

# Mother Orchards

## Education Pack



**Foraging for our future**





# An Introduction to Mother Orchards

## WHAT IS A MOTHER ORCHARD?

A Mother Orchard is a special collection of fruit and nut trees which have been selected for the west Wales climate as part of Cwm Arian's "Ein Coed" initiative.

Ein Coed is a project encouraging people to share cuttings of trees and shrubs. Like seed-swapping but with cuttings (scions) and seeds from fruit trees given out to the public for free by arrangement with the site owners.

To arrange cuttings or find out more visit  
[www.cwmarian.org.uk/eincoed](http://www.cwmarian.org.uk/eincoed)



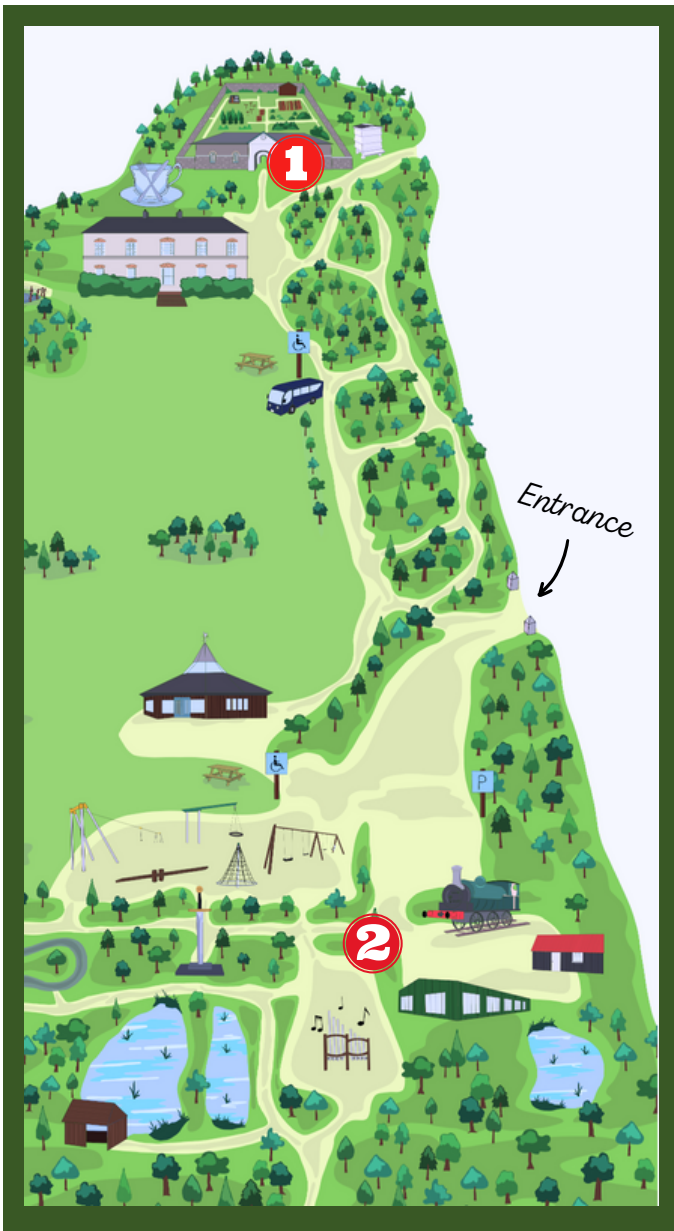
The Mother Orchards provide a valuable resource to local people to be able to obtain fruit and nut tree cuttings and seed to grow their own produce.

This guide provides a window into the history of fruit and wild foods, its contribution to our wellbeing and health, improved understanding of where our food comes from, whole food health benefits of fruit and nuts in our diets and the wildlife habitat creation that benefits nature recovery.



Some great things about  
Mother Orchards...

