



WWF

FOR YOUR WORLD



SEASONAL RESOURCE FOR YOUTH GROUPS



SPRING

© Jiri Rezac 2008

Watching the world wake up after its winter dormancy can be nothing short of magical. From the first snowdrops in January and February, to the late blooming carpets of bluebells in April and May, Spring is a welcome arrival after the cold months of Autumn and Winter.

In the UK and Ireland the month of April is famous for its showers, the heavy downpours are caused by the jet stream when it starts to move northwards. During the spring equinox day time is approximately 12 hours long, determined by the amount of day light hours.

Plants need water, light, warmth and soil or compost to grow healthily. During Spring the conditions are perfect to encourage lots of growth. Showers give them essential water, and more daylight and warmth from the sun raises the temperature of the air and soil.

It can seem as if everything grows quite suddenly and rapidly. Perennial plants will start their regrowth, and deciduous trees will start to bud with leaf and blossom. Hardy annual seeds dispersed by their parent plants the previous year will germinate underground and start to show – they're tough enough to push their way through compact soil and withstand frost.

The warm soil encourages new growth of wildflowers such as lesser celandine on roadsides and in fields. Daffodils and other bulb flowers seem to spring up from nowhere, and when blossom covers blackthorn, hawthorn and cherry trees, the season is in full swing. Later on, keep your nose alert for the smell of fresh wild garlic.

Birdlife wakes up too – listen out for Spring's dawn chorus, as birds call to attract mates, defend territories and prepare for new families in the nest. Other birds – buzzards, sky larks and grebes – put on a show in the sky and on water to win the best mate and settle down for a season of new growth. Swallows with their long tail-tips, return to the UK from their faraway winter homes, keen to build nests and raise their young. And what's the famous marker for Spring? The cuckoo's call.

The air starts to hum with insect life – with butterflies and moths taking flight, and queen bumblebees looking for the best spot to start the year's colony. Other insect species flourish in the warmer air, keeping the birds well-stocked with food for their chicks.

GET COOKING, GROWING AND CREATING

We have created a range of activities for your members to do this Spring. Cooking can be so much fun when you use seasonal produce – whether you're foraging and creating a 'wild garlic pesto' or encouraging your members to try something different like 'wild garlic and nettle soup. Thinking about seasonal food, why not encourage your group to grow their own chives which are a great asset to have at home or at the meeting place if you have growing space and can be used in many different recipes. Group members could also encourage pollinators into their gardens by growing 'sweat peas': not only do they smell gorgeous but they also encourage bumble bees which will then go onto pollinate the vegetables.



© iStock



TOP TIPS ON FORAGING SUSTAINABLY

This is a guide to help you and your members forage sustainably, responsibly and of course safely.

SEEK PERMISSION FROM THE LANDOWNER

Make sure you seek permission from local land owners or national parks / trusts.

KNOW WHAT YOU ARE PICKING

We need to protect nature and of course ourselves. Wild plants or fungi could be rare and protected, inedible or – in the worst case scenario – extremely poisonous! Please make sure you identify the wild plant or fungus before picking. If you are unsure, as it can be extremely difficult to identify, it's best to leave it well alone. Maybe there is a local expert who could take the group on a guided walk?

ONLY COLLECT FROM PLENTIFUL POPULATIONS

Please think about what you are collecting and make sure you only collect flowers, leaves, fruits and seeds where they are in abundance. If you are collecting fungi, only take mushrooms that have opened their caps, this is because once the caps are open they are likely to have dropped their spores. Do not collect small 'button' mushrooms.

LEAVE PLENTY BEHIND FOR OTHERS AND WILDLIFE

When foraging it is extremely important to think about wildlife as this food is vital for their survival. Make sure you leave enough food for the wildlife and also allow the plants and fungi to produce seeds and spores to allow continuation of growth. Remember you may not be the only one foraging!

BEWARE OF POISONOUS SPECIES

As mentioned in 'Know what you are picking' above, make sure you know what you are collecting before and during your foraging. If at all you are unsure then leave it alone.

