Regaining Paradise? Sustainability in the Early Years



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ECEY6005/C

This path is just 5 minutes from our front door!





My family and I are so lucky to live so close to this beautiful nature park. We often go for walks together, rain or sunshine, whilst having the privilege of using the secret back pathway.



Before we even get into the park there are varied plants to touch, smell and see…

Holly



Wild Rose



Wild Orchid



Hazel





Bracken



Elderflower



Ivy





Common Sorrel

Discover

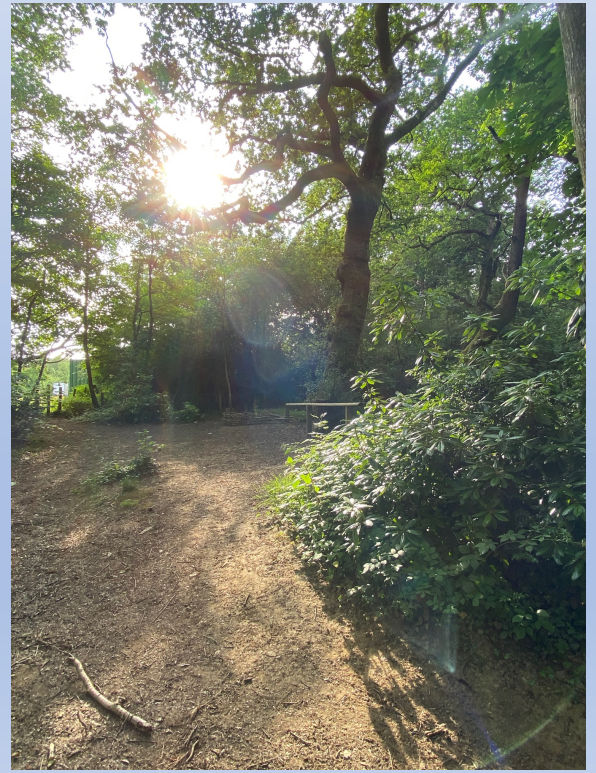


Bryngarw Estate



My family love being out in nature, enjoying the fresh air.



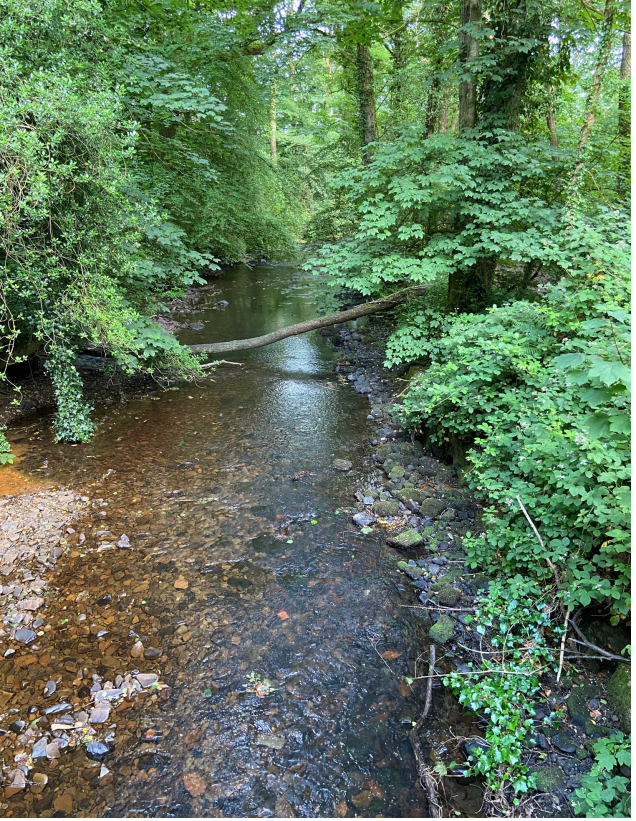


The surrounding beauty relaxes, reduces stress levels, and muscle tension.

