

Human (&) Nature:



A zine on human and nature
friendly growing

Growing Together

Published
7 June 2023

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Introduction

Ecological emergencies have been declared across the West of England region, highlighting the urgent need for action to support pollinators and wider nature regeneration.

In May 2023, a small group of community growers in the Bristol region came together to connect, share insights and celebrate growing that is friendly for Human & Nature.

The Human (&) Nature: Growing Together project was coordinated by Bristol Green Capital Partnership and funded by the West of England Combined Authority's Community Pollinator Fund, as part of the Natural History Consortium's People for Pollinators project.

- www.bristolgreencapital.org
- www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/bee-and-pollinator-capital/community-pollinator-fund
- www.bnhc.org.uk/people-for-pollinators

Contributors

Amrish Pandya (He/Him)
Bristol Rainforest

With an interest in growing rainforest trees and teaching children, Amrish co-founded Bristol Rainforest with a mission to put trees in classrooms all over the city. He is also passionate about changing attitudes to food for positive environmental impact.

www.thebristolrainforest.org

Elsie Harp (She/Her)
Divina Botanica

Elsie is a Florist, Folk Herbalist and qualified Mental Health Practitioner, growing flowers and medicinal herbs at Bridge Farm. Interested in the many ways connecting to nature can support wellbeing, Elsie has over 15 years' experience working with herbs and flowers.

www.divinabotanica.com

Eric Swithinbank (He/Him)
Avon Wildlife Trust

Eric is a Community Ecologist at Avon Wildlife Trust with experience as a Nature Ranger in the South West of England. Eric is fascinated by people's relationships with nature, working with Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust and Ambition Lawrence Weston on their community climate action plans to facilitate their communities to take action for nature.

www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk

Priya Sheth (She/Her)
Bristol Rainforest

Priya is Treasurer of Bristol Rainforest and runs a chocolate business, with an interest in natural foods.



www.filtontowncouncil.gov.uk/communitygarden
www.facebook.com/FiltonCommunityGarden

Sara Venn (She/Her)
Edible Bristol

A food, social and gardening activist, Sara founded Incredible Edible Bristol in 2014 which supports communities to create gardens that become community assets in lost and unloved spaces across Bristol. With 20 years' experience in the horticulture industry, Sara is also chair of Bristol Food Producers and teaches ecologically friendly gardening and growing.