DO NOT COLLECT RARE SPECIES

Use a good field guide or reference book to confirm what you are collecting. Please be careful as some species are protected by law. If foraging in ancient woodlands they may contain rare species, so be prepared and avoid anything rare.

MINIMISE DAMAGE TO THE NEARBY HABITAT AND SPECIES

When foraging you're more likely to go off the beaten track, so remember to take care and avoid trampling down areas. If you are with your group make sure you are not all foraging in the same place.

TAKE ONLY WHAT YOU NEED

When foraging think about how much you actually need. If you are foraging nettles for the nettle soup recipe, but you're not sure you are going to like it, maybe halve the recipe so you make a smaller amount and reduce waste and collect less nettles. Never uproot plants as this can lead to damage and reduce the chance of re-growing for others and wildlife.

THE LAW AND WILD PLANTS

All wild plants are protected under the 'Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)'. It is illegal to dig up or remove a plant (including algae, lichens and fungi) from the land on which it is growing without permission from the landowner or occupier. Some species are specially protected against picking, uprooting, damage and sale. A list can be found on Schedule 8 of the wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/8



WILD PESTO

WHAT YOU NEED TO MAKE A 275g JAR

- Use our ‘Top tips on foraging sustainably’
- 150g wild garlic leaves
- 50g parmesan, finely grated
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- Zest of ½ a lemon and a good few squeezes of juice
- 50g pine nuts, toasted
- 150ml rapeseed oil



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

METHOD

1. Place the wild garlic in a food processor along with the parmesan, garlic, lemon zest and pine nuts. Blitz to a rough paste. With the processor at a slow pace, season with salt and pepper and add almost all of the oil.
2. Add a few good squeezes of lemon juice, taste and season with salt and pepper.
3. Transfer the pesto to a clean jar and top up with the remaining oil.
4. This will keep up to two weeks, so don't forget to write the date it was made on the label. You can also make smaller jars and sell them to raise money for your group



© iStock

© iStock



WILD GARLIC AND NETTLE SOUP

SERVES 4 - 6

WHAT YOU NEED

- Use our ‘Top tips on foraging sustainably’
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 25g vegetable margarine
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 1 leek, finely diced
- 2 celery sticks, thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, finely diced
- 1.2l vegetable stock
- 300g young nettle leaves
(wear protective gardening gloves)
- 200g wild garlic leaves
(keep any flowers if you have them)
- 3 tbsp milk or dairy free alternative



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

METHOD

1. Heat the oil and vegetable margarine in a large pan. Add the onion, leek, celery, carrot, potato and a good pinch of salt, and stir until everything is well coated. Cover and sweat gently for 15-20mins, stirring occasionally so the vegetables don't burn.
2. Pour in the stock and simmer for 10 mins. Add the nettles in several batches, stirring, then add the wild garlic leaves and simmer for 2 minutes.
3. Remove from the heat and add to a blender and blend. Return back to the heat and stir through the milk/dairy free alternative, then taste and add salt and pepper if needed.
4. Place into bowls and drizzle a little extra oil and decorate with the garlic flowers if you have them.





CHIVVY UP CHIVES

Chives are perennial herbs with a smell and flavour similar to onions. Because herbs are a really good way to add flavour without sugar and salt, they're great for adding zip to bread, cheese, eggs and potato. They're often snipped with scissors rather than being chopped and have a pretty purple flower which can be used as a garnish.

Because of their strong smell, chives make ideal companions to other plants, controlling pests like aphids, beetles and slugs, yet giving a home to beneficial creatures and encouraging pollination. This is a better way to stop crops from failing rather than using chemicals which are harmful to wildlife and not kind to our bodies.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Pots or containers for sowing (recycled if possible)
- A peat-free seed compost
- Used and washed lolly sticks and a pencil
- Hand trowel
- Gloves (optional)
- A watering can with a fine rose
- For each pot you sow seeds in, 1 recycled 1l plastic bottle with the top chopped off – you'll need that top half.

