

Wild **SPRING** Wellbeing

Wild at Heart
Be wild, whatever your age

A Wild Welcome...

Spring is here, winter is left behind, the sun feels warmer, and though days may be frosty or baking, blowy or balmy, we can embrace the changes. We can wake up each day and see what sort of a spring it is today!

You can think of early, mid and late Springs, each with their distinct natural excitements to look forward to. Nature doesn't work to dates - it is energised by increasing day length and warmth over the preceding weeks creating the right conditions for new growth. It's a great time of the year to sow seeds and marvel at the fresh new growth.

Birds are carrying twigs and moss to build their nest to raise their young. Birdsong in the early morning and evening reaches its peak by late May. Try waking up early and opening a window to listen out for the Dawn Chorus.

If you are out for a walk you could notice the signs of spring emerging. Can you find the pastel shades of blossom on the trees and smell the aroma of wild garlic popping up in damp woody areas? Even a week passing can bring great change to the local parks and woods. Buds become flowers and shoots become leaves. Find a favourite spot and see how it changes as Spring gets into its stride.

What #3GoodThings in Nature can you spot throughout Spring?

Jenny, our Wild at Heart Project Officer



An orange tip butterfly on honesty flowers



Sheffield & Rotherham

For nature, for everyone



SPRING

At Wild at Heart we often start our sessions with an active short walk in the park together to experience the sights, sounds and smells of nature all around us. It's great to chat and get to know each other and really get to know the beauty of the greenspaces we are in. We then go on to try out various hobby-based nature activities.

Here are just a few beautiful things to look out for this Spring:

- Cherry blossoms falling like confetti
- Bluebells blanketing woodland floors
- Fluffy white clouds
- Orange tip butterflies
- Colourful flowers emerging
- New green leaves on trees
- Bird song at dawn and dusk



Connecting Steps Project Assistant Lucy shares tips for getting outside and enjoying the outdoors near you.

How to **SPRING** out into Spring safely, venturing out from our snug winter pause, along with the UK's only three hibernating mammals; hedgehog, bat and dormouse. Think about how to reenergise yourself and feel an excitement in the air as nature starts to awaken from its slumber.

Maybe your local wildlife and the 5 Ways to Wellbeing can help you:

Notice... how the birds outside your window start to sing earlier in the morning and later in the day, celebrating the longer hours of sunlight. Look around as a hue of green starts to wash over the bare trees and colours explode with bursting blossom and buds, maybe you'll see hungry insects finding some well-needed nectar.

Learn... more about your local area and explore it, get out a map and plot a new route around your park or to the shops. Explore the nature in your local area as if you are looking at it with a beginner's mind!

Give... a friend a call to invite on a socially distant outing, or have a phone catch-up as you walk

Be active... go and find your favourite colours and spring scents, find a new footpath to follow. Remember the Countryside Code and take litter home.

Be prepared... for rain, cold weather, and muddy ground by wearing appropriate waterproofs, warm clothes, and grippy shoes.

Connect... with others and the wildlife you see by sharing a special photo or sketch a little drawing from your mini-adventure, log any wildlife that you saw on the Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust Nature Counts page: www.wildsheffield.com/wildlife/wildlife-conservation/moredata-for-nature/sightings



Jenny - Project Officer



Susan - Project Assistant

Seasonal Recipe

Spring Soup

Vegetable soups are perfect for making the most of what's in season. At this time of year you can make fresh, nutritious soups with peas straight from the pod and spring vegetables.