- 
- Continue the traditions of foraging
  - Improve our wellbeing
  - Provide healthy food
  - Encourage higher yielding fruit and nuts
  - Are nature friendly
  - Use improved forms of native fruit and nut species



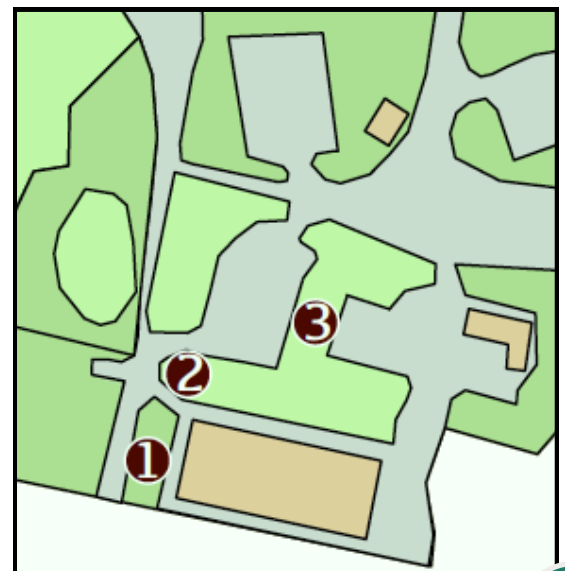
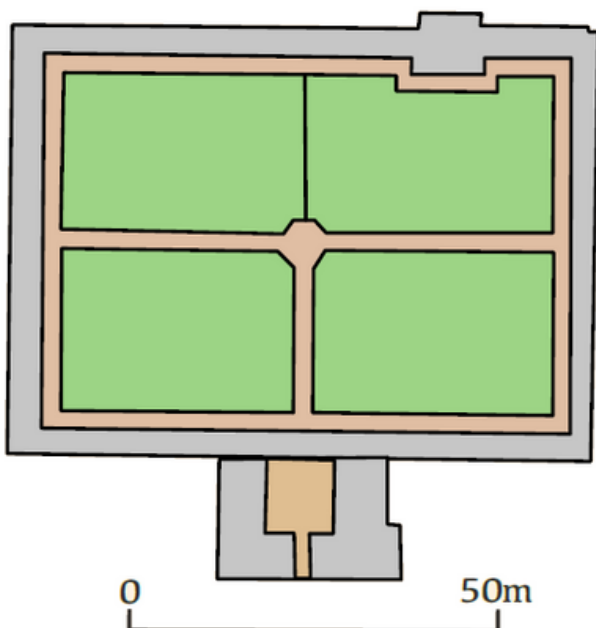
At Scolton Manor, we have two orchard sites: the "Railway car park" and the "Walled garden".

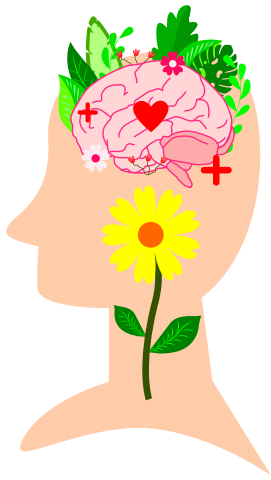
The site map situated by the Green Barn shows you the individual fruit and nut tree locations.

The maps on this page show the size and location of the two orchards.

**1** The Walled Garden

**2** The Railway Car Park





# Nature & Our Wellbeing

Natural Resources Wales ([naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](http://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)) have recognized that there are 5 steps to improving our health and wellbeing when connecting with nature and the natural world. Studies show 80% of the world's happiest people have a strong connection to nature.

These simple and effective steps are:

- Give
- Learn
- Be active
- Take notice
- Connect

The Mother Orchard project allows everyone to connect with nature and their own food supply and reap the added free benefits of wellbeing.



# Foraging for Food & Health

Before 24-hour food shops and freezers, most people lived rural lives surrounded by farmland, hedgerows and woodland. People relied on growing their own vegetables and fruit in gardens and supplementing this with a foraged diet of nuts, roots, mushrooms, fresh leaves and fruit harvested from the countryside.

This was an essential part of the basic diet of many rural people and provided valuable nutrition including important vitamins.

## VITAMIN C

Vitamin C in the 21st century is largely supplied by imported fruits such as oranges, limes and lemons, farmed berries including blueberries, raspberries and strawberries, or by supplementary pills from health shops and supermarkets - but before these supplies were available, they had to be collected from the wild.



