


Green Health

Autumn



As the days shorten, the shadows lengthen and sunbeams bounce and sparkle, enhancing the contrast between life and decay this season. In the canopy above us sunlight enhances the colour changes in the final weeks of leaf. Enjoy walking through a carpet of leaves this season as they return life-giving nutrients to the soil.

September

Green Health
South Ayrshire

1. Ayrshire Attraction

The Gentle Joy of Auchincruive



Auchincruive



2. Doorstep Nature

Charting the Seasonal Changes of September



It feels like you aren't alone during this walk. At your shoulder the flickering tree leaves, glistening water and sparkling sunlight combine like a friendly conversation, distracting your mind to think of little else beyond the present moment. This is the joy water brings, a gentle insistence to look and listen, which effortlessly demands your attention, enhancing your self esteem and mood more than green space alone.

A 1.7 km / 1 mile there and back again walk through 19th century ornamental woodland alongside the River Ayr. Enter the Auchincruive estate through the small iron gate and follow the path down to the riverside past majestic ancient oak trees. The path continues below the hanging gardens, (a tall wall constructed as a three tiered terraced around 1840) and through mixed woodland with tree species from around the world. Gaze over the contrasting river conditions: the steady pool before a rocky outcrop disrupts the calm into a bubbling torrent of water


3.

Eco Kids

Send Secret Mycelium Messages



The rocky outcrop is an igneous dyke formed from volcanic lava squeezing through a gap in the ground. After the natural weir, a large gate encourages you to enter the gardens and take refreshments at the café before returning the same way back to the start.



Doorstep Nature 2.

September is a month of extremes and changes: one moment the sun is splitting the sky and warming your cheeks, the next you're huddling from a sharp northerly wind.

Chart these changes by noticing and recording specific natural phenomena.

Return to a particular spot or view regularly throughout the month and choose your favourite way to record its state.

Techniques to try...

- Divide an A4 sheet of paper into four boxes and draw the silhouette of the same tree, once per week in each box.
- Maybe you could write one or two words that describe the day's feeling.
- Or perhaps you could write down the first thing you notice about the day outside.



Word of the Month

Psithurism⁽ⁿ⁾

The whispering language of trees as the wind rustles their leaves.

What secrets are they saying?

3. Eco Kids



As humans, there are lots of ways we can let others know how we feel or what we think: talking and writing; drawing and sculpting; facial expressions and body language.

**But what about plants?
How do they communicate?**

The roots of trees are connected together by fungal filaments (the underground rootlike fibres of mushrooms called mycelium). These filaments carry messages between trees, sending information about droughts, disease, and insect attacks so that the neighbouring trees can change their behaviour to survive.



Let's pretend to be trees...

Imagine our bodies are the trunks and our arms and legs are the roots extending down into the ground. This game is like Chinese Whispers where the message is sent through your hands to your neighbour.

Stand in a circle holding hands with a group of friends. One person in the circle decides on a message to send: choose a rhythm of hand squeezes, keeping it simple the first time. For example, three squeezes on the left hand. The left-hand neighbour passes this message to the person on their left hand side, squeezing their hand three times.

Can you pass the message all the way back to the person who started?

Is it still the same message?
If you were trees, what message would you be sending?



Anaëll Lee
Oceanside Drive
South Argyle

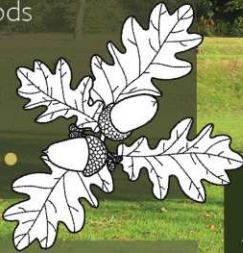
October

Green Health
South Ayrshire

Ayrshire Attraction

Visit the Colourful Magic of Fullarton Woods

1.



Doorstep Nature

Watch the Rhythm and Patterns of the Wild Winds

2.



Eco Kids

3.

Create a Natural Art Gallery



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Fullarton Woods

Delve into this ancient woodland where with each corner you'll find autumnal shades, colourful fungi or wooden sculptures. Look out for signs of the Fullarton residents: nibbled pines cones from squirrels and holes in tree trunks from great spotted woodpeckers and the *'pweet, pweet pweet'* call of the nuthatch.

On sunny days, golden sunlight sprinkles like fairy dust through the canopy and leaves dance like they are enchanted. If you can catch a leaf, can you identify it?



Some might think magic rules over these woods but the truth is the grounds maintenance team and rangers from South Ayrshire Council care for the site along with Friends of Fullarton Woods and Scottish Wildlife Trust. Their dedication to maintaining the woodland for visitors and wildlife has resulted in the site being awarded Green Flag status.

From the car park beside the play park, toilets and picnic benches there are multiple paths leading from open parkland into denser woodland.

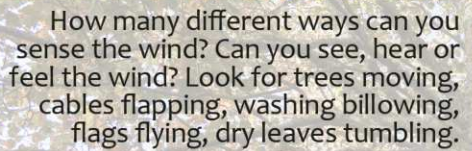
A tarmac track forms a spine through the centre of the woodland meeting residential streets in Troon at the far end.

A network of paths of varying sizes and conditions crisscross the woodland encompassing mature Scots Pine, Oak, Birch, Sycamore and Norway Maple trees alongside newly planted saplings.





The leaves are now swirling and dancing in an Autumn party where the wind determines the music.