Playing outdoors allows my daughter to develop self-confidence, independence and self-esteem







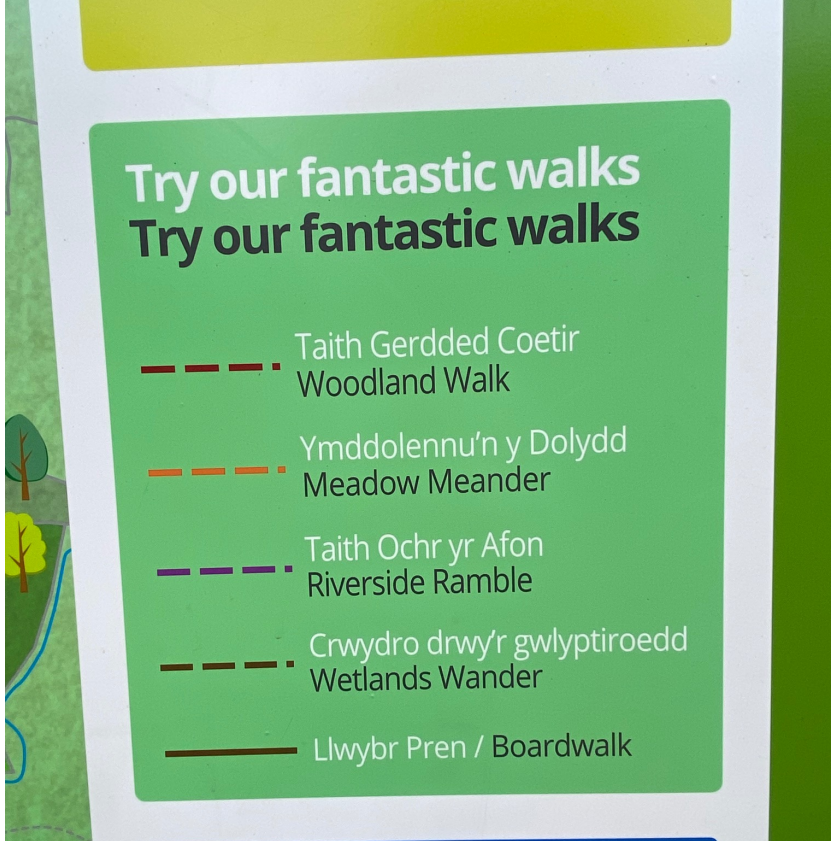


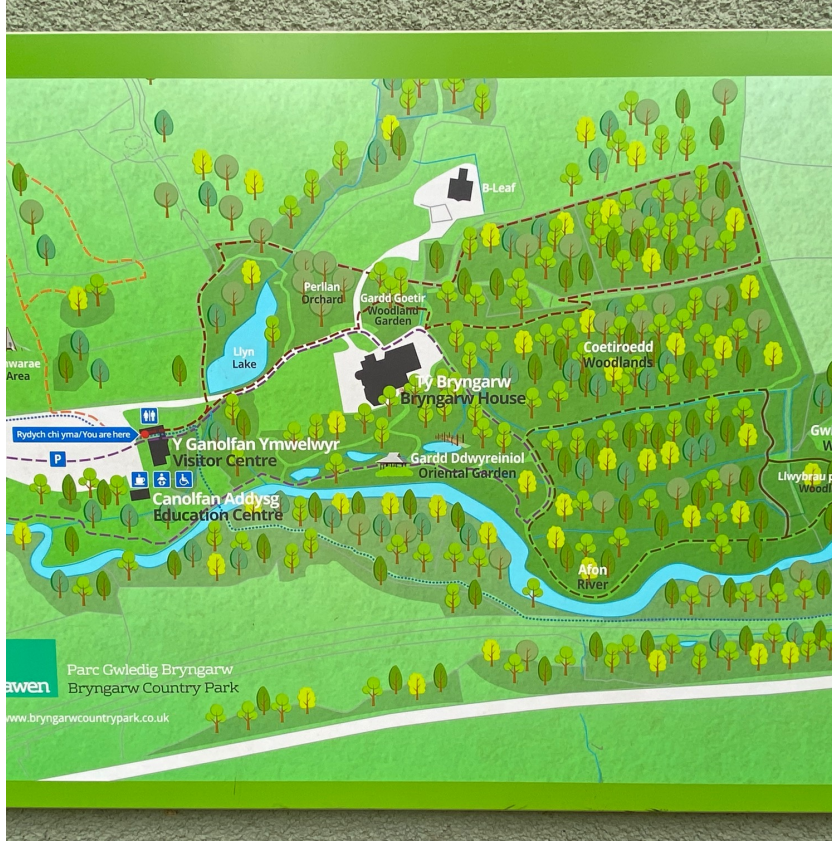




There are many places to walk within Bryngarw Park with so many animals, plants, trees, meadows and rivers to discover…







Bryngarw is 100 acres of nature, that has something for the entire family to enjoy. This includes varied walks, ranging from difficult to easy.

My family often walk right around the entire park, absorbing the scenery, taking time to smell the flowers and breath in the fresh air. It's one of our favourite past times.

Bryngarw has been revamped and renovated over the years, and now has a visitor's centre…



Cafe



Storytelling area

(including foam logs and flames for children to build fire-pits)

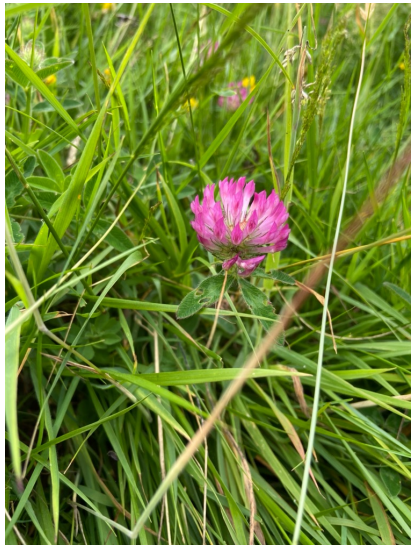
Explore



Sitting, seeing, smelling, listening and feeling…



Squirrels



Flowers



Rivers and birds

(Hover over river photo and press play to listen)



Sunshine







Identifying habitats..

There are a huge variety of animals living within the boarders of Bryngarw Park, such as frogs, ducks, woodpeckers, fish, foxes and squirrels. However, my daughter and I saw with our own eyes:

Ducks, bumble bees, butterflies, dragonflies, squirrels and small birds.

Trees and Ponds..

There is so much well-kept natural beauty within Bryngarw Park, however we did notice that the ponds were all stagnant and dirty and there were lots of trees chopped down.

Stagnant ponds can mean that oxygen levels within the water is lowering, causing animals to die.

Too much tree removal will reduce the available food, shelter and breeding habitat for animals.









Conserve





How can I make a difference for the animal's and their habitats within Bryngarw park?

I contacted Bryngarw and asked why the ponds are stagnant and if this is OK for the ducks and other animals that call it their home.

This led to conversations regarding the need for some algae and dirt to be present in ponds for the animals to survive and thrive. The caretaker also explained that water oxygen levels are low due to the lack of rainfall. With more rain the ponds will look less stagnant.

I also asked the caretaker why so many trees have been chopped down in the wooded areas. Is this because tree surgeons have advised it because of diseased trees, or are there other reasons? The caretaker was able to reassure me that they only ever cut trees down due to diseases that could affect the surrounding animals or if they are unsafe for the public. Their most common tree disease is called Ash Dieback and is found in many Ash Trees. It rots the tree from the inside and can cause danger to both wildlife and walkers.

I will be asking if there is anything I can do to help conserve and preserve the health of their ponds and trees...

How can I physically help to conserve our trees and ponds?

The caretaker of Bryngarw Park has kindly said I can come down for a tour of the ponds and trees where they can explain to me in detail of how they conserve the trees and ponds and how I can be apart of that.

Volunteering to clear away debris and any unneeded weeds from around the ponds will be my first challenge in conservation!



Share





Shared thoughts….

I've shared my thoughts on conservation with my extended, wider family – the need to be mindful of our surroundings, wildlife, and habitats. My father-in-law in particular loves nature and being out in the 'wild' and has explained that recently he made a bird feeder to put up in his garden as a way of helping varied birds and "dipping his foot" into conservation.

He also shared with me his disgust of people littering natural areas, fly-tipping in particular. This is when someone goes to the top of a mountain or somewhere rural and leaves bin-bags full of rubbish and unwanted items. He said he has seen this regularly as he lives in a fairly rural location, and how devastated it makes him feel.



He also explained how he wants the land to be cultivated and nurtured for future generations, especially for his grandchildren.



It has been wonderful to talk about and share ideas with others regarding the John Muir Award; Discovering, Exploring, Conserving, and Sharing.



A poem about a bird, bug and duck

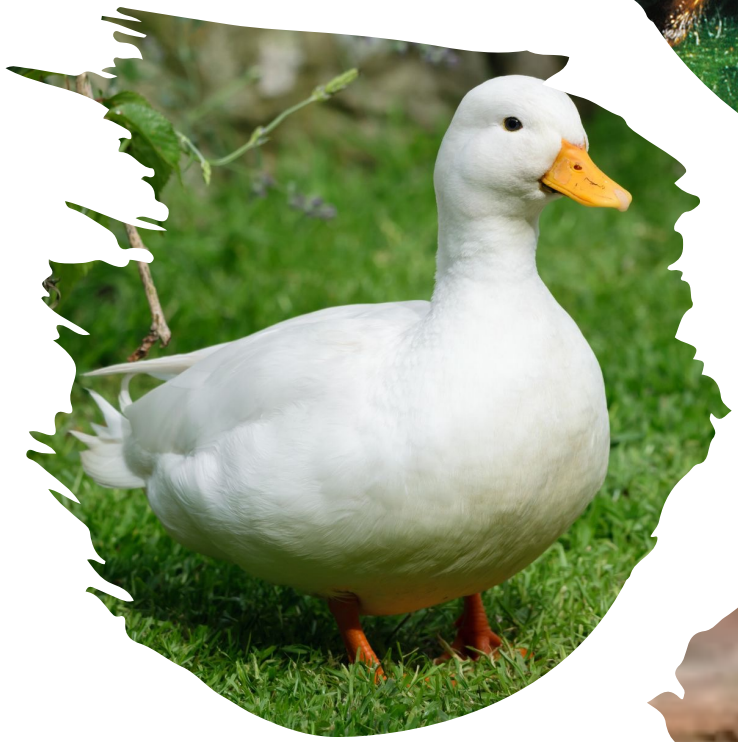
There once was a bird, a bug, and a duck,

And they all lived in Bryngarw,

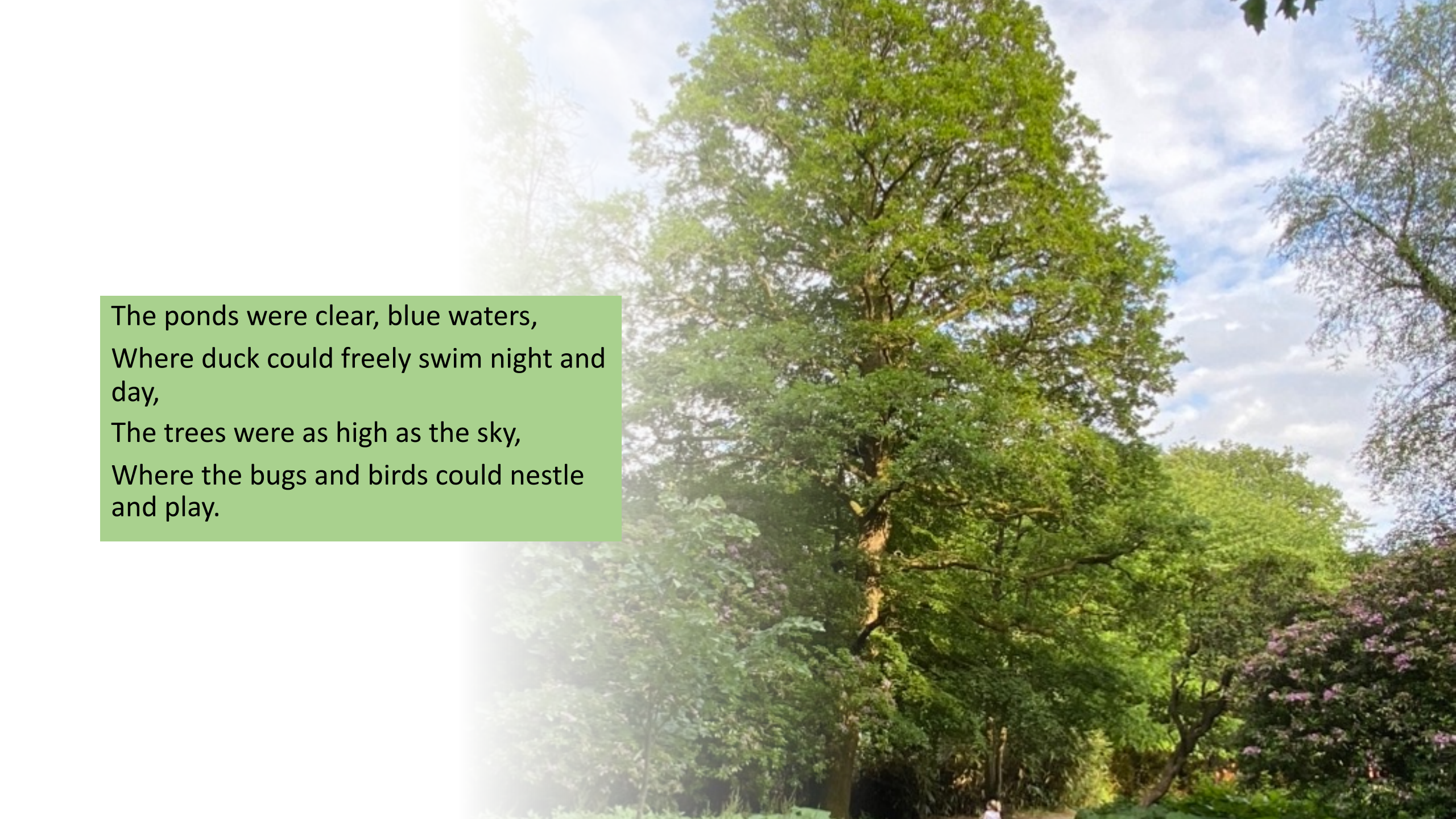
They were friends and often spoke of their lovely homes,

The three ponds and the tree’s in the gardens.









The ponds were clear, blue waters,

Where duck could freely swim night and day,

The trees were as high as the sky,

Where the bugs and birds could nestle and play.



Every day bird and bug would rummage for food in the trees,

Until one day they looked at eachother and sighed,

When they looked up at the trees overhead in the distance,

They noticed they were cut down and the wood was dry.



They went to find their friend duck who was swimming,

Again, noticing that something wasn't quite right,

The pond had been littered with lots of rubbish,

It was such a dreadful sight.

Bird, bug and duck spoke of the sadness they felt,

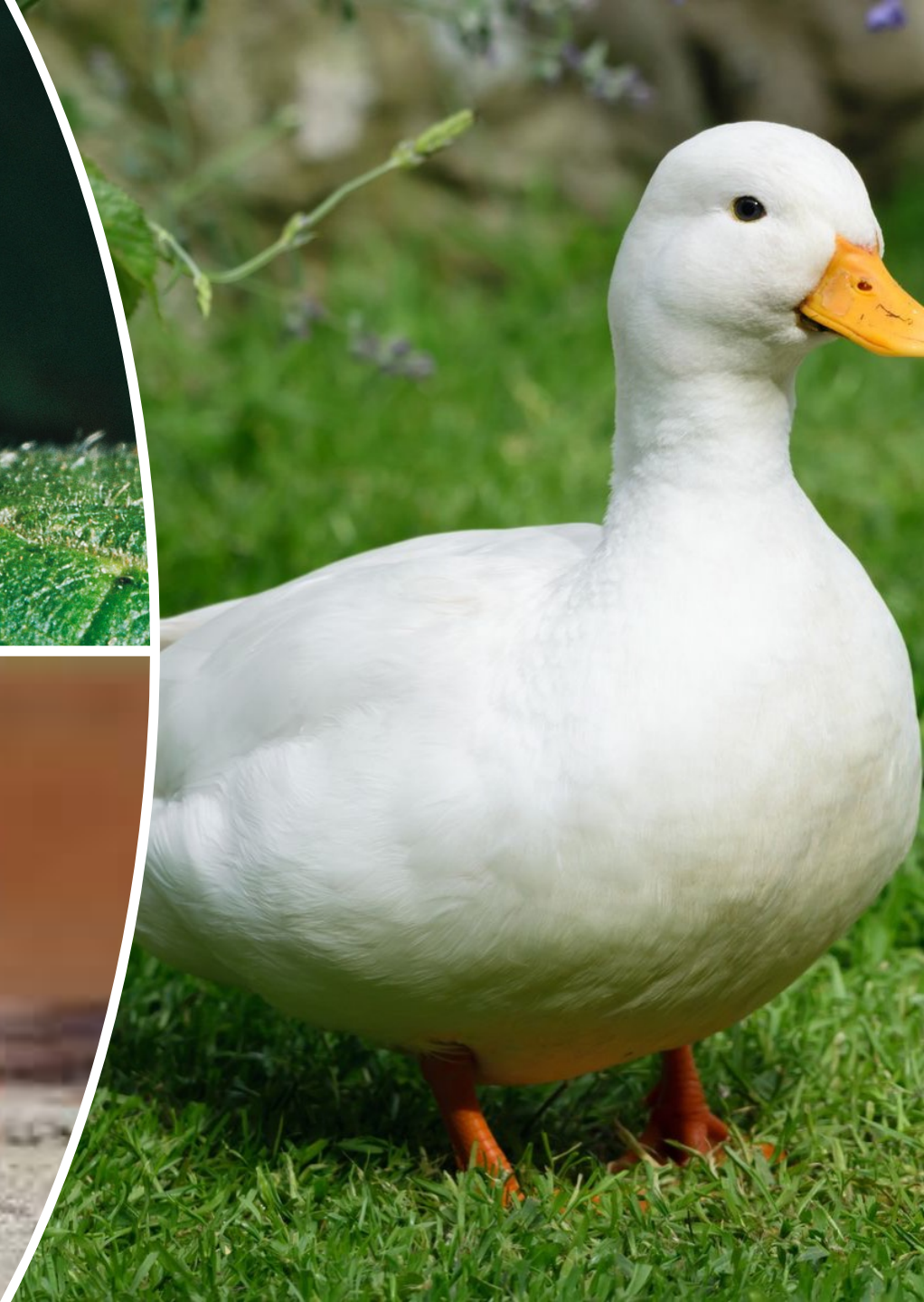
Wondering if the humans cared for them at all,

They questioned why ‘people’ would destroy their homes,

“Do they understand this is where we live and grow?”

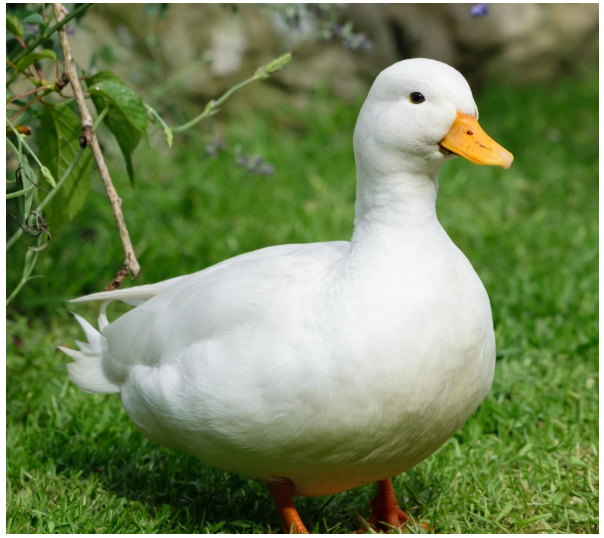














As they questioned, cried and wondered why,

They each noticed a class of young children,

We want to take care of and love ‘those’ animals,

As they pointed at the bird, bug and duck.

Over the next few weeks, the children tidied up the litter,

To make it cleaner and less dangerous for duck,

They made a bug hotel and a bird feeder,

So that each animal was cared for and loved.













Bird, bug and duck were ever so grateful,
For the care that the children showed them,
That every time the children came to visit,
They would always make sure they said “hello”.

By Shauna Hawker

To conclude…

Whilst doing this John Muir inspired scrapbook I have had many conversations with both my husband and daughter regarding conservation, and what that could like within our locality.

We already had a desire to look after, protect and care for nature and their habitats, however, this module has highlighted even more to us the need to be aware of wildlife (from the smallest to the biggest animals), trees, water, and all that lives within our world. We only have one globe, we must take care of it.

