

Bringing people, wildlife and wellbeing together

Nature Thoughts...

I was just reminiscing the other day on how I used to really enjoy walking and mountain climbing. I was much younger then! I managed to climb both Snowdon (1085 metres) tallest mountain in Wales and Ben Nevis (1345metres) tallest in Scotland not on the same day I have to say!

I was reflecting on how amazing mountains are. Mountains are formed over millions and millions of years, when the Earth's crust (tectonic plates) is pushed up or forced up or down in blocks or where volcanic activity erupts through the earth's crust. I am not a geologist but I am sure that rock formation must be fascinating.

Both mountains I climbed had amazing views once I got to the top. I prepared beforehand, making sure I had the proper walking boots, clothing (layers) as the weather can easily change on the way up, water and food. Having friends along with me for the climb was good as we could share the experience and support and look out for each other on the way.

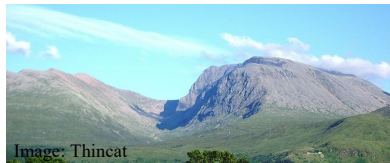
The journey up a mountain: Some parts are easy going with clear tracks, there will be lovely flowers and plants on the way; other sections are uneven, steep and hard going, maybe barren landscape. It can be misty and weather can change quite quickly. When it is misty and you cannot see where you are going you just have to trust your own instincts and keep going. Often you meet people on the way either going up or coming down. Those coming down often give you encouraging words like 'you can do it, not far now to the summit'. Sometimes we need to push ourselves to get to the summit.

I feel that life is sometimes like climbing a mountain. Sometimes life is easy and all is well. Sometimes it is very hard going, a steep upward path. It feels like two steps forward and one step back. Life can feel like a barren landscape. It is good to have friends to share experiences with as they may be able help when the load that we carry makes life difficult. The main thing is to try and keep going because you WILL get to the top and the view will be amazing. All will be worth it.

This strange time we are all in will come to an end.

Stay safe and keep going,

Man Lan



Read of the Week... "The Girl Who Climbed Everest" by Bonita Norris.

"Everyday on Manaslu would seem like the hardest day of my life.—but then the next day would be even harder... I thought I was a pretty good climber but Manaslu showed me I wasn't. I could never have imagined the depths of physical and mental endurance I would have to go through..."

"Every day I wanted to give up... There were times when I'd shut my eyes and pray I was back at home. Then I'd open them to find towers of ice soaring above me, the wind blasting my cheeks red raw, knowing there were still many hours of climbing before the solace of a tent... I was a million miles away from home. That realization was almost too much to bear.

I have never been so terrified or so broken... I told myself I wasn't cut out for being a mountaineer. I swore I'd never go near another mountain. And yet here I am, this time on Everest, feeling the exact same way... Why didn't I learn my lesson?

The reason I'm here, on Everest, is because of just one moment on Manaslu. After pushing through the hardest day of climbing, we finally escaped the shadows and found ourselves high above the clouds. Up here on the open summit fields, I finally felt I could relax. With the sun shining and the deep blue sky interrupted only by miles of white Himalayan peaks... I found myself climbing alone, my teammates all ahead of me. I felt as though I had the whole of the Himalayas to myself.

I hurried on, not wanting to get left behind. My feet crunched on the hard snow, my breathing strained from the lack of oxygen. I tried to focus and find a rhythm. Suddenly, a gust of wind whipped around me and blew a layer of ice crystals high into the air. I found myself surrounded by billions of tiny shards of ice dancing in the sunlight. As they fell back to Earth, they glittered like fairy dust. I swear I could hear them tingling with energy.

Walking across those crystals was like being bathed in magic. A smile broke out across my cheeks. A feeling of pure joy rose in my chest. My spirit soared. I was so glad I hadn't given up when I wanted to most. I was so glad I had the courage to leave the comforts of home and fight my way up this mountain, because, if I hadn't, I would never have seen something as rare and as beautiful as this. I would never have felt those crystals melt upon my cheeks, and felt as though somehow the mountain was trying to tell me that everything was going to be ok.

In that moment I think I came alive. I left behind my anxious teenage self and became a woman and a mountaineer. I realised that I was far more capable than I first thought, and that, just when I'd wanted to give up, I'd had so much more to give. I saw the amazing things that happen when we step outside our comfort zones.

WILD-WORDSEARCH!

Wildlife of the Galapagos

- Darwin's Finch
- Frigatebird
- Ghost Crab
- Giant Tortoise
- Golden Ray
- Green Turtle
- Lava Gull
- Lava Heron
- Lava Lizard
- Mangrove Finch
- Marine Iguana
- Nazca Booby
- Red Bat
- Waved Albatross

Image: DC_COLOMBIA/GETTY IMAGES

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F	H	S	G	B	Y	U	A	N	L	C	T	E	H	D
E	S	I	O	T	R	O	T	T	N	A	I	G	E	V
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Extra challenge... Find the two hidden words that hint at next week's theme!

"The moment one gives closer attention to anything, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself."
Henry Miller

Name It!

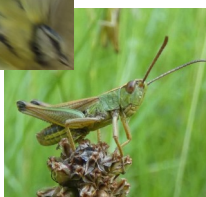
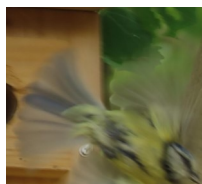
Can you identify the wildlife in the photos...



Issue 14 answers...

Name It!

