









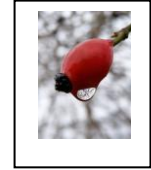


Nature activity calendar – explore, enjoy, learn and help wildlife.

	Enjoy ...	Support wildlife:
January 	...large flocks of birds when you go out. Spot out for starlings, geese, redwings and fieldfares. Learn their calls. Look out for mosses and lichens too. Check which birds visit your garden and keep a list for each week or month.	Offer food and water to your garden birds. Check these tips first: Feeding Wild Birds: What, How, When and Why - Woodland Trust
February 	...the first signs of spring: buds on trees and shrubs, daffodils and anemones, singing blue and great tits, the first bumblebees. In the UK, the first butterfly you may see each year is often a brimstone. Listen out for calling tawny owls in parks and woods: now is when they pair up. Males call 'toowit', hoping to attract a female – who responds with a 'toowoo'.	Keep willows suitable for breeding little owls and other species and help out with pollarding. Contact your local wildlife trust, A Rocha partner or farmer. Volunteering Opportunities The Wildlife Trusts
March	...the longer and warmer spring days. Check out woodland spring flowers this month. Also, in March many migrant birds will return to their breeding grounds: from larks and wagtails to ospreys and terns. Don't miss the birds that are just flying overhead, from Africa to Scotland or further north. This is also the time when lots of male songbirds mark their territories and attract mates by singing their hearts out.	Decide what veg you would like to grow this year: courgettes, pumpkins, tomatoes, runner beans, salad leaves are all easy (see also 'Extra resources' Grow your own). Plant your seeds now, indoors. Put up a nestbox (away from squirrels, and the sun - so not south facing).
April 	.. lots of edible plants outdoors. Pick wild garlic, dandelion and young Sting nettles, to make salads, biscuits and soup. Delicious and packed with vitamins! Avoid toxic and rare plants. 21 Wild garlic recipes - delicious. magazine (deliciousmagazine.co.uk) Look out for butterflies too: holly and common blue, small tortoiseshell, comma, brimstone and peacock. Garden butterflies to spot in early spring - Discover Wildlife	Join in with Earth Day! Earth Day: The Official Site EARTHDAY.ORG What about an Earth Day picnic? Try to be as eco-friendly as possible and invite your class, church or youth group. Try out organic, free range, Fair Trade and veggie products, avoid plastic. Explore a local nature reserve. Walk or cycle.
May 	... the perfect month for breeding birds, insects and flowering plants. Go out as often as you can. Don't forget that May is also ideal for bat spotting. See Lesson 2. Check out bat walks (Events & Training - Bat Conservation Trust (bats.org.uk)) and visits to bat colonies, e.g. on Bats at our places National Trust	Build a bat box for your local bats. How to build a bat box The Wildlife Trusts Find a sheltered location like an old tree for your box, or ask your local council if they could hang it up in a park near you. Monitor which bats may use it.
June 	.. orchids! Some are very obvious, like early purple orchids, others are harder to spot, such as Ophrys species (bee- and fly orchids). Limestone woodlands and meadows, dunes and marshes are often good. Where to find orchids The Wildlife Trusts	Check out if any of the A Rocha projects/partners need a hand with landscape management for wildlife. Who we are (arocha.org.uk) Contact Us (arocha.org.uk)
July 	... dragonflies! Scan water surfaces, from canals and rivers, to streams and ponds. You may find them resting on trees, or darting past in your garden. Try to learn to identify five species this month. Identification Help - British Dragonfly Society (british-dragonflies.org.uk) Also, this is a great month for pond dipping! Use the FSC ID guides.	Join in with nature conservation camps – ACTION FOR CONSERVATION Camps (12-16) Nature Volunteering in the UK - Nature Volunteers Visit the Knepp estate: Knepp Castle Estate (kneppestate.co.uk)
August 	.. early autumn migration. If you are on holiday on the coast, look out for waders, raptors and other birds grouping together again before they head south. Take an evening stroll after dark and spot out for Sea sparkle (see Lesson 3)	Due to climate change, summers are getting hotter. Keep your lawn long to offer shelter to insects and help your grass to survive. Try not to water your lawn in a heatwave.

<p>September</p> 	<p>... rutting red deer! Visit e.g. Devon or Scotland Deer rutting season National Trust It's a spectacle that's not only fun to watch, but wonderful to listen to. Look out for overflying geese too – are they flying in V-formation? Why? Look up some facts. What about foraging – September is the month of bounty: berries, apples, plums... Free, fresh and organic. Make juice, jam or crumble. Elderberry cordial is delicious and very healthy, as it fights viruses.</p>	<p>A new school year with new opportunities – why not become an eco-school? Form a team and apply! What about church? Check out Eco Church. At home you can do an 'eco-blitz': switch to green cleaning and laundry products (Ecover), introduce meat free Mondays and up your recycling!</p>
<p>October</p> 	<p>... mushrooms! You can find their fruiting bodies above ground (a tiny bit of the whole fungus – the rest, called mycelium, is underground: Lesson-01.pmd (nios.ac.in) and Find fungi The Wildlife Trusts Learn to identify your finds, take photos and check out some interesting facts. Reading tip: Entangled Life (by Merlin Sheldrake)</p>	<p>Protect fungi as fungi protect us and everything around us! They also give us medicine and even antibiotics. Grow your own fungi: A guide to growing mushrooms Love The Garden (or buy a kit)</p>
<p>November</p> 	<p>... dancing, diving, murmuring starlings. Between now and February, in many places, thousands of starlings come together in huge flocks every night to roost together on roofs and in trees. When it's dry, they often perform the most amazing flight shows. Also, check out how some mammals and insects survive the winter by hibernating: bats, hedgehogs, dormice...</p>	<p>Keep going outside, even if it looks unappealing. It's good for our bodies, our mental and emotional health, and the best way to get through another winter. Join organised walks or nip out for 20 minutes every day. Find your nearest health walk Walking for Health</p>
<p>December</p> 	<p>... redwings, fieldfares, wintering ducks... we are almost back to where we were in January. Cherishing winter wildlife, or longing for the Spring. Make the most of our wintering birds and pick up some binoculars. Don't forget to scan bushes and trees with berries – these attract not only thrushes and blackbirds, but, in very cold winters, you may also see some waxwings. Lakes, rivers and coastal areas are great for winter birds too.</p>	<p>It's nearly Christmas! How can you make this year's meals, cards, gifts and decorations as 'green' as possible? Set yourselves a challenge at home, school or church and email us some photos! infowildandwonderful@gmail.uk</p>