

## Green Green Grass of May 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012

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Discovering Our Countryside provides a clear, interesting and informative picture of the important role of agriculture and rural affairs in the lives of pupils from an early age, the films and commentaries have been developed specifically to enhance the work that you are doing in your own classrooms.

These are the scripts and associated teaching links and notes for the program of 7 May 2012.

### Teaching links.

Below are this program's specific links to:

- National Curriculum
- The 9 Eco School topics.
- National Government initiatives:
  - Healthy Schools
  - Sustainable Schools
  - Every Child Matters
  - Learning Outside the Classroom
- Thinking Skills.

*Note on National Curriculum links*

*The National Curriculum subjects and the units from the QCA schemes of work. (Rather than list each specific National Curriculum objective we have simply listed the QCA Units as these are already linked to the National Curriculum and are generally what schools reference when planning work.)*

These will allow you to easily link each program into your existing work.

The programs can also be used to promote interaction by children in pairs and groups, circle time or class discussion, encouraging learning through discussion and interaction

Discovering Our Countryside is a modular approach to rural affairs - we hope you and your pupils will look forward to each new episode as it paints the picture of the rural environment and it's seasonality.

Specific links for this weeks program sections:

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### Details of this program

This program looks at lambs and calves outside at last, tomatoes being picked and busy spring birds.

- **Grass at Last** – We revisit the lambs we saw turned out after lambing and learn some tragic news. We see our calves getting their first taste of fresh grass
- **Ripe Tomatoes** – The tomatoes we saw planted, sorted by robots, pollinated by bees are finally picked and sorted ready for you to enjoy in the shops.
- **Busy Birds** – Lots of spring activity to look out for, birds building nests, singing and new chicks.

These sections can also be found on the relevant topic page, which over the weeks will build up the seasonality picture for each of the main themes: Crops / Arable; Livestock; Wildlife and the Countryside

Discovering Our Countryside - Teachers Notes

**NATIONAL CURRICULUM SUBJECTS LINKS.****Citizenship KS 1 + 2**

E.g. Shows how farmers look after animals after they have given birth, how they must protect their health and planning for next years offspring

*Relevant QCA Schemes of Work*

Unit 3 Animals and Us

**Design and Technology KS 1 + 2**

Looks how farmers use modern technology to grow crops and provide fresh 5-a-day produce

*Relevant QCA Schemes of Work*

Unit 1c Eat More Fruit and Vegetables

**Science KS 1 + 2**

The videos have lots of science links to the units listed below for example:

Shows the start of plants life cycles and what parts of a plant we use and harvest.

Looks at how we can help bees so important to many of the plant food crops we rely on

Some of machinery could be used to discuss pushes and pulls.

*Relevant QCA Schemes of Work*

Unit 1B. Growing plants.

Unit 1E Pushes and Pulls.

Unit 2A Health and Grow.

Unit 2B Plants and Animals.

Unit 3B. Helping plants grow well.

Unit 4B Habitats.

Unit 5B. Life cycles.

Unit 6A Interdependence and adaptation.

These are just the links we thought of – please let us know if you make any more!

**ECO SCHOOL TOPIC LINKS**

With apologies if we are ‘teaching grandma to suck eggs’ here are some of our thoughts on how our videos link to the Eco School Topics

Showing pupils just which of their food products are grown in this country will give them important background knowledge when discussing transport, energy and global perspective of food production and the healthy living choices they make when they go to the shops.

- Energy
  - Growing food and the associated energy costs of buying home grown food or imported food
- Water
  - Use of water to grow plants

- Biodiversity
  - How growing a bee larder can help school, garden and local biodiversity
- School grounds
  - How the simple act of planting some wild flowers can help with the design and creation of new features in your school grounds
- Healthy living
  - How growing your own produce can promote healthy living by promoting a healthy diet and also promoting exercise in the act of growing that produce. The improvement of school ground can also aid mental well being.
- Transport
  - Reduce transport costs of food by growing your own local produce.
- Litter
  - When carrying out gardening tasks introduce children to tidy habits – pick up all packaging and dispose of ‘thoughtfully’ – see waste
  - When outside be it school, garden or countryside “Take only photos Leave only footprints!”
- Waste
  - Explain that gardening and farming is and always has been synonymous with recycling. Re-use seed trays, compost is made from last years ‘recycled’ plants. Think twice about where to put litter – bin or recycle?
- Global citizenship
  - Explain how even the little things we do – where how food comes from, how much we recycle, our biodiversity, can affect the whole world be it good or bad!

**TEACHERS NOTES:****MAY THE FOOD BE TASTY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2012 - SCRIPT****INTRO**

*Green, Yellow. Green and Yellow Red Green green grass of May*

*What's your favourite colour of May*

**GRASS AT LAST**

*The unusual snow we had in early April was a disaster for some sheep farmers - many lambs died in the snow before the farmer could save them...*

*The lambs you saw born are now doing well and enjoying the spring grass*

*The shepherd is giving the ewes some extra food this is because the ewe is producing lots of milk for her lambs*

*The cows we followed during calving are now also been turned out to grass*

*The farmer is already thinking about next years calves to make sure he improves the cows growth and the taste of their meat he carefully selects the cows for each field. Then he will mate these cows with a specially selected bull to get the type of calves he wants - fast growing and tasty meat!*

*The cows to go into the first field are being selected here*

*These 'cowboys' are very experienced but still careful when getting the cows out - they could easily get knocked down and injured.*

*Once the cows have been selected the their calves are identified and also taken out.*

*The cows are loaded on to a special cattle trailer*

*Before the calves are loaded they are dosed against Coccidiosis a parasite they can pick up when outside in fields - it gives them diarrhoea and can cause death*

*The calves are then loaded and taken to the field with their mothers*

*The cows are very happy to be out in the fields again and run around with joy as well as enjoying their first taste of fresh grass for months*

*Some calves have a taste too*

*Sheep and Cattle belong to a special group of animals called ruminants - what is special about them?*

*Answer next time...*

**Teachers notes:**

*Coccidiosis of Cattle*

*<http://www.merckvetmanual.com/mvm/index.jsp?cfile=htm/bc/21202.htm>*

**PICKING TOMATOES.**

*The tomatoes we have been following.... planted, sorted by robots, pollinated by bees...*

*Are now over 3 metres tall*

*The tomatoes are checked with this machine that checks their 'sweetness' once they are sweet enough they can be harvested*

*The tomatoes are picked then taken to be packed*

*In the packing shed the tomatoes are graded by size*

*then packed into boxes ready to go to the shops for you to buy and enjoy*

*Strawberries if needed*

### **BUSY BIRDS**

*The countryside is fantastic at this time of year - the verdant fresh green of new growth.*

*Flowers like cowslips*

*Ramsons or Wild Garlic - you can use these leaves in salads*

*Garlic Mustard or 'Jack-by-the-hedge' whose leaