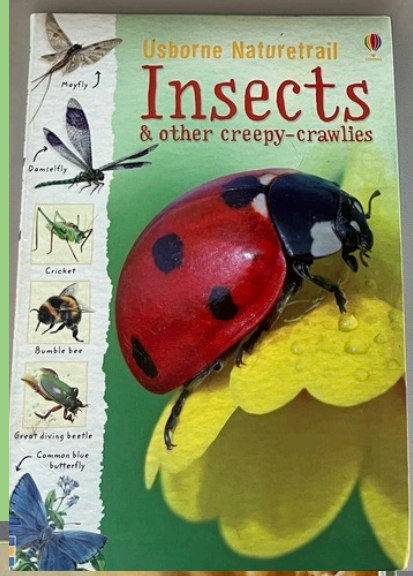


As I'm around the corner from my car, I stop to look at the flowers, I can hear lots of buzzing around me and instantly suspect there is a bee on one of the flowers.

Explore

Why do bees land on flowers?

The colour and fragrance of flowers attract bees. A bee's primary food source consists of the pollen and nectar found inside flowers. Pollen sticks to the bee's fur during the collection of pollen and nectar. The pollination cycle is completed when the pollen is transported to the stigma of the following flower.







WATCHING INSECTS

"FANTASTIC FACT"
The energy in about 30 grams of honey would give a bee enough energy to fly around the world.

Here are the different castes of bee to spot. There are lots of different species of bumble bees and honey bees.

Let's bee together

A lot of bees live alone, but honey bees and bumble bees are whizzes at teamwork. They live in nests or man-made boxes called hives. Nowadays, most honey bees live in hives, looked after by beekeepers who farm them for their honey.

In each community of bees, every type or "caste" of bee has a vital job to do. There's one queen bee who lays the eggs. Male bees called drones are on hand to mate with the queen, but they don't do much else... and female worker bees do all the other jobs!

	Drone Spot these... in summer	Queen Spot these... if you're incredibly lucky!	Worker Spot these... from spring to autumn
Honey bees	Drones get kicked out of the hive and die soon after mating.	A queen can live for years, but only leaves the hive once, to mate.	Most honey bees that you spot will be workers.
Red-tailed bumble bees	Bumble bee drones forage alone after mating with the queen.	Queens can be seen flying low in spring, looking for new nests.	You might spot worker bumble bees during warm winters too.

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Hard workers

Most of the bees in a honey or bumble bee colony are workers, and it's these industrious insects that give bees their reputation for being busy. Look for them in gardens, fields, parks and other flowery places. They buzz from flower to flower, collecting dusty grains called pollen and sticky nectar to feed the queen, the drones and the hungry little larvae.

This worker bee is putting nectar into the wax cells of the hive.

A cosy teapot

In spring, when bumble bee queens are looking for new homes, try leaving an old teapot in a sheltered place outside. This would be a cosy spot for the queen to nest. Make sure the pot doesn't have a grille at the bottom of the spout, so she can get in.

Put some cotton wool inside the teapot and then bury it with just a bit of the spout sticking out. Make sure you leave the lid on!

Put a bit of broken pot over the spout, so that the pot doesn't fill up with water, but leave a gap for the bee to get in and out.

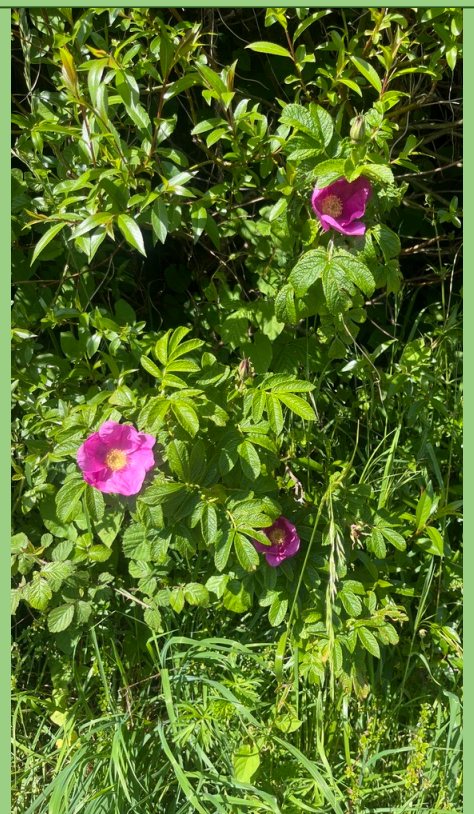
"BEE HELPFUL"
It's getting harder for bumble bees to find the right food as there are fewer wild flowers in fields nowadays. You can help by growing their favourites in your garden or window box. Plants such as lavender, foxglove and michaelmas daisies are best.

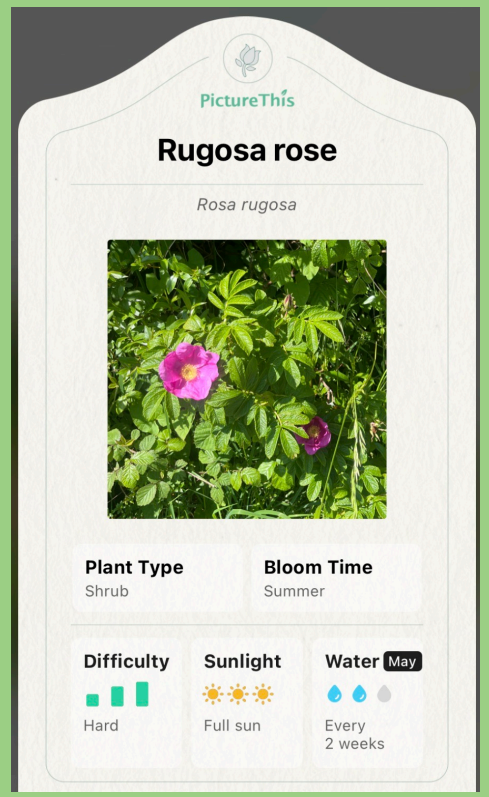
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Conserve

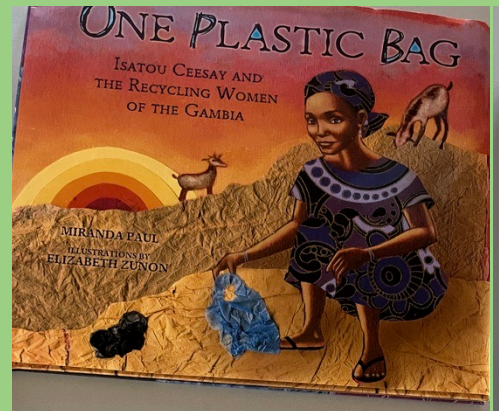
As my part of conserving Sandy Water Park, I plan to educate my family and friends on the harm of plastics being in the lake, from what I have learnt.

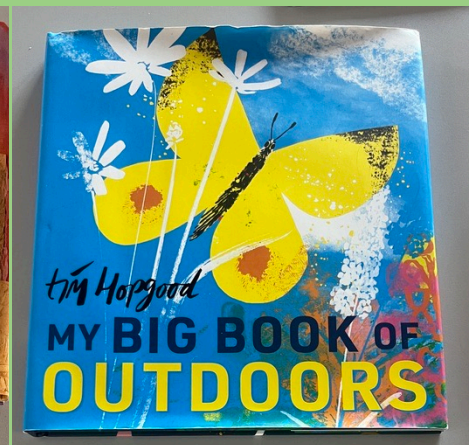
I also plan to inform the practitioners within my setting on how we can educate the children in our care about the importance of sustainability and the environment around us.

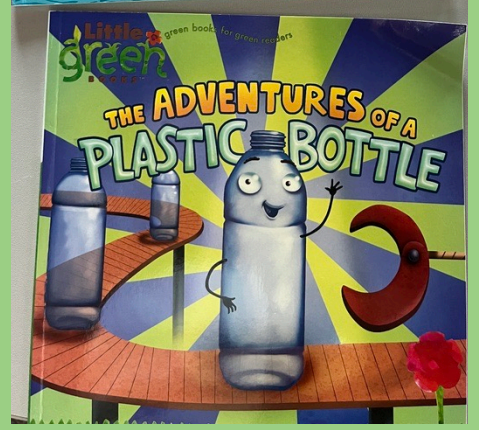


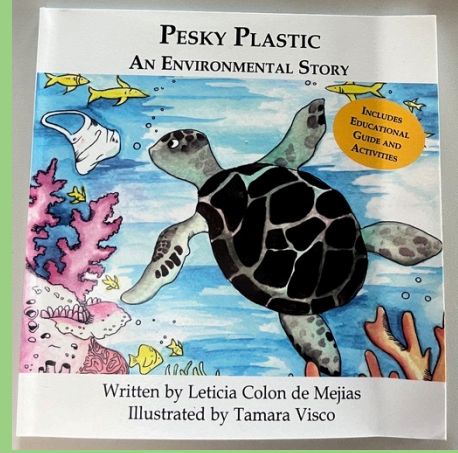


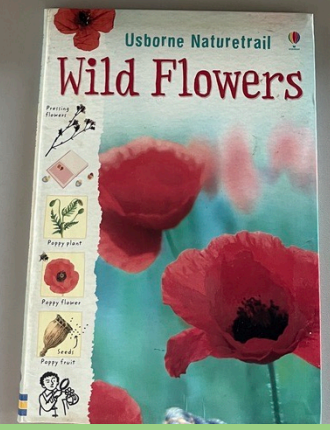












To educate others and share the memories I made whilst participating in the John Muir Award, I plan to show them this scrapbook. After I identified some plants, I thought that this would be a fun activity for children to take part in, as well as educating them on how to take care of them. I also think that educating children on litter and regular litter picking would be beneficial for the local area, and to aid in conserving Sandy Water Park.


Warning!



