

# SWA ECO NEWS

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## Challenge 2.6: Forest of Marston Vale

As you know, Forest of Marston Vale have planted over 2 million trees and provided 13 local woodlands (so far) that people are appreciating more than ever right now - having green space on your door step is vital for physical and mental wellbeing. They can't look after our woodlands and create more without our help! We planted 200 of these trees at Wilstead back in February.

Charities are really struggling right now - across the board, not just environmental charities. So Save the Charities UK have come up with an amazing way of helping everyone to carry on their good work - The 2.6 Challenge. The idea is that 2.6 million people in the UK raise or donate £26 each, raising £67 million as a nation, for charities. It's very simple - it starts on 26th April (what would've been the London Marathon) and will last 5 days.

The idea is that you make a donation and/or get sponsored for doing something revolving around the numbers 2.6 or 26 (in place of the London Marathon), and aim to raise at least £26. You could -

Hop 2.6 miles

Skip for 26 minutes

Eat 26 pork pies

Toss a pancake 26 times

The possibilities are endless - you could run the marathon in your garden, you could eat 26 leftover Easter eggs (against all medical advice...) or you can just donate, if you don't fancy getting involved - we won't judge!

Get involved and help the Forest of Marston Vale combat climate change and improve our local areas for us all to enjoy. Tell us what you have done and send us a picture if you would like to be included on the next newsletter. Tweet or Instagram us at the above addresses or email [jambrose@bestacademies.org.uk](mailto:jambrose@bestacademies.org.uk). To find out more visit:

<https://www.marstonvale.org/news/26-challenge>



Polehanger Farm adds 200 trees to our count...

## 5 Positive Eco Facts

By Will

1. Endangered sea turtles are hatching on beaches, nearly 100 critically endangered sea turtles hatched on the Brazilian beaches.
2. A Formosan Clouded Leopard has been spotted by rangers. This species of leopard was thought to be extinct.
3. A jelly fish was seen in the rivers of Venice
4. Oil refineries are shutting down because of lack of business.
5. The earth is telling us that we must rethink our growth society.

## SIMPLE WAYS TO INTRODUCE SMALL ANIMALS AND WILDLIFE INTO YOUR GARDEN DURING LOCKDOWN. By Dr Emma Dunham

Spring is the time when lots of animals are emerging and it is a great time to welcome them into your garden.

Birds like a variety of foods and putting out different nuts and seeds at a feeding station can bring them into your garden. At this time of year birds are also making nests. By leaving out a pile of small twigs and dog hair you are helping the birds by providing valuable nest materials. Only the other day we had a pair of blue tits squabbling over dog hair from our Labrador that we had left on top of the bird feeders. If you want to get really adventurous and have some left over wood in your garden, go to the RSPB site to get the blueprints to make your own nest box.



Bug hotels can be as simple or elaborate as you like. See RSPB website for details on how to make one.  
<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>



An insect house made out of bark, twigs and leaves piled up can make a safe place for insects to hide and a great way of increasing bug diversity in your garden. Leaving the grass uncut in specific area also encourages insects and plants that like long grass such as wild flowers and butterflies. Having a compost heap is not only a great way to recycle your vegetable cuttings, tea leaves, coffee granules and garden waste but also acts as a great habitat for wildlife. Last autumn our garden hedgehog used our compost heap to hibernate, and this spring we used the compost to enrich our soil on our vegetable patch and found a heap of worms squiggling around in the compost. All great stuff for the earth and our friendly inquisitive blackbird!

Most of us have a garden fence around our open space however this may actually stop wildlife from getting into our gardens. Digging away some earth from the bottom of a fence or taking a small corner piece from the bottom of a fence, will allow animals into our gardens. Most importantly leave water out for the birds and bees, frogs and hedgehogs. Bees, hedgehogs and frogs like a shallow dish filled with pebbles, whilst birds are happy to drink from a deeper pot. Hopefully everyone can take a little something from this article and give wildlife the extra help it needs during the dry warm weather and in doing so create little wildlife havens in our own gardens. (Advice taken from WWF and from my own experiences!)

### Be Eco in Quarantine By Adam

During quarantine you can't go out but you could still be eco. Here are some ways you can do this: Be in your garden; Plant flowers for the bees and set up feeders for birds and other animals; Keep your heating at minimum; Put on jumpers if you are cold or sit outside because the weather this quarantine is brilliant. Keep your electrics low; Don't be on electronics and screens all the time you can be outside or entertaining yourself in different ways.

Stay Safe, Stay Home, Stay Eco



We had planned to plant 200 trees in association with Andrew Foster and his family, the owners of Polehanger Farm in Meppershall. Due to lockdown he had to plant them himself. We are so grateful to him. When you next go for your daily exercise see if you can spot them on a walk around Polehanger wood.

### How Planting Trees Helps By Mrs Ambrose

A scientific report released in June last year from a Swiss University said that the quickest way to reduce climate change would be to plant a trillion trees. That's a million million. This would help to reduce levels of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. Carbon dioxide along with other green house gases increase the amount of heat trapped within the atmosphere, raising global temperatures. You may not think that global temperature has risen but it has and it has risen more so in the oceans as these absorb and retain heat more readily. This is why the coral reefs are bleaching - it is due to rising sea temperatures. Climate change can be a really scary prospect, but you can help and one way you can help is by planting trees. As a school community we are on track to plant 2000 trees. Together we will fight climate change.

### In Conversation with... Mrs Little (Social Sciences)

With more time at home recently, I realised that my stash of plastic cleaning bottles that I planned to recycle was building up. What to do with them? I had made a couple into natural room sprays by adding my favourite essential oils to water (some of my students will be aware of my Rosemary oil obsession). I found this company called 'Iron and Velvet' that sell little refills that dissolve in your bottles when mixed with warm water and they even send you a sticker to add to your bottle to make it look 'official'. You can get these by mail order and they are even for sale from a local business, Adore Nature, in Stotfold that specialises in plastic free alternatives.

Iron and Velvet products can also be found on line at websites such as [peacewiththewild.co.uk](http://peacewiththewild.co.uk) and [littlegoatgruff.co.uk](http://littlegoatgruff.co.uk)



### We can all be eco heroes... By Charlie

Bees are important! They perform 80% of pollination worldwide...



You can help out the bees by planting bee-friendly flowers in your garden, and by not using pesticides or chemicals on your lawn.



Together, we can help to