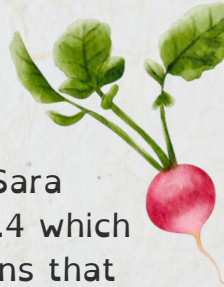
www.ediblebristol.org.uk

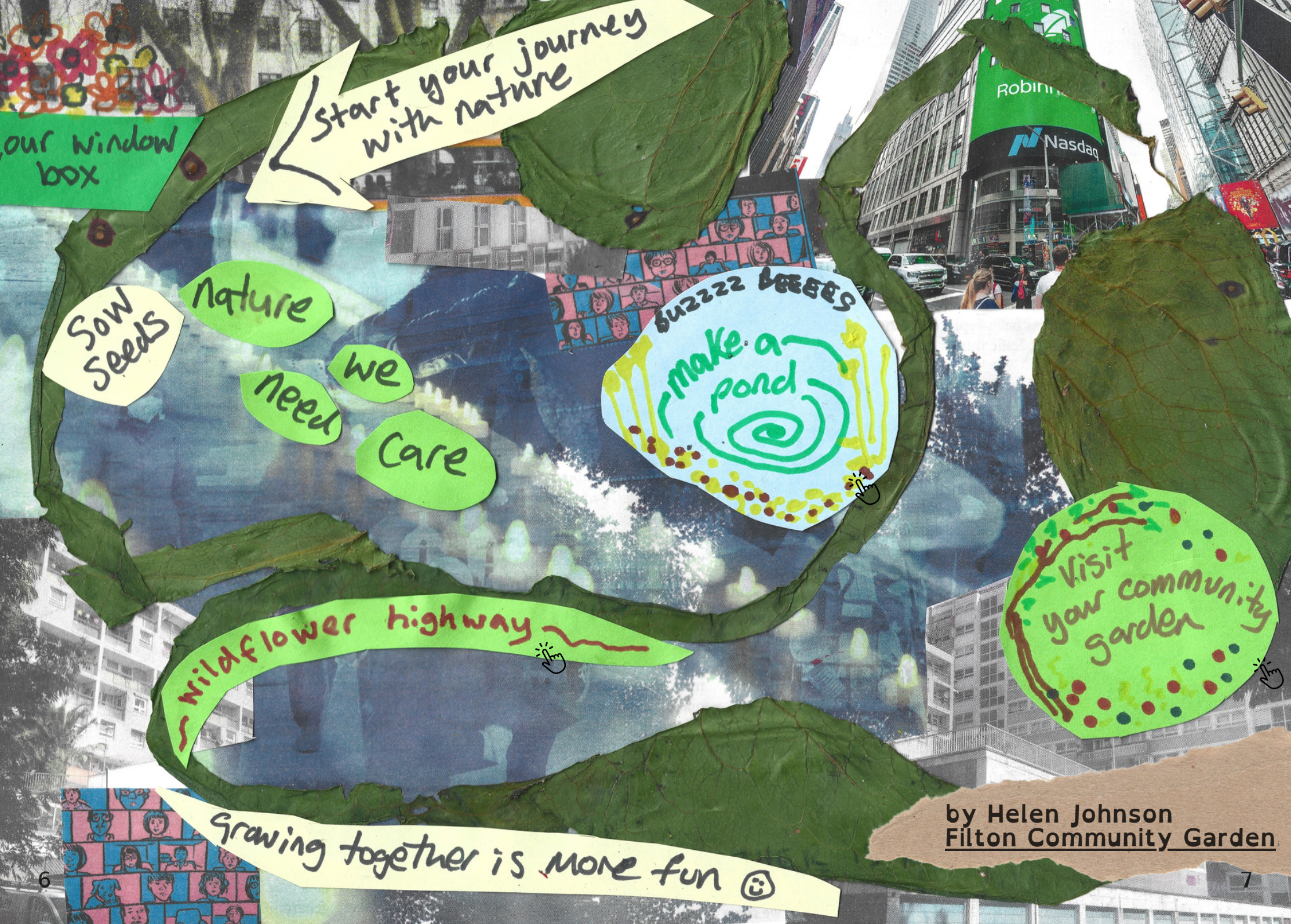
Sophia Foster (She/Her)
The Haven

Sophia is a project development worker at the Haven community garden.

www.havenlandcommunity.org.uk

Helen Johnson (She/Her)
Filton Community Garden
Helen has been Chair of Filton Community Garden for 2 years, with interests in community, getting people engaged in gardening and having a space which is free for anyone to work in and enjoy.





our window box

Start your journey with nature

Sow Seeds

Nature

we need

Care

buzzzz bees
make a pond

wildflower highway

Visit your community garden

Growing together is more fun ☺

by Helen Johnson
Filton Community Garden

GROWING WITHOUT A GARDEN

GROWING A FOREST OF MY OWN

ONE DAY I
ATE A STRANGE,
BEAUTIFUL
FRUIT...

... AND GREW ITS TINY SEED ...

THEN I WAITED... AND WAITED... AND WAITED

THEN ONE DAY WHEN I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN
SOMETHING CAME UP!
IT GREW...

... AND GREW ...

... AND GOT BIGGER...

... THEN I GREW ANOTHER... AND ANOTHER

NOW I HAVE A FOREST OF MY OWN



www.TheBristolRainforest.org
TREES IN EVERY CLASSROOM
GROWING VEGETABLES IN EVERY PLAYGROUND

by Amrish Pandya

Growing without a garden: getting started

plastic bottles & cartons



tyres

cans



boots

old pair of jeans



How to make a high rise herb planter



by Dee Moxon

The perfect plant-pot match

Use a container that will give enough room for your plant's roots to grow.

As a rule of thumb, the roots of plants are about the same size as the height and width of the plant.



Let the water flow

Make sure there are drainage holes in the bottom of your container for water to drain so your plant does not get over watered.



Better together


Putting your containers together gives them some protection from weather damage such as wind and extreme temperatures



Growing reasons for containers

Growing plants in containers is also great for:

- Tender plants that need moving for the colder months
- Plants that are not suited to the soil in your green space
- Plants that spread (e.g. mint) to keep under control

 Check out Thrive's guide on container gardening: www.thrive.org.uk/get-gardening/container-gardening

a community land project set up by and for people with lived experience of addiction, mental health matters and life trauma who identify a need to build community and support networks outside of services.



The **PURPOSE** of the Haven is to enhance wellbeing and improve recovery through connection to nature, ourselves and others.
We offer access and opportunities to engage in healthy sustainable living and creative activities as well as offering the time and physical environment to relax and socialize.

