



# SEASONAL RESOURCE FOR YOUTH GROUPS



# WINTER

Winter is a wonderful time to wrap up warm and venture into the great outdoors. Underfoot the crunch of autumn leaves has passed and left a firm frozen crust of soil as temperatures often drop to below freezing. The air is alive with the smell of woodsmoke from fires and logburners roaring inside. Warm lights glow from windows and, in the dark nights, welcome us to our destination.

In the UK we experience the lowest temperatures of the year during the winter. Often weather is very unsettled, ranging from storms and heavy rain, to dense fog, to freezing conditions, with ice and snow being more likely the further north you are. The daylight grows shorter peaking on the winter solstice when we have the shortest day (21st December) and longest night.

Our wildlife can be more visible in the winter because the trees and hedgerows are bare, and undergrowth has died back. Many animals such as hedgehogs, bats, dormice, amphibians, reptiles and some insects will hibernate through the coldest weather and then wake as the weather starts to warm up. Before winter sets in, many build up fat stores to keep them going through the colder months, while others will store food nearby for when nature's 'food store' looks a little empty. Some birds and butterflies escape the cold by migrating to warmer climates. The growth of plants and trees slows down, deciduous trees have no leaves and very few plants will bloom, they become dormant.

Over the years our ancestors have brightened the darkest winter days around the solstice with celebrations including light, fire, food and fun to speed up the springtime. Through the years, Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Jesus for Christians, has taken on some of these customs involving trees and plants such as holly, ivy and mistletoe. Around the world many religions come together to celebrate during

the winter holidays. Buddhists share Christian values of peace and goodwill to mankind and take part in 'Bodhi Day' giving gifts of kindness. The Jewish community celebrate 'Hanukkah' a festival of lights for eight days, sharing prayer, singing, playing games and lighting candles.

## GET COOKING AND GROWING

In the winter we feel hungrier as our bodies have to work harder to keep us warm in the coldest months.

Experiment with your own winter warmer, planet-friendly meals [wwf.org.uk/livewellmeals](https://www.wwf.org.uk/livewellmeals) or try making these tasty, healthy winter recipes to keep warm. Why not try something new, our crunchy kale chips to keep hunger at bay between homework and clubs. They're fun to make and share with your friends, and you can also experiment with your own flavours. Kale is readily available in the UK during winter, so you will be able to find it at local farm shops, farmers markets and allotments. Plan for next year and grow your own!



# CRUNCHY KALE CHIPS

## EQUIPMENT

- A roasting tin or tray
- A pair of scissors

Why not create fun cones to serve your kale chips in by rolling up unused paper off-cuts or newspaper? The paper cones can then be composted knowing you have zero waste.



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 Bunch of kale
- 2 Tablespoons of vegetable oil
- Optional additions, a sprinkle of sea salt, 2 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar, a dusting of ginger and tablespoon of local honey or if you like things spicy some dried chilli flakes

## READY, STEADY, COOK

1. Preheat your oven to 180 C/Gas 4. Wash the kale, shake dry and cut across the stems making small pieces about 3cm wide.
2. Lay the kale pieces in the roasting tin and drizzle with the oil and your choice of added flavouring.
3. Place the tray in the oven and bake for around 10 to 15 minutes, the kale should look lightly golden before serving.



# SIMPLY SCRUMPTIOUS SAUCE

Lots of us use sauces in jars to make quick meals, but many of these sauces contain lots of sugar and artificial flavourings. Yet even during winter there are healthy herbs in your garden and on windowsills to make easy homemade sauces that taste delicious. This sauce can be stirred through pasta on its own, or used as a topping for pizza or as a base for spaghetti bolognese, casseroles or stews.

## EQUIPMENT

- Saucepan
- Sharp knife
- Pair of scissors
- Chopping board
- Wooden spoon



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## INGREDIENTS

- A tablespoon of cooking oil
- 1 onion, red or white
- A few cloves of garlic
- 1 tin of tomatoes, plum or chopped
- Herbs, a few tablespoons of your choice (in season now are rosemary, thyme or parsley)
- A little seasoning of black pepper and salt

## READY, STEADY, COOK

1. Chop the onion and peeled garlic cloves into small pieces.
2. Place the garlic, onion and oil into a pan over a gentle heat.
3. When golden add the tin of tomatoes, wash your harvested herbs and snip and add to the pan with a seasoning of salt and pepper.
4. Simmer for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon.
5. The sauce is now ready to use by mixing with cooked pasta or use as a pizza base.