1. blue tit
2. meadow grasshopper
3. common mullein (Verbascum thapsus)



Missing Links...

- Lightning-hole: **bolt**
- Raised-room: **bed**
- Rain-cloud: **storm**
- Fox-box: **glove**
- Fish-life: **pond**
- Snow-kind: **man**

Missing Links...

Your task is to find the missing word that follows the first clue and precedes the second. For example, the answer to Rain-String could be 'Bow' giving Rainbow and Bowstring.

Cow-Shod

Fly-Time

Ant-Side

Flower-Pack

Stem-Snap

Red-Mark

Answers next week!

You can also follow TEaM on social media for a Daily Dose of Nature...



The Environment and Me



theenvironmentandme



TheEnviroandMe

NATNAV

DOWN TOWN

You might be forgiven for thinking that NatNav has no place in the city but this is not so. Finding urban clues to compass direction just needs us to look at the built landscape with the same level of interest with which we look at the natural environment.



Satellite dishes pointing south-east.

For example, when we are walking down a terraced street where houses have visible satellite dishes we can see that they are all pointing in the much same direction. In the UK this direction is normally towards the south-east whilst tennis courts are usually laid out on a north-south axis to prevent glare for the players.

In addition, the weathering of buildings can help us too. In the UK the prevailing wind (the direction the wind blows from most often) is from the south-west. If we look at buildings, the exterior paint, render or brick may be more weathered on one side than another (peeling paint for example). This is best observed on buildings that are in an exposed location or on high rise structures and will indicate a south-westerly direction.

Spiders can also help us (especially in the autumn). Building a web is a time-consuming process and spiders have learned that if they build a web in a position that is exposed to the wind it may become damaged. As a consequence, they usually construct them in more sheltered areas, typically in the leeward side of a building or hedge. In the UK, where the prevailing wind is from the south-west, this means webs are mostly located on the north-eastern side of an obstruction.



Cobwebs on a fence on the north-north-east side of a house.



Image: mapmarketing.com

When we combine more than one observation we can begin to see a pattern which can help us define the points of the compass as we only need one direction in order to discern the rest.

Remember, you can always use a simple compass or 'compass app' on your phone to check your findings.

THE COLLECTIVE QUIZ!

Fill in the missing spaces to discover the wildlife collective noun phrases...

Next time you're cursing those midges in the garden, you'll know exactly what to call the lot of them...

Check out this '*****' of baby garden spiders Martin found on his rain harvesting water butt!



A f _ _ _ _ er of butterflies

An _ rm _ of ants

A _ _ _ rm of bees

A gl _ _ _ _ r of glow-worms

A n _ _ _ _ ing of gnats

A b _ _ e of midges

A cl _ _ t _ _ of spiders

Issue 14 answers...

A paddling of ducks

A whoop of Gorillas

A party of Jays

A cartload of Monkeys

A bind of Salmon

A knot of snakes

A wedge of swans

How many did you get?

Your nature poetry...

Lockdown been hard
I'm not gonna lie
Some days near the start,
I could just sit and cry

Before I was out
And my dog was sad
But these last few months are the
Best we've ever had

As time went by
I could see much more
We now have a bond even
Stronger than before

Two lives have changed
In a very special way
For my dog I am thankful
Every single day

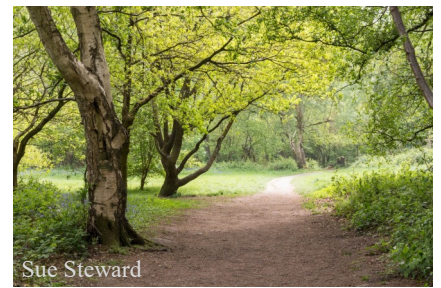
A dog doesn't care
If you're rich or poor
Just love them and feed them
And they'll give you much more

They give you their heart
And don't notice your flaws
I thought angels had wings
But now I know they have paws

*By Becky Taylor about Toffee
(aka Ebola)*



Becky Taylor



Sue Steward

Woods are calm,
mean no harm.
They could be loud,
they could be louder than a crowd.
The leaves rustle,
no need to hustle,
In the calm wood.

Butterflies pass
Near the lush green grass
Frogs jump
The tree fruits plump
No camels with humps
In the nature of the wood.

By N. Reay

Feature Species!!

Common Pigeon or Posh Pigeon?!

Rock Dove - feral (Columba linia)

Conservation status UK	Green
Length	31-34cm
Wingspan	63-70cm
Weight	230-370g
Population UK	550,000 pairs
Food	Seed, cereals
Habitat	Farmland, urban, suburban, marine + intertidal



Saharima Roemisch

Stock Dove (Columba oenas)

Conservation status UK	Amber
Length	30-33cm
Wingspan	60-66cm
Weight	290-330g
Population UK	260,000 territories
Food	Seeds
Habitat	Woodland, farmland, urban, suburban



Dan Loveard

Wood Pigeon (Columba palumbus)

Conservation status UK	Green
Length	40-42cm
Wingspan	75-80cm
Weight	480-550g
Population UK	5,400,000 pairs
Food	Crops, seeds, grain, berries
Habitat	Woodland, farmland, urban, suburban, grassland



Hilary White

Collared Dove (Streptopelia decaocto)

Conservation status UK	Green
Length	32cm
Wingspan	51cm
Weight	200g
Population UK	990,000 pairs
Food	Seeds, grain, buds, shoots
Habitat	Farmland, urban, suburban



Hilary White



**Stay
safe**