Our **VISION** is a co-creative grassroots space for transformative experiences in relationship with nature. Finding personal growth and collective wellbeing through shared purpose and belonging.



Tuesday and Friday 11am until 3pm -
They function as a peer-led drop-in.
Please contact us via our website at
havenlandcommunity.org.uk
or you can email us at
haven.land.community@gmail.com

Black Girls in Nature by Elsie Harp

We are nature. Our skin, our hair, mirrored in the world around us.

CAN YOU SEE YOURSELF IN NATURE?

Activity → Look out the window or take yourself to a green space. Look for shapes, colours and silhouettes that match yours.

* This activity came to me when I woke up one morning with "morning hair" I noticed how my 4C hair looked like a windswept tree, and from that day noticed how much trees look like afros.

A relationship to Nature, our all giving Sustaining Mother, is readily available to us. As a black woman, what keeps me anchored deep within myself is knowing that I belong to the Earth.

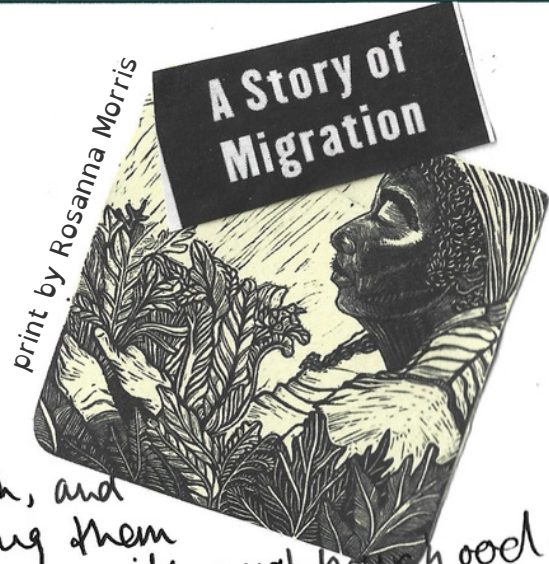
BE LIKE THE DANDELION

The dandelion has a deep deep tap root, that reaches deep into the Earth, and pulls up nutrients, making them available to other plants in its neighbourhood. The humble dandelion is socialist.

DANDELION IS MEDICINE

Dandelion supports liver functioning. The liver cleans our blood, and acts as a sorting station, breaking down nutrients taking and leaving what is necessary. A healthy live means a healthy BodyMind.

Liberatory Education 101



print by Rosanna Morris

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Alternatives to pesticides

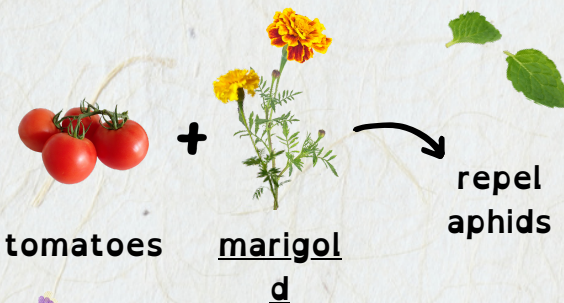
Physical Barriers

To stop gastropods (small invertebrates that crawl on their body e.g. snails and slugs) eating your plants you can use:

- copper wire / tape
- eggshells
- wool (it makes good mulch too!)

Companion planting

Grow certain plants together so they can help each other out. Companion plants can encourage healthier growth, pollination and repel pests. Some plants create fragrances or compounds that deter pests for example:



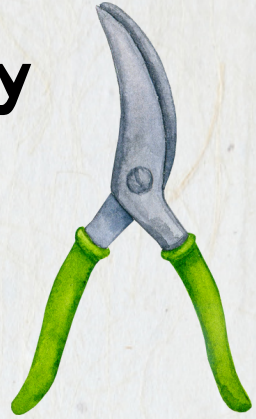
Nasturtiums
Act as sacrificial plants for brassicas such as cabbage, kale and broccoli, by attracting aphids, cabbage white butterflies and caterpillars



How to access gardening tools freely or cheaply

Library of Things, where you can borrow items including gardening tools and equipment

www.sharebristol.org.uk



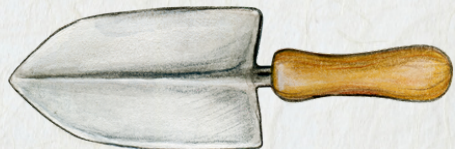
Online platforms for people to give away items they no longer need for free, such as

