

**YOUR GUIDED  
ACTIVITY PACK**

**NOTICE  
NATURE  
in the everyday**



**Friends of  
the Earth**

**#NoticeNatureEveryday**

# Noticing nature not only helps you. It can also help the natural world.

Nature is amazing. It inspires and delights us and is key to keeping our planet (our home) healthy. Nature is all around us and it's easy to think it always will be, but the natural world is in trouble and needs your help.

Research shows that by noticing more of the natural world around you, you learn to care more about it. If you care more about it, you're more likely to protect it.

Even small actions can make a difference. By downloading this pack, you've taken your first step to helping the planet.



**Friends of the Earth**  
is a grassroots network  
made up of friends,  
families, neighbours  
and local communities  
who want to create a  
healthier, greener  
and fairer future  
for everyone.

From introducing doorstep recycling and protecting bees, to bringing back beavers and preserving green spaces, Friends of the Earth has been protecting people and the planet for over 50 years.

Find out more about our work at:  
[foe.uk/who-we-are/our-history](https://foe.uk/who-we-are/our-history)



### Why should I take part?

You could:

- feel happier and healthier
- put the pressures of life on pause
- feel connected to the world around you
- improve your understanding of the wonders of the natural world
- discover nature on your doorstep
- help protect nature for future generations.

# Benefits of nature



**You don't have to go far to notice nature.**

Nature is all around us and it's essential to our lives, from the food on our plates to the air we breathe and the water in our taps. It also has an incredible impact on our health.

**Connecting with nature can:**

- ✓ reduce stress and anxiety
- ✓ improve your mood and wellbeing
- ✓ reduce feelings of loneliness
- ✓ help you to be more active and improve your physical health
- ✓ improve your memory
- ✓ make you feel happier.



# Everyday wonders on your doorstep

From dazzling insects to incredible plants, here are 6 wonders you can spot from your window.



## Honeybees

Honeybees are important pollinators, and a single bee can pollinate about 1,000 flowers per day. They communicate by performing a “waggle dance”.



## Painted lady butterflies

Painted Lady Butterflies have found homes on every continent apart from Australia and Antarctica. They can fly at nearly 30 mph and can migrate up to 100 miles a day.

## Pigeons

Considered one of the most intelligent species of bird on the planet, pigeons can recognise themselves in a mirror and can even distinguish different people in a photo. They’re also impressive navigators that use landmarks as signposts.



## Dandelions

Dandelions are incredibly edible; in fact, you can eat all parts of the plant. They’re one of the healthiest foods on the planet and are rich in vitamins, iron, potassium, and calcium.

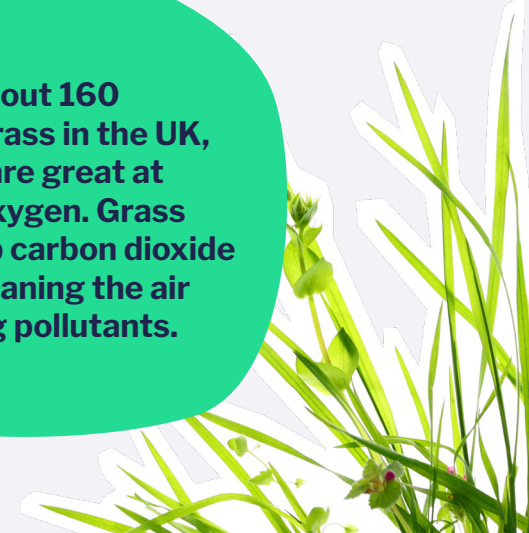
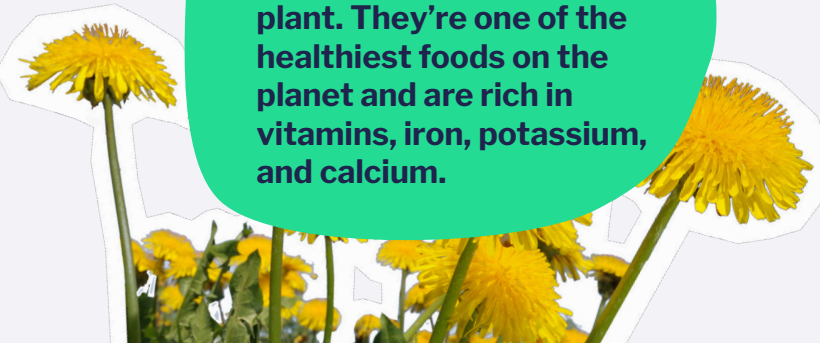


## Oak trees

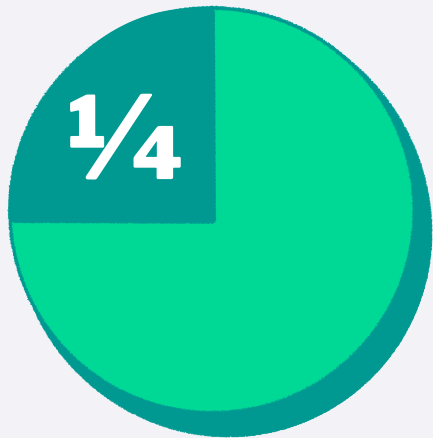
Oaks trees are living legends and their lifespan can stretch for over 1,000 years. They provide a haven for about 2,300 species and support more life than any other UK native tree.

## Grass

There are about 160 species of grass in the UK, all of which are great at producing oxygen. Grass can also trap carbon dioxide and dust, cleaning the air and reducing pollutants.