Ingredients - serves 4

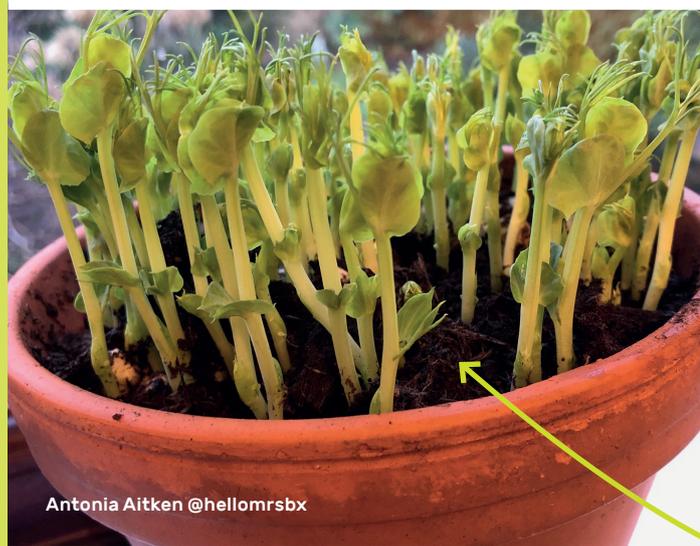
- 3 tbsp oil or butter
- 4 spring onions
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 large potato
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- 900g young peas in the pod / 500g frozen peas
- 4 tbsp chopped fresh mint
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 150ml double cream (optional)

Method:

1. Wash potatoes. Chop all the vegetables.
2. Fry the spring onions, garlic, potatoes in oil on a low heat, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned.
3. Add the vegetable stock.
4. Bring to the boil, then reduce to simmer for 20 minutes or until the potatoes are soft.
5. Shell the peas into a bowl.
6. Add the peas and simmer for 5 minutes.
7. Turn off the heat and stir in the mint, lemon juice, and cream. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
8. You can blend your soup with a hand blender or food processor if you wish. Then serve with chunks of fresh bread!



Antonia Aitken @hellomrsbx



Antonia Aitken @hellomrsbx



Grow pea tops for tea

Wild at Heart Project Assistant Susan shares a simple top tip to get growing for yourself and for wildlife. If you've never tried gardening before and thought it just isn't for you then Springtime could be the ideal opportunity to give it a go and see if you can discover what all the fuss is about!

Ingredients and Equipment:

- 1 packet of dried marrowfat peas from the supermarket - not special ones, just ordinary dried peas.
- 1 plant pot OR small seed tray (an empty egg box, mushroom or tomato produce tray would do).
- Compost / garden soil OR cotton wool / kitchen paper as a growing medium.

What is a growing medium?

You don't need to use compost or soil as peas are full of all the stored energy that they need to start to grow once they are given warm damp conditions. They will send out roots to take in the moisture from the water held in the cotton wool, kitchen towel or compost. The shoots will grow leaves and send out tendrils as they want to climb and grow towards the light.

What to do:

- 1 Soak a handful of the dried peas in a bowl of water for 12-24 hours. They will soften and become a brighter green.
- 2 Fill the tray with whatever growing medium you are using place on a baking tray or similar, to catch the water and then water well. Firmly push the soaked peas into the compost/cotton wool or kitchen paper so that they are in good contact. You can put quite a few peas into one tray with just a little gap between them. If you are using compost you can cover them up but don't worry if not.
- 3 Place on a windowsill and keep them damp over the next week or so. Turn the tray to face the light occasionally as the seedlings begin to grow. Within a week you should see little white roots coming out of the pea.
- 4 Watch them regularly! If it is warm and sunny then they will grow quickly. Water them well.
- 5 When they are about 10cm high you can cut them off and make a tasty salad. Pea tops have a distinctly nutty flavour that is very moreish.
- 6 If you keep sowing more peas as you harvest them, you will have a steady supply of fresh salad leaves throughout the spring and summer.

If you enjoyed growing the pea shoots, how about trying something outdoors next, and/or growing some herbs for you and for wildlife.



Woolley Woods



Jess - Project Assistant

Wild at Heart Project Assistant Jess tells us about a local greenspace to visit in springtime - Woolley Woods (Ecclesfield Road, S9 1NW).