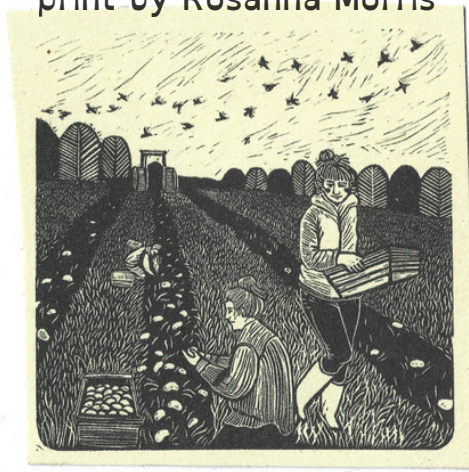
Freecycle

www.freecycle.org

Ask friends or neighbours to borrow tools (and maybe offer them a plant, some seeds or produce that you grow in return)

Buy / Sell / Trade groups on Gumtree, Nextdoor, Facebook





Growing Food
Growing Communities
Growing Connections

Bristol
An ancient and modern city, lively, contemporary and keeping up with fashion, but deeply rooted in history. It grew up around its harbour on the River Avon and as a result the city became a flourishing commercial port from the 10th century onwards. As a mark of its importance it was made a county in its own right in 1323, and after John Cabot's sail in 1497 from Bristol to North America, Newfoundland and the North Atlantic year before Columbus' it became known throughout the world. Here, too, was founded in 1552 the Society of Merchant Venturers, who did so much to lay the prosperous foundations of the Empire.

Community and gardens
support local food economies,
local livelihoods and
productive use of
local land.

SAVE
SOIL

It's easier to ask for
forgiveness
than
permission

@ edible bristol

by Sara Venn

Hopeful
and too small
for fast and change

Edible plants
or seeds?



BUSINESS AS USUAL
HAS LED US INTO
THIS MESS; WE
NEED SOMETHING
RADICALLY DIFFERENT
TO LEAD US OUT.

Food Justice supports
grassroots change.
Food Justice = Social Justice = Climate
Justice.

91 Languages spoken
91 Food Cultures
91 Communities to
connect.

LOOK UP!
STOP SCROLLING!

CONNECT
CONNECT
CONNECT.

MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH.

JOIN US!

www.ediblebristol.org.uk.
@ediblebristol.

GET GROWING.

THERE IS NO
PLANET **B**
WE ONLY HAVE
ONE EARTH

Growing Soil
Building habitats.
Feeding
people.



Growing futures
on lost and unlabeled
urban land.





Beetles

(Insects with hardened wings and most have a mouthpart called a mandible to hold or bite food)

There are 4,000+ beetle species in the UK, including ladybirds and glow-worms!



Beetles have different roles in the ecosystem, including pollinators, pest controllers, decomposers.



Easy ways to help beetles

Let grass grow long and hold off cutting back plants until late winter - long grasses and dead plant stems provide habitat and attract beetles.

Dead wood and leaves also provide homes for beetles and other insects.

 Visit [Wild About Gardens'](#) [guide](#) on bringing back beetles for more balance and biodiversity in your growing space.



Birds



Birds can support our growing spaces by eating slugs and insects such as aphids which can damage our plants. As well as pest control, they can help with pollination, spreading seed and weed control.


They also create an enjoyable environment with their colourful plumage and soothing birdsongs.

Easy ways to help birds

Place a shallow container of fresh water outside for birds to drink and bathe. Keep the water clean and change it regularly and add rocks for birds to perch on whilst they enjoy the water.

Leave out dry grass and plant stems, straw, twigs, leaves, cotton or wool for birds to build their nests with.

Nettles, once dry and pliable, are also a valuable source of nesting materials.

 Learn how you can help birds on the RSPB website:

www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice





Upskilling and Educating



Facilitating Proactive Communities



Urban Nature Reserves



Food Security



Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust



Community Climate Action

Wild Mile

We are aiming to create as much wildflower meadow habitat across Lockleaze as possible and we need your help! All you need to do is not mow an area of your lawn and let the weeds grow! Even better you can plant or sow native wildflowers to increase diversity

Any space counts! Whether it's an area of your garden or an old welly boot - it all helps pollinators such as butterflies and bees



Scan the QR code to upload the amount of wildflower meadow you have created. This will be mapped out to see how big and connected our Wild Mile is across Lockleaze. Alternatively use this link: <https://forms.gle/EpwHreVVfXpmx48k9>

Feel free to email Eric at ecologist@lockleazent.co.uk for advice on creating native wildflower areas and also free seed packets!



