**Live Simply May**

**Live Sustainably with Creation**

**No Mow May - Give Nature a Helping Hand**

https://www.countryfile.com/news/no-mow-may-why-you-should-lock-up-your-lawnmower-on-1st-may/

**Join the No Mow May movement** **and liberate your lawn for nature**.

Starting on 1 May lock up your lawnmower for the month, stand back awhile and then enjoy the wild flowers which will provide food and nectar for pollinating insects such as bees, butterflies and moths. You don’t have to leave the whole lawn uncut, you can let parts of it or just the edges grow longer.

**But why May and what are the benefits?**

Lawns start to grow faster during May and it is peak season for wildflowers to bloom. Most gardeners are keen to get the mower out and transform their scraggly patch of grass into a pristine lawn. By holding off from cutting the lawn a little while longer, you can provide food for pollinators (and the birds and animals who eat them) that is critical to their survival. Dandelions are a particular superfood for bees and butterflies. They produce 9% of the lawn's pollen and 37% of its nectar sugar.

**Why take part**

We've lost 97% of our wildflower meadows in the past 70 years in the UK, and insects are in worrying decline with butterflies down by about 50% since 1976, and 13 species of bee now extinct. No Mow May is one way that we can help to turn back the tide of decline.

**How to take part in No Mow May**

All you have to do is:-

* Simply leave your mower in the shed for No Mow May and watch the flowers fill your lawn.
* Register at the No Mow May website <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/>
* At the end of the month choose a random square metre of your lawn, count the number of flowers in it and upload the results to the website.

**St. Joseph’s Church Lawn**

At St. Joseph’s we have gone one step further and we have left parts of the church lawn unmown from the beginning of the season. The snowdrops, crocus and grape hyacinths that were planted in the grass flowered in early spring and they were beautiful, in April we had a wonderful show of cowslips, pansies, dandelions and daisies. Take a look at our mini meadows, who knows what May will bring!

**Live Simply**

**Marvel at the Wonders of Nature**

David Attenborough’s Wild Isles TV series was both fascinating and inspiring. Most of us didn’t realise that there was so many wonders of nature to see and experience so close to home. Even so it may not be possible to travel to the wilds of Scotland to catch a glimpse of a golden eagle or a beaver no matter how eager you are! However you don’t have to stray very far from your doorstep to experience the magic of nature.

**The Dawn Chorus** is one of nature’s wonders and is at its best in May, it’s so accessible that you can even witness it whilst lying in bed with the window open - although you will get a better experience sitting in the garden, in a woodland or at an organized event (most bird reserves arrange them) Set your alarm 1 hour before sunrise on a day when the forecast is for fine, clear weather with little wind. The chorus starts with one bird - a blackbird, robin or a song thrush, then other birds gradually join in until they reach a crescendo half an hour before, to half an hour after dawn then it gradually fades away as the birds set off to go foraging for food.

As you listen, you can try to work out which bird is singing. The RSPB have created a handy audio guide so that you can get to know the different bird songs. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/bird-songs/what-bird-is-that/>

You can also get to know the birds that sing near you with the RSPB Bird Identifier. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/identify-a-bird/>

**Bluebells and Wild Garlic**

At this time of year our woodlands are filled with the sights and smells of wild garlic and blue bells. No-one can fail to marvel at the sight of a spring woodland carpeted in a sea of bluebells, or the smell of a woodland floor carpeted in wild garlic, it is truly awe inspiring. Take some time away from the hustle and bustle and enjoy a tranquil springtime walk through one of the local woods to enjoy them. Anston Stones Wood, Hail Mary Woods at Treeton and Clumber Park all have spectacular displays.

**Orchids**

In early June the three fields close to the top path north of Anston Stones are ablaze with wild flowers, orchids and butterflies. Four species of orchid grow there - Common Spotted Orchid, Southern Marsh-orchid, Fly Orchid and Pyramidal Orchid. These fields along with Anston Stones are a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and one for us to cherish.

**Swans**

The swans are nesting again on the side of the canal at Turnerwood, they have built their nest close to the lock this year and it’s very easy to see from the opposite bank. The female was sitting on the nest in April and she could be seen tucking straw in around her body to keep the eggs warm. The chicks should hatch in May and hopefully, they will be swimming in the lock alongside their parents which is always a magical sight. To see them easily, park in Shireoaks close to the railway station then walk west along the canal for about a mile to the hamlet of Turnerwood, go under the bridge and you will see the lock. The walk is beautiful at all times of year and so it’s an added bonus.

**Live In Solidarity with the Poor**

**CAFOD Fix the Food System**

CAFOD are asking us to sign a letter urging the World Bank to protect the rights of small-scale farmers to freely swap and share their own seeds. The freedom of farmers to choose what seeds they use is under threat as new laws are introduced which push farmers towards using seeds sold by big agribusiness.

**Meet Salina -** Salina lives in Bangladesh, she trained with CAFOD to be an organic farmer. Salina spoke about the challenges she faced when she used to do chemical agriculture.

She said - “When I bought seeds from the market, I tried my best to produce good crops from them. I sowed the seeds but after a few days the plants started turning reddish, because they required chemical fertilizer. So by then, whether I liked it or not, I had to buy the chemical fertilizer and pesticides sold by the company or I’d lose my entire crop. Sometimes I borrowed money from my neighbours to buy it, and had to pay it back with interest. Altogether, when I harvested the crop and calculated how much I had made, compared to how much I had spent, I made hardly anything.”

If you haven’t done so already, please take action now by co-signing Salina’s letter to the World Bank. Follow the link [cafod.org.uk/food](about:blank)