METHOD

1. Wash your pots if they have been recycled or used for growing. Make sure your pots have holes in the bottom for drainage.
2. Fill your pots nearly to the top with the compost, crumbling it through your fingers to ensure there are no large lumps.



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



outdoor fun

3. Chive seeds are tiny, so carefully space them out over the surface of the compost (sow thinly), allowing around 20 per 9cm area surface of container.
4. Gently sprinkle a layer of compost over the seeds and finely water the seeds using a watering can with a rose.
5. Take the plastic bottle and cut it in half. Place over the plant pot to create a mini greenhouse environment to help the seeds germinate.
6. Label your pot with the date using the recycled lolly stick, and put it in a light, warm place – a windowsill is ideal. You can expect to see the seeds germinate within two to three weeks. When they have germinated and are a few millimetres tall, the plastic bottle tops can be removed.
7. When the seedlings are about 3cm tall. Take another pot and gently scoop out 5 chive plants – be careful not to damage the roots, replant the chives by filling the pot with compost. Make 5 individual holes for each plant and cover with compost and water.
8. Continue to carefully water the chives and keep them in a warm light spot inside, continually turning the pot if they are growing towards the light. When the temperature is warm enough the pots can be placed outside near a warm wall or with the mini greenhouse over the top. As the plants get stronger and temperatures warmer the greenhouse can come off gradually to harden the plants off.
9. Your chives can be planted into a large container, kept in their pot for dense growing or plant into a border. They tolerate most soils and enjoy partial or full sun.



GROW A BROAD BEAN PLANT

WHAT YOU NEED

- Broad bean seed
- A small plate
- Water
- A jug
- A glass jar
- Piece of kitchen roll or napkin

PREPARATION

Before your meeting, soak the broad bean seeds in water on a plate for about 1 hour.



10 minutes



Age 5 upwards



Indoor fun

METHOD

1. Fill your glass jar with water, only about half way. Swirl the water around and tip it into a jug. Remember not to dry your glass jar out as it needs to be damp.
2. Take your piece of kitchen roll or napkin and place inside your jar. If you have a small jar you can fold the kitchen roll or napkin over. Make sure the kitchen roll or napkin is pressed up against the side of the jar.
3. Then slip your broad bean seed in between the glass and the napkin.
4. Place your bean on a sunny windowsill.
5. Use the water in the jug and sprinkle a little water on it every day. Be very careful not to over water.
6. You should start to notice your broad bean sprouting after 4 days.
7. After 10 days your board bean should have grown roots, a stem and leaves.
8. Why not add your broad bean to your garden. Carefully remove the broad bean from the glass jar, without damaging the roots and plant it in a garden pot with compost and water it often.

FRAMES FOR GROWING

Climbing flowers and veg need the support of some kind of solid structure to help them grow. You can make frames out of any material – fallen tree branches, old pipes, old bits of wood, bamboo canes, hazel or other coppiced wood, even a normal fence panel with some wire fixed to it.

WHAT YOU NEED

- Strong material to create the frame (ideally recycled)
- String/wire
- Scissors
- See 'How to lash' for help with lashing

WHAT TO DO

1. Decide what type of frame you would like to create, this is dependent on your outdoor space. Here are some ideas of frames commonly found in gardens or allotments
 - a. **Double row:** This needs fairly straight material such as bamboo canes, pipes or hazel. The plants need to be planted in two rows, parallel to each other approximately a foot apart. Use 'Sheer lashing' to fix the poles together and place the poles alongside each plant so they are parallel to each other. Place a pole along the top of the lashed canes and lash in place, using spare string create a guide rope at each end to give the structure strength and support.
 - b. **Wigwam:** This structure uses the same material as in the 'double row' frame and use 'Shear lashing' with three or more poles. This time plant your crops in a circle and adding in the canes behind the plants. Once all the canes are in, simply gather them at the top and tie together, this will form a wigwam shape.



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



outdoor fun

To avoid wasted space in the centre you can plant some vegetables.

