



Learning through nature; a new approach to education in the UK?

Every now and then it's essential to pause and ask 'is there something else we could be doing'? Especially if what you're doing is not having the effect you'd like. Organisations need to be bold to take on such self-analysis as it is often all too easy to carry on with what you know you're good at, and with what is familiar and comfortable.

The Wildlife Trusts were bold enough to do this around 2006 with the realisation, before all other nature conservation organisations and long before government, that a focus just on our nature reserves was going to fail to restore wildlife to our cities and countryside. Something else was needed. Along came an evolution from site based conservation to landscape scale working – Living Landscapes was born.

Just as big a challenge is our children's relationship with nature. The Wildlife Trusts have again been bold and realised that our amazing education work is not having the effect we would like. Something else is needed. Our response is an evolution from treating nature and wildlife as a special, one-off treat within a child's education to using it as the medium through which pupils learn all academic subjects. The Wildlife Trusts are seeking permission to open their own primary schools where children will learn with, through, and about the natural world. Nature Schools will be born (see page 4 and 5).

I am very proud that Warwickshire Wildlife Trust is leading this collective effort, but even more proud of the Wildlife Trusts for being bold enough to embark on this course. This is not say that we are abandoning our established classrooms and partnerships with local schools, any more than we abandoned our nature reserves when recognising the need to work across landscapes. They will remain as exemplars for our vision for society, and as such will be the special focus of the Spring edition of Wild Warwickshire.

Thank you as ever for your continued support.

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Ed Green



Outdoor spaces can help improve a child's academic achievements
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Nature and the outdoors can be much more than a one-off treat during weekends and school holidays
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Ed Green
Chief Executive
☎ 024 7630 2912