How many different ways can you sense the wind? Can you see, hear or feel the wind? Look for trees moving, cables flapping, washing billowing, flags flying, dry leaves tumbling.

Can you tell which way the wind is blowing just by looking? What does the wind sound like? How does it feel if it comes from the North or the South?

Doorstep 2. Nature

Word
of the
Month

Tree Leaf
Senescence (n)

Shedding of the old to ensure life flourishes again.

In preparation for winter, deciduous trees stop photosynthesising and producing food, resulting in leaf colour changes, the reabsorption of sugars and nutrients from the leaves and eventually leaf drop.



Eco Kids
3.

Let's take advantage of the leaves and sticks the trees are discarding!

We can use the multicoloured natural debris to get creative. Why not produce a portrait with some natural finds. Arrange fallen sticks, leaves, bark, grass cuttings etc to form your picture, using the ground as the gallery walls.

Can you make your portrait look happy, then angry, then shocked, then sad?

November

+ Green Health
South Ayrshire

1. Ayrshire Attraction

Explore the
Tranquil
Dalquharran
Estate



Dalquharran

1. This month's Ayrshire Attraction is the Dalquharran Estate in Dailly.



DOGS WELCOME



ACCESSIBLE PATHWAYS

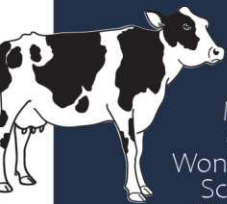


TRANSPORT LINKS



PARKING ON-SITE

2. Doorstep Nature



Myths
of the
Wonderful
Scottish
Weather

This accessible ancient estate is steeped in history, wildlife and walks and the short loop of surfaced path along the riverside is perfect for an afternoon stroll. Plus, there are plenty of opportunities to stretch your legs further by extending your walk along one of the many connected longer routes.

The mix of deciduous and evergreen trees bring a variety of colours as the final leaves fall. Listen for the crackling and snapping of beech nuts underfoot and for the plaintive winter song of the Robin.



BEECH LEAF AND NUT

Peering out from the trees ahead is the impressive ruin of Old Dalquharran Castle. A traditional tower house built almost 600 years ago, it was abandoned in the 1790's when the more fashionably and comfortably commissioned new castle was designed by Robert Adam (of Culzean fame).

3. Eco Kids

Design your
Tree Stump
Triumph!



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This short loop turns right at Old Dalquharran Castle and returns with the river closer on your left hand side. This path offers the perfect opportunity to be mesmerised by the ripples, bubbles and tranquil soundtrack of the Water of Girvan.

Dalquharran Estate
Main St, Dailly,
KA26 9SB
1.6km / 1mile



Starting at the playing fields opposite Dailly Primary School, find the path on the left hand side and follow it round to the right along the river. Cross the footbridge and continue to walk upstream through the woodland.

2. In the West of Scotland, we are lucky to enjoy a variety of weathers - *sometimes all in one day!*

We are a nation of weather watchers eager to seek out the drier days, and there are many myths about foretelling rain, but how many of them are true?

"Rain before seven, fine by eleven"

Usually our rain clouds are pushed along fairly quickly by the wind. Four hours is often enough time for the rain to have stopped.

✓ TRUE



"Frogs sing for the rain"

✓ TRUE

The humidity increases just before it rains, so frogs are happy to hop out the pond and croak a little chorus.

Despite the prevalence of the myth, cows do not choose to lie down before it rains!



✗ FALSE

Doorstep Nature

"A ring around the Moon, rain is coming soon"

✓ TRUE

Ice crystals around the moon give it a glowing ring indicating there is a change of weather ahead, most likely rain.

The best way to predict the likelihood of rain is to assess the clouds!

Thick Blanket Stratus Clouds



Towering Cumulonimbus Cloud

Did you know? Only two types of clouds drop rain all the way down to our heads.

? What clouds are forming above you today?
Can you spot any other clues to predict the weather?

What will you put on top of your tree stump?



Next up, a challenge for the Green Health Kids!

When next on a woodland walk, look out for a tree stump. How many different uses can you think of?

- A dancefloor for a weasel family?
- A look-out post for an ant?
- A table for a squirrel's meal?
- Or perhaps a plinth for an important artwork?

Search the woodland for nature's treasures & create your own Tree Stump Triumph!

Eco Kids 3.



Word of the Month

Pluviophile
(n) a lover of rain; someone who finds joy and peace of mind during rainy days.

What is Green Health?



Green Health is about supporting a healthy lifestyle by integrating nature into your day. Simple activities connecting you with nature on your doorstep can benefit your mental and physical wellbeing.

Inside this booklet you'll find seasonal suggestions to refresh tiring spirits, brighten grey days and help you build nature connections into your life. Every month, there's something for the young and the young-at-heart - a location to visit in South Ayrshire, a home-based activity and a fresh way for families to play outdoors.

Remember to be prepared for changeable weather. Pack a waterproof jacket to keep you warm and dry, and wear comfortable boots with good tread to keep your feet stable on uneven paths. Don't forget sun protection to keep the rays off your skin and the glare out of your eyes.

*Feel healthier for free,
add nature into your day!*

www.greenhealthsa.org.uk