- c. **Arch:** This is one of the most decorative looking frames when the flowers are in full bloom and are used over garden beds and walkways. These arches can be made out of hazel due to its flexibility. You may think of other alternative materials you could use to create an arch.
- d. **Wall or fence:** Many youth groups don't have the luxury of outdoor space so using what space you have is perfect. Simply fix some wire horizontally across the fence panels or the side of a shed or hut.
- e. **Herb wall frame:** This can be hung on a wall of fence, if limited to space. This can be used to plant herbs or flowers.

HOW TO LASH

By kind permission of 'Scouting Resources UK' and author Darren Dowling, here are weblinks to help you and your members with lashing.

Clove hitch

www.scoutingresources.org.uk/wordpress/outdoor-adventure/knots/hitches/clove-hitch/

Sheer lashing

www.scoutingresources.org.uk/wordpress/outdoor-adventure/knots/lashings/sheer-lashing/

Square lashing

www.scoutingresources.org.uk/wordpress/outdoor-adventure/knots/lashings/square-lashing/



WHAT YOU NEED

- See 'How to lash' for help with lashing
- 6 pieces of wood, roughly the same length
- Outdoor string
- Plastic milk bottles with handles, 4 pint size is ideal
- Garden wire
- Scissors
- Seed compost
- Range of herb seeds



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



outdoor fun

METHOD

1. Take four of the pieces of wood to create a square frame.
2. Lash each corner of frame using 'Square lashing'. See 'How to lash' for help with lashing.
3. Cut the milk bottles in half, leaving about 2 inches away from the handle. Make sure you give the bottles a good wash and keep the lids on.
4. Thread the milk bottle handle onto the wood and evenly space out.
5. Attach the two pieces of wood with the plastic milk bottle onto the existing frame. Make sure that both bits of wood have the bottles facing the open end up and lash these in place. You should now have a secure frame with plant pots on.
6. These are now ready to add some compost (peat free) and add in any of the following herbs – chives, rosemary, thyme, sage, mint and oregano.





HERBAL BAGS

Spring is a time full of fresh scents and perfumes. Capture the spring season in a little scented bag and add into your clothes draw. This will make your clothes smell of spring.



30 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

WHAT YOU NEED

- Large plate
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Piece of material, recycled cotton or muslin
- Herbs, thyme, bay leaves, mint, rosemary or lavender
- Elastic band
- Recycled ribbon

METHOD

1. Take a large round plate and draw around it onto a piece of muslin or recycled cotton. Cut out the marked area on the material, so you are left with a circle shape.
2. Place inside some herbs you have harvested such as bay, thyme, lemon balm, mint, rosemary or lavender.
3. Gather the fabric together and tightly secure with an elastic band making a small ball shape at the bottom. Make it look pretty using some recycled ribbon.
4. Place in a clothes draw or gift them away as a gift. You can also sell them at your spring fayre.





© Richard Storehouse / WWF-UK

BIRD FEEDER

Watching garden birds is great fun and they are easy to attract to your garden. The easiest way to attract birds into your garden is by creating a bird feeder.



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



outdoor fun

WHAT YOU NEED

- Carton, washed
- Plastic bags
- Scissors
- Glue
- Stapler
- Wire
- Twigs
- Bird seed, good quality

METHOD

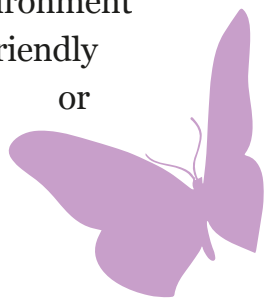
1. Cut a hole in the side of the clean carton about 5 cm (2 inches) from the bottom. This will be the doorway of the feeder.
2. Cut out some leaf shapes from your plastic bags and stick them with glue onto your carton.
3. Push several small holes in the bottom of the carton with scissors so that water can drain out when it rains.
4. Staple the opening at the top closed. Pierce another hole in the top and thread the wire through for hanging up the bird feeder.
5. Pierce a hole just under the doorway and repeat on the opposite side. Then poke a twig through the small holes under the doorway to create a perch for the birds.
6. Now add the good quality bird seed into the carton.
7. Your bird feeder is now ready to hang in your garden or meeting space, remember to keep it topped up.





