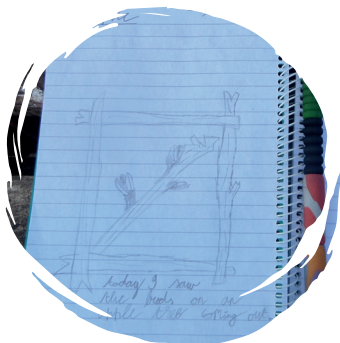


In springtime, it is very easy to explore nature on your own doorstep. There is plenty to discover either within your own garden or just outside your home. We challenge you to create your own spring diary to track the changes happening around you and get to know the wildlife on your doorstep.



*Decide what things you are going to record and how you are going to do it.
You could:*



Keep a notebook to record details such as when trees come into leaf and when flowers first appear.



If you plant any flowers or vegetable in your garden, you could also track their progress.



Write and draw in your notebook.



Take lots of photographs.



Making simple frames to hang on the trees means that you can photograph the same part of the tree each time.

Start Observing and Recording



You don't need to record every tree or plant every day. Just check your garden regularly and make note of anything new.



When trees are coming into leaf, you might see big changes over the course of a few weeks.



Make note of any new flowers in your garden. If you're keeping a look out regularly, you may see different insects visiting your flowers.



Remember that it is important to have wild spaces in your garden to allow wildlife to live. Delay the first grass cut to allow dandelions to flower and let areas of grass grow for up to 6 weeks at a time to encourage clover and other pollinator friendly flowers.



Lots of trees have flowers which you may not have noticed before. Look out for them.



Don't worry if you don't know the names of the trees and flowers in your garden. If you want, you can make up your own names for the moment and maybe try and identify them later.

If you want to find out more about wildlife in your garden and start identifying and recording wild plants and animals, the following websites can help:

The All Ireland Pollinator Plan

<https://pollinators.ie/> has lots of resources to help you learn about pollinators and make your garden pollinator friendly

Zoë Devlin's website

<http://wildflowersofireland.net/> is a great beginner's website for identifying wild flowers and even has a list of what is flowering right now

The National Biodiversity Data Centre

<https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/> has lots of resources for identifying and recording wildlife in your garden

The UK Woodland Trust

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/tree-id-kids/> has leaf and twig identification sheets



COVID-19: It is important to stay up to date as social distancing guidelines may change over time. The most up to date advice, information and resources can be found on: www.hse.ie and www.health.gov.ie

Nature on Your Doorstep challenge sheet brought to you by Carlow Sports Partnership in collaboration with Wildways Adventures