Vitamins were obtained from many berries. Commonly foraged ones were rowan, wild strawberry, rose hips and hawthorn. Nearer the coast, there were shoots of samphire and sea buckthorn berries.

People did not depend on supermarkets, but they did depend on knowledge of where the important plants were growing and when best to pick them, store them and treasure the meagre supplies so that they would last the year out.

Here is a list of some of some commonly foraged plants and their uses:

- pickings of wild garlic and mint as powerful flavourings,
- large butterbur leaves for wrapping butter and cheese,
- flowers of hop and elder and berries from service tree for flavouring beers and cordials,
- birch tree sap for wine production,
- fruit from wild strawberry, blackberry, raspberry and elderberry for fruit and juices,
- nuts of hazel and pignuts for high protein



- fruit from crab apples, rowan, cherry, sloe, damson and bullace for jams, syrups and preserves.
- edible mushrooms picked fresh and also dry stored for the long winter.

Fruit and herbal teas were widely made from wild foraged crops but today in the UK most of the fruit teas are now commercially produced from imported fruits and herbs.



Wild plants provided herbal remedies for pain relief, including ribwort plantain, still appreciated today to reduce itching and inflammation from bites and stings. Many herbs eased symptoms for common ailments including constipation and stomach pain.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES (KEY STAGE 2 AND 3)

- Use plants to develop an understanding of wellbeing.
- Develop social interaction skills and confidence.
- Notice and engage with the natural environment.



## ACTIVITY 1: FORAGER HUNT

Looking for edible seeds, nuts and fruits

The children are looking for the following plants:

- Blackberries\*
- Raspberries\*
- Wild strawberry\*
- Rose hip\*
- Wild garlic\*
- Rowan berry\*
- Hazelnut
- Blackcurrants\*
- Hawthorn berries\*
- Sloe\*
- Redcurrants\*
- Apples
- Damson\*
- Pink currants\*
- Pears
- Bullace\*
- White currants\*
- Elderberries\*
- Crab apple\*

\*Those marked with an asterisk are high in Vitamin C.

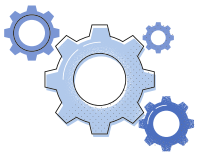


## ACTIVITY 2: HERBAL HUNT

Looking for edible plants.

The children are looking for the following plants:

- Dandelion
- Stinging nettle
- Thyme
- Cleavers
- Mint
- Hedge garlic
- Elderflower
- Fennel
- Chickweed
- Ribwort plantain
- Marjoram
- Garlic mustard






## NOTES FOR ACTIVITIES 1 & 2

The Forager Hunt activity works best in Autumn (September/October) when fruiting is occurring.

The Herbal Hunt activity works best in Spring (April/May) when young fresh leafy growth is available.

These outdoor learning activities enable children to explore nature directly and recognize how it changes through the seasons.

You will need:

-  clipboards
-  pencils
-  collecting bags



Allow 30 minutes to hunt and 30 minutes to examine and discuss the findings

Children can work individually, in pairs or small groups. Clearly outline the area to be investigated and encourage children to explore all the areas within the space (muddy, low down, high reaching).



**Ensure everyone is careful when picking stinging nettles.**



**Ensure everyone washes their hands after completing the activity.**



Celebrate and discuss their finds, which could now be used to create a nature table in the classroom and inspire creativity as a story starter or drawing pictures of what they have seen.

Did they spot anything different from the list?

The table below can be used to record findings for the activities in this pack.

<i>Plant found</i>	<i>Location on the site</i>	<i>Drawing of the plant including nuts, fruit, seeds, leaves etc.</i>	<i>Notes</i>





## ACTIVITY 3: HEALTH QUIZ

Identifying the health benefits of edible plants.

Name 5 plants that will naturally boost your Vitamin C intake and find the fruit in the Mother Orchards.

- The plants high in Vitamin C can be found with the Forager Hunt activity marked with an asterisk.



When back in the classroom investigate the vitamin C content of shop bought citrus fruits with freshly harvested wild berries and fruits and discuss.



Cyllidwyd y prosiect hwn drwy Cymunedau Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru - Rhaglen Datblygu Gwledig Cymru 2014-2020, a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru a'r Gronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig.

This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

Produced in collaboration with

