

Self isolating? Stuck at home with the kids? Bored?

Most of us on Moor Pool are fortunate enough to have gardens so, as the weather must improve soon, here are a few ideas from Moor Pool Wildlife group for occupying some time with nature.

Grow stuff

If you haven't got pots, compost, seeds etc someone will be able to deliver them for you. Ask a friend, family member or the Covid 19 task force!

You can grow anything from mustard and cress on the windowsill, to potatoes, to pots of lovely flowers. Nurturing something from seed to flower can be deeply satisfying and gardening is understood to have mental health benefits.

Here are some ideas from the RHS:

- growing veg in small spaces: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-inspiration/grow-your-own/how-to-grow-veg-small-spaces>

- guide for gardening beginners: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/beginners-guide>

And if you've heard of gardening for wildlife and want to find out more here are some ideas from the Wildlife Garden Project: <https://wildlifegardenproject.com/>

Have a look at this short video about urban wildlife in your garden from the RHS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqgv1UmNv-4>

Or think about making a mini pond? <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/createaminipond/>

Discover stuff

There's the obvious wildlife, like birds and foxes, but lots of other less obvious things too. The world of invertebrates, such as beetles, moths and 'creepy crawlies', can be fascinating whatever your age. And with roughly 27,000 types of insect in the UK there are plenty to find out about.

Here are some tips from the RSPB about identifying birds: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/identify-a-bird/>

and have a look at these from the Woodland Trust!

- how to identify woodland invertebrates: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/animals/other-invertebrates/>

- how to identify wildlife: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/identify-wildlife/>

Record stuff

For anyone with a scientific approach, why not become a recorder? All our volunteer observations contribute to a greater understanding of biodiversity in our region. And it will help our very own Moor Pool ecology study, too.

Find out more:

Moor Pool Wildlife: www.wildlife.moorpool.com

Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust: www.bbcwildlife.org.uk

iNaturalist: www.inaturalist.org

iNaturalist is an international organisation that began in California but is now used by over 1 million people worldwide and has recorded over 32 million observations. The iNaturalist app is simple and easy to use. You upload a photo of what you have observed and the software will suggest an identification. Your observation will be verified by a naturalist. Moor Pool Wildlife is using iNaturalist in our Ecology Survey.

Here's a selection of websites with ideas for nature-related kids' activities!

15 nature activity ideas for kids including building a bug hotel, making a wormery or an ant farm:

<https://www.firstdiscoverers.co.uk/nature-activities-for-kids>

All you need to know for a really great bug hunt:

<https://www.familyeducation.com/fun/nature-activities/bug-hunting>

Outdoor activities and online games:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-kids/games-and-activities/>

Tree ID for kids:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/tree-id-kids/>

Awesome activities for kids (yes it's American but if you fight your way through the adverts there are some good ideas!):

<https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/outdoor-nature-science-activities-kids>

Gardening for kids:

<https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/10-gardening-projects-for-kids/>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/education-learning/gardening-children-schools/family-activities>