BUTTERFLY FEEDER

Support your local environment and create a butterfly friendly area in your garden or communal area.



WHAT YOU NEED

- A bamboo cane
- A recycled bottle top
- Some recycled wrapping paper and laminator
- A tack/drawing pin or similar
- Cotton wool
- Sugar and water syrup
- BluTak



TOP UP THE
FEEDER REGULARLY
TO ATTRACT MORE
BUTTERFLIES

© Adobe Stock

METHOD

1. Cut the wrapping paper in to a large flower shape and laminate.
2. Place the bottle top in the middle of the laminated flower shape and push the tack through both the bottle top and the flower shape so the point of the tack comes through.
3. Place a small ball of BluTak at one end of the bamboo cane to keep the top from falling off.
4. Push the laminated shape and bottle top point first into the BluTak.
5. Place in the garden in full sun, add a small amount of cotton wool and drip some of the sugar syrup onto the cotton wool.
6. Sit back and enjoy butterflies visiting.
7. Top up the feeder regularly with sugar syrup to invite more butterflies to your feeder.





BEE HOTEL

Britain has around 200 species of solitary bees; these differ from bumblebees in that they build single nest cells for their larvae. Some species nest in tunnels in sandy banks or old bricks; others use hollow stems of dead plants or old wood to create their nests.

BRITAIN HAS
AROUND 200
SPECIES OF
SOLITARY BEES



POSITION THE
BEE HOTEL IN A
SOUTH FACING
POSITION AS BEES
LOVE THE SUN



1 1/2 hours



all ages



outdoor fun

You can make use of recycled materials to create their own bee hotels, providing spaces for solitary bees to nest. These bee hotels could be positioned in a garden or around your meeting space throughout the summer. Just make sure they are placed in a south facing position as bees love the sun.

Download the bee hotel instruction sheet to help you with this activity.



MAKE A BEE HOTEL

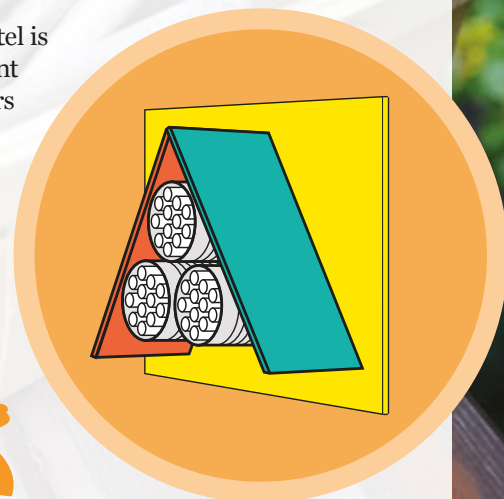
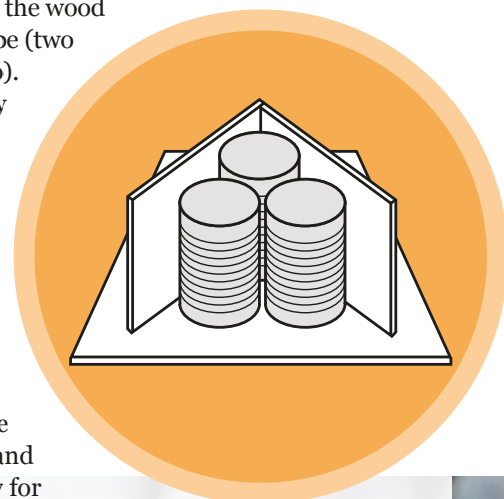
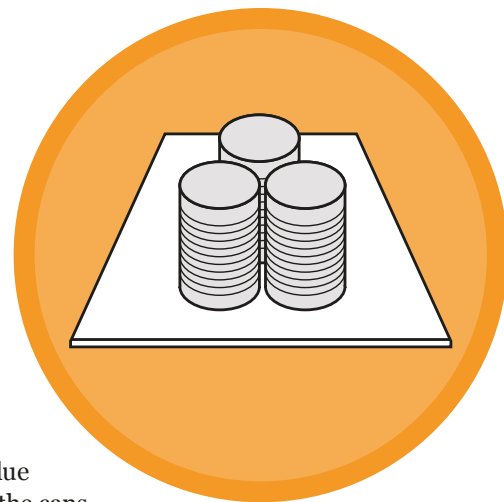
WHAT YOU NEED

- Three clean tin cans
- Bamboo canes
- Non-toxic PVA glue
- Wood glue
- Paint
- Two thin pieces of wood for the roof
- A thin square piece of wood for the back of the hotel



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the piece of wood you have chosen for the back of your bee hotel on the floor. Put wood glue on the bottom of the cans and stick them to the wood in a pyramid shape (two below, one on top). Leave them to dry for an hour.
2. Take the pieces of wood for your roof and place them in a triangle shape covering the cans. Glue the wood into place and leave them to dry for an hour.
3. Ask an adult to help you cut the bamboo canes into short sections the depth of the tin cans. Place a little PVA glue on the end of each cane and push it into the can. Fill up the can with the canes.
4. Now your bee hotel is nearly ready. Paint it in bright colours and patterns (with non-toxic paint) and leave it in a quiet, sunny, place outside for the bees to start using.



BADGE IT UP

These activities support the following badges for Girlguiding UK and The Scout Association

Rainbows: Wildlife Explorer

Brownies: Wildlife Explorer

Guides: Rescue your rubbish, Consumer conscious

Rangers: Cooking, Cook, Community action, Vlogging

Scouts and Cubs: Chefs activity book, Environmental conservation badge.

EMPOWERING THE FUTURE GENERATION



Green Ambassadors for Youth – GA4Youth – is a fantastic badge programme to help 5-14s take the lead on green issues in their groups and their community. Our friendly Green Ambassador team – Leafy, Wheel, Switch, Crush, Smith and Tap – will help them get informed, get involved and get sharing on

six topical green issues. Designed with the help of over 100 leaders, it offers six themed activity sets, a suite of posters to help you plan your green journey, and a badge scheme to reward young people for their achievements.

wwf.org.uk/youth

DID YOU KNOW?

Nature is vital – it's our life support system and we can't survive without it. But our world is under threat like never before. Globally we're using all the planet's resources faster than nature can restore itself.

THERE COULD BE MORE PLASTIC IN THE SEA THAN FISH BY 2050.

WILDLIFE POPULATION SIZES HAVE PLUMMETED BY 60% IN LESS THAN 50 YEARS.

WE LOSE AN AREA OF FOREST THE SIZE OF A FOOTBALL PITCH EVERY TWO SECONDS.

FOOD IS A MAJOR DRIVER OF WILDLIFE EXTINCTION. THE FOOD WE EAT IN THE UK ALONE IS LINKED TO THE EXTINCTION OF AN ESTIMATED 33 SPECIES AT HOME AND ABROAD.

ONE IN SIX SPECIES IS AT RISK OF EXTINCTION BECAUSE OF CLIMATE CHANGE.



© Sophie Lanker

WWF's Living Planet Report 2018 revealed the scale of human impact on our precious natural world. The Our Planet series, now streaming on Netflix, shows the awesome splendour of the natural wonders that we risk losing, but also carries a message of hope: we can still save our planet if we act now.

We'll shortly be releasing specially designed activities to support Netflix's Our Planet series. Resources will be available end of May so register your groups interest to access the leader notes and activities. wwf.org.uk/ourplanetyouth



For a future where people and nature thrive | wwf.org.uk

© 1986 panda symbol and ® "WWF" Registered Trademark of WWF. WWF-UK registered charity (1081247) and in Scotland (SC039593). A company limited by guarantee (4016725)