# Animals under threat



**One quarter of native species in the UK are at risk of extinction.**

Human activity is particularly harmful. From plastic pollution and pesticides, to loss of habitat and climate breakdown.

**But it's not too late.**

If you have a connection to nature, you're more likely to be aware of the damage that's being done on your doorstep.

If more people notice the natural world around them, we can work together to protect it.

Native species that are currently in danger include:

## Nightingale

Nightingales can produce more than 1,000 different sounds. But sadly, like many other UK songbirds, they're threatened. We've lost over 90% of nightingales in the last 50 years.



## Hazel dormouse

These tiny creatures have been present in Britain for more than 10,000 years, but our population of hazel dormice has declined by 51% since the year 2000.



## Stag beetle

Males can be as long as a credit card making them the largest beetles in the UK. Their jaws look like deer antlers and according to British folklore they can summon thunder and lightning.



## Hedgehog

Hedgehogs got their name from the pig-like grunts they make and their love of hedges. Numbers of hedgehogs have fallen by up to 30% in urban areas and by half in rural areas in just 2 decades.



# Ideas and activities

## Appreciation

Use this space to write down 5 daily wonders of the natural world that you usually overlook and why you're grateful for them. Is there a street tree that you pass on the way to work that offers shade, or do you wonder what those birds are chatting about?

This exercise is simply to celebrate and appreciate the seemingly insignificant parts of our natural world. Find out how much nature is around you every week, or every month.

## Observation

Look outside your window or step outside and notice nature that is nearby. Watch it for a couple of minutes, taking note of details you might usually miss. This could be a tree, wildflower or an insect.

## Awareness

Consider something related to nature that you take for granted. Do you walk past a flower growing by the pavement? When you see the flower next time, stop, take a moment and be mindful of where you are and how you feel.

## Breathing

Take a minute to slowly inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Try to make the breath last 6-8 seconds.

## Listening

What sounds do you miss while you are plugged in? Take a moment to take off your headphones and listen to the world around you. Can you hear birdsong? The buzzing of bees? The crunch of sticks and leaves on the ground?



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## If you only have a moment...

### 10 seconds

- Smell a flower.
- Look at the clouds.
- Step outside. Breathe in... Breathe out.

### 10 minutes

- Listen to a nature soundscape.
- Count how many birds or flowers you can see from your window.
- Photograph a flower.

### 1 hour

- Walk to a local green space and identify the different species of wildlife.
- Plant a seed in a pot.
- Watch a sunrise or sunset.




## If you have more time...

- Plant some vegetables, herbs or flowers in a window box or green patch.
- Draw a picture of the nature you can see from your window.
- Have a picnic in a park, green space or garden.







We often think of nature as something we can 'escape to' when we have time, but nature is all around us and we can #noticenatureeveryday on our doorstep.

### **Look**

How much nature can you spot in your home?

### **Listen**

Try blowing through a blade of grass. What sound does it make?

### **Feel**

Place a piece of paper on a tree trunk and rub some chalk over it. What texture does it make?

### **Smell**

Did you know flowering gorse smells like vanilla or coconut oil? What other nature smells can you find?

### **Taste**

Can you recognise a fruit or vegetable just by the taste?

# Tree ID Guide

Use this guide to help you identify some of the UK's most common tree species.



**Alder**



**Ash**



**Beech**



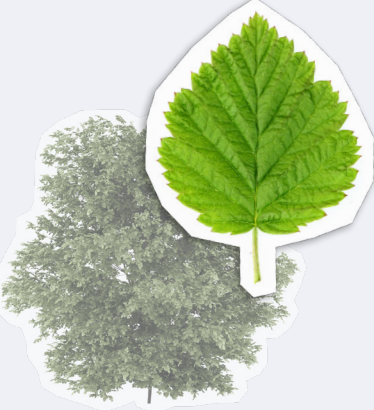
**Silver birch**



**Cedar**



**English oak**



**Hazel**



**Scots pine**



**Sweet chestnut**



**White willow**

# What if your street was

# 10xGREENER

supported by



At Friends of the Earth we have supported local communities to hire a postcode gardener as part of our 10x Greener project.

Postcode gardeners bring communities together to transform streets and to grow plants for food and for wildlife.

From high-rise balconies and front gardens to alleyways and bus stops. By adding hedges, fruit trees, bee-friendly flowers and bird-friendly habitats you can give nature a helping hand and create a greener and healthier home.

Could your street be next? Find out more:

[foe.uk/10xGreener](https://foe.uk/10xGreener)



# Want to do more?

**At Friends of the Earth we know how small actions can add up to make a big difference.**

For example, our Climate Action Caerphilly group planted a tiny forest in their local park. Residents, schoolchildren, friends and families came together to make a difference in their local community.

Tiny forests not only provide havens for local wildlife, the trees also absorb carbon dioxide from the air and they can help combat climate change.

They can have a huge impact even though they take up relatively little space.



If you enjoyed doing the activities in this pack, find out what you can do next at: [foe.uk](https://foe.uk).

We'd also love to see your photos of nature you've noticed. Why not share them with us? [#NoticeNatureEveryday](https://twitter.com/NoticeNatureEveryday).

**"One of the best treats as a child was a picnic by a wild flower meadow."**

Chris, Manchester

**"I like to observe how the seasons change."**

Alicia, London

**"Listening to birdsong and noticing the colours of flowers around me makes me feel calm."**

Jenny, Birmingham



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