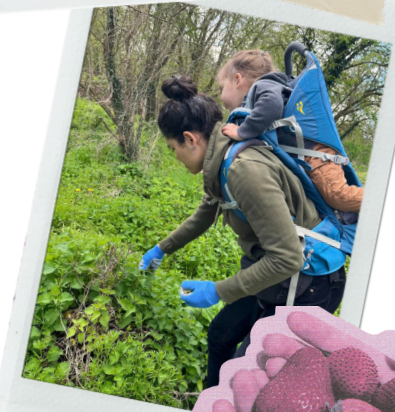
Consultation, Communication, Communal Action



Flourishing Wildlife



Equal Access & Opportunities



by Eric Swithinbank



Grow, Cook and Eat
Lawrence Weston



Smile!

AWARENESS

fix it

OBJECT
EARTH

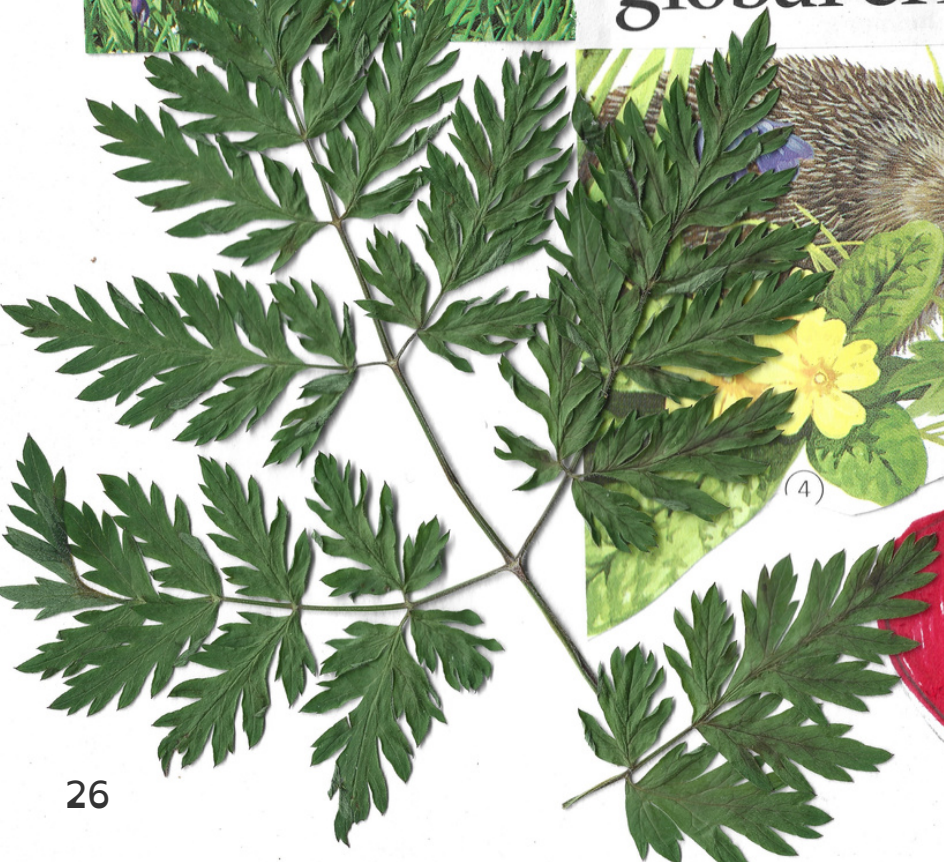
global crisis

by Priya Sheth

This project has received
Union's Horizon 2020
programme under

Paradise

Global
Justice



Notes

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following:

- Amrish Pandya, Elsie Harp, Eric Swithinbank, Helen Johnson, Priya Sheth, Sara Venn and Sophia Foster for their input, participation and contributions to Human (&) Nature: Growing Together.
- Tay Aziz for her input into the project.
- Sophia Foster and The Haven for hosting the project workshop.
- Clara Fung, Bristol Green Capital Partnership for coordinating the project and zine.
- Natural History Consortium and West of England Combined Authority for funding the project.



Filton
Community
Garden



Coordinated by



Part of
Natural History Consortium's
People for Pollinators project



Funded by
West of England
Combined
Authority