# LOVELY LEEK AND POTATO SOUP

## EQUIPMENT

- Knife
- Chopping board
- Wooden spoon
- Saucepan
- Hand blender
- Scissors

## INGREDIENTS

- 450g potatoes
- 2 leeks
- 1 onion
- 1 and a half pints of vegetable stock
- 50g vegetable margarine
- 150 ml milk or a plant-based alternative
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Chives (optional)



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## READY, STEADY, COOK

1. Peel the potatoes and onions, wash and trim the leeks.
2. Chop the potatoes, onion and leeks into small chunks.
3. Gently fry the potatoes, onion and leek in the margarine for 5 minutes.
4. Add the stock, season with salt and pepper. Bring to the boil and then simmer for 30 minutes.
5. When cool enough, blend the mixture with the hand blender.
6. Add the milk/milk alternative and then gently reheat, place in to bowls to serve.
7. Garnish by snipping the chives on top of the soup.





# WARM MULLED APPLE JUICE

After a lovely winter walk in the crisp air, try making this delicious warming apple juice to share with family and friends. It is also a welcoming drink to make for celebrations in the holiday season. The small sachets made to infuse the juice can also be tied with recycled ribbon and tied to bottles as homemade gifts. While cooking, this sachet will make your home or meeting place smell wonderful. The sachets can also be placed on a radiator to scent your room instead of synthetic sprays.

## EQUIPMENT

- Muslin cloth cut into small squares
- Scissors
- Pretty recycled ribbon



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## INGREDIENTS

- Star anise
- Cloves
- Cinnamon sticks
- Cardamom pods
- Dried orange slices (see Dried Orange Activity)
- 75cl bottle of local apple juice

## WHAT TO DO

1. Take a square of muslin cloth.
2. In each of the sachets you make, place 1 star anise, 4 cloves, a small piece of cinnamon bark and a cardamom pod.
3. Now thread a piece of dried orange on to a piece of recycled ribbon, gather all four corners of your fabric square up and tie together.
4. Warm a 75cl bottle of local apple juice in a pan with one sachet in the juice for 15 mins on a low heat.
5. Remove from the heat and allow to infuse for 20 minutes before enjoying.



Many foods are sold in tins and these can be recycled and reused as attractive plant pots. Why not make a personalised pot to grow herbs in on your windowsill? Herbs such as mint, chives and parsley can be split and divided at the roots to make free plants! They make great gifts and are also popular at sales for fundraising: try making recipe cards for planet-friendly meals [wwf.org.uk/livewellmeals](http://www.wwf.org.uk/livewellmeals) to sell with them.

## EQUIPMENT

- Clean food tin cans (without a sharp rim)
- Old magazines, posters, flyers or newspapers of your choice
- Large potted herb from the supermarket or nursery
- Multipurpose, non peat compost
- Metal tablespoon
- Scissors
- A glue stick or PVA
- A screwdriver
- A little water



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## WHAT TO DO

1. Choose medium to small size pictures and colours swatches that you like from your old magazines and cut out neatly.
2. Take a tin and carefully push a hole through the bottom. Younger members could seek adult help with punching the holes. This will act as drainage when you water your herbs.
3. Arrange your pictures and stick them all over the tin in a collage style. Overlapping will add to the effect.
4. Take your herb plant out of the pot and split into 4 or 6 pieces by gently separating the roots so that you don't break them. You can use a spoon to do this if the roots are very intertwined or tough.
5. Half fill your pot with compost then put in one of your split herbs. Fill with more compost up to the rim of the tin with the small, new herb plant poking through.
6. Gently water and place your herb pot on a sunny windowsill, then repeat with the rest of the herbs that you have divided.

# GROW YOUR OWN TREE



Trees disperse their seeds to make new trees – take a look around to spot any small saplings that have started to grow from such seeds. Why not see what types of saplings you can pot for planting out in future years. This will help protect them from being trodden on and damaged, weeded out or being pulled up for being in the wrong place. Trees are so important for people and wildlife: we need to help trees by planting more of them and in places where they will be protected. Imagine how many species of wildlife you will be helping by growing them at home or by your meeting place!

## EQUIPMENT

- Sharp spade
- Damp reusable bag
- Recycled old pots 1 or 2 litre in size
- A good loamy, non peat compost, from the bottom of a compost heap is ideal
- A watering can



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## WHAT TO DO

1. With your group find a place where you have permission to dig up saplings. Often community spaces, your local parks team, allotment holders, people with very large gardens, or the local school's headteacher will be very happy to let you.
2. Take a damp reusable bag and your spade with you.
3. Look around for saplings that are not too big to lift but are possibly in a tricky situation to grow much bigger.
4. Using your spade dig down well to get underneath the root. When you have a good number of saplings, take them back to somewhere practical for potting.
5. The saplings will have a thin root at this stage. Fill the pots with compost and plant each sapling in the middle, lightly pressing down the surface of the soil to anchor the little tree.
6. Lightly water, label and date. Place somewhere light and sheltered.
7. Remember to keep looking after your tree and make plans for where they will be planted out when they are bigger.

Trees that disperse seeds that germinate well are sycamore, ash, holly and oak. It's easy to identify holly well into the winter as it is evergreen. Take a tree ID sheet/app with you to help identify some of the different trees on your way.