Woolley Woods has become a bit of a favourite with us at Wild at Heart - we have visited every spring in recent years with all of our groups, and for good reason. Located in North Sheffield, Woolley Woods is what is known as an 'ancient woodland', which means it has been a woodland since at least the 1600s when such records began.

Ancient woodlands are precious and rare, and support plants and animals not seen anywhere else. Spring is a particularly special time to ramble through

the sloping paths of Woolley Woods, because the woodland floor is carpeted in beautiful bluebells. The best time to see this spectacle is late April and May, but if you are visiting in early spring you will come across another ancient woodland plant - wild garlic, with its fresh garlicky smell and dainty white flowers.

Woolley Woods truly is a relic of ancient days with its tall moss-covered trees and vibrant springtime flowers, and yet this ancient place is right here in our patch for us all to enjoy.

Other places to see bluebells near you:

Moss Valley Nature Reserve

Ecclesall Woods

Canklow Woods

Wath Wood

Anston Stones Wood

Dam Flask Reservoir

Roe Woods

Dawn Chorus

Spring is the time when male birds sing to either attract a mate or defend their territory which creates a beautiful soundscape filling the early morning air. To enjoy this spectacle simply wrap up warm and head out as early as you can in the morning to your garden, park or wood, and listen. The best times are from April to June, in cool, still weather. You will find yourself surrounded by uplifting birdsong of every kind as the dawn slowly rises across the land.



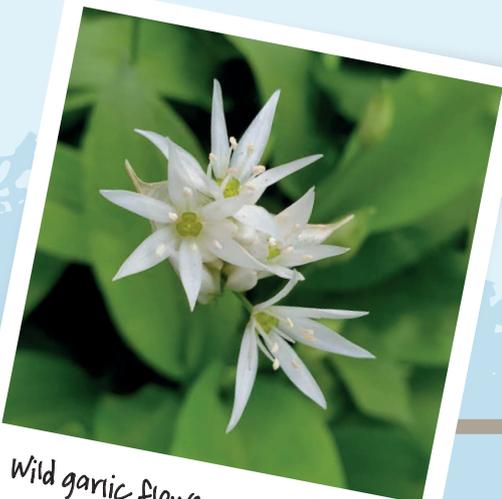
BRAIN TEASER

Cryptic clues

Can you work out what these nature-themed cryptic clues are describing? The numbers in brackets indicate how long the word you are looking for is!

1. Homing bird who might carry your mail (6)
2. Beatrix Potter's Mrs Tiggy-Winkle was one (8)
3. A lion-yellow flower with a fluffy seed 'clock' (9)
4. Some love the smell of freshly cut _____, others just blow their noses at it! (5)
5. A girl's name, which makes floral chains (5)
6. These bring rain and snow (6)
7. A red beetle that is no gentleman (8)
8. Cunning and bushy-tailed (3)
9. Butterfly relative, wears a dusty cloak (4)
10. Jump to it! It's that time of year! (6)

Answers: 1. Pigeon; 2. Hedgehog; 3. Dandelion; 4. Grass; 5. Daisy; 6. Clouds; 7. Ladybird; 8. Fox; 9. Moth; 10. Spring



Wild garlic flowers

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If you would like to find out more about all of our work across Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust please contact us or visit www.wildsheffield.com.

For more activities, wild recipes, videos and small ways to stay connected to nature, find Wild at Heart on Facebook at [Facebook.com/WildatHeartproject](https://www.facebook.com/WildatHeartproject) and follow us on Twitter: @WildatHeartSRWT

Take a look at our Wild at Heart at Home Nature Adventures page on our website www.wildsheffield.com/home/wild-at-heart-at-home

More information about the project can be found at: www.wildsheffield.com/discover/your-community/wild-at-heart

For further information contact:
Jenny King - Wild at Heart Project Officer:

✉ j.king@wildsheffield.com

☎ 0114 263 4335