# FEED THE BIRDS



Help care for birds during winter as their food sources are scarce. Autumn berries have died off and the ground is often too frozen from them to peck out worms or insects. They rely on scraps left on bird tables and bird feeders, so why not make your own?

## YOU WILL NEED

- Fir cones
- Vegetable fat or lard
- Bird seed
- Garden twine



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## WHAT TO DO

1. Take a fir cone and tie a piece of garden string around it firmly, leaving enough to make a loop to hang it up with.
2. Carefully press in the vegetable fat all over the pine cone.
3. Lay the bird seed on a plate and then roll the pine cone over the bird seed making sure it sticks to the fat. This will be sticky!
4. Carefully place your bird feeder in the freezer overnight, this will help it stick well.
5. The next day take your bird feeder and hang somewhere for the birds to visit and feed, away from the reach of cats.



# BUG HOTEL

Leaves, straw, bamboo, twigs and old pots... These are the things that bugs, bees and spiders absolutely love! Our gardens are filled with these amazing minibeasts who help us to control the unwanted pests in our garden so that our plants and vegetables can flourish. So why not help to look after these amazing creatures by building them their very own bug hotel!

## YOU WILL NEED

- 2 – 3 wooden pallets. Small wooden boxes work well too!
- Any recycled materials such as: egg boxes, ceramic pots, plastic containers, plastic drain-pipe, bricks, mesh or wood
- String / baling twine
- Garden waste that you can include: leaves, twigs, dead wood, pine cones, straw or old bamboo canes



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## WHAT TO DO

1. Insects like cool, damp conditions so place your pallet(s) by a nearby shady hedge or tree.
2. Fill your various recycled materials with leaves and twigs using the string to tie everything together and keep in place.
3. You can use different materials to create smaller habitats for differing insects, for example, use straw to enable smaller invertebrates to burrow in, creating a safe environment to hibernate. You could also fill a length of drain-pipe with bamboo canes to create a wonderful habitat for bees.
4. Continue to fill in the gaps of your wooden pallet or box using a combination of recycled materials and garden waste. Use loose leaves, bark and pine cones to fill in some of the smaller gaps.
5. Once your insect habitat is finished, you might want to plant some spring bulbs around it. They'll not only look beautiful when they flower in the Spring, but will provide food for bees, butterflies and other flying insects that will be attracted to your habitat.



# REUSE, REDUCE AND RECYCLE!

We all love beautiful decorations to celebrate the holiday season [www.org.uk/creativeactivities](http://www.org.uk/creativeactivities), so get creative and have a go at making your own this year. Natural and recycled decorations can be very beautiful, fun to make and a good way to avoid buying more plastics.

## DRIED ORANGE SLICES

Slice oranges and place on a baking sheet on a low heat in the oven for several hours until no moisture is left. Next thread recycled ribbon or twine through your slices. They are now ready to hang on your tree.

## SCENTED ORANGES

Simply take a clementine and stud with cloves, tie with a coloured ribbon. These make beautiful simple decorations and smell wintery for weeks.



60 minutes



Age 6 upwards



Indoor fun

## PINE CONES

Collect pine cones and decorate with white paint as if dusted with snow. When dry, place a loop of recycled ribbon on the top, fixing with a drawing pin. These can be hung in garlands, bunches or straight onto your tree.

## STARS

Cut out a simple square shape from recycled decorative paper or a magazine. Pleat the paper, folding back and forth until you make a fan. Next staple the middle of the fan. Pull one end of the fan to the other, staple again. Take a loop of ribbon and staple this in the two ends not attached to make a flower shape. They look very effective hanging in groups or dotted over a tree.

## MAKE YOUR OWN WRAPPING PAPER

Take sheets of plain brown parcel paper and stencil or print your own design onto the paper. Homemade wrapping can be personalised for the person you are giving to. You could look to nature for your inspiration – robins, trees, snowflakes and holly can be fun to create with.

## 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.

## CALLING BUDDING GREEN CHAMPIONS!



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.

Sign up at [wwf.org.uk/ga4youth](http://wwf.org.uk/ga4youth)

## DID YOU KNOW?

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.

## MAKE YOUR PROMISE FOR THE PLANET THIS EARTH HOUR

At 8.30pm, Saturday 30 March, hundreds of millions of people across the world will be turning out their lights to celebrate WWF's Earth Hour. Our world is under threat like never before, globally we're using all the planet's resources faster than nature can restore itself. Your members have a vital role to play in achieving a more sustainable world by taking part in Earth Hour.

Register your group to take part in Earth Hour 2019 and access a range of supporting resources to help your group celebrate Earth Hour [wwf.org.uk/youth](http://wwf.org.uk/youth).

But you can make a difference. It's time to decide. Are you for your world?



For a future where people and nature thrive | [wwf.org.uk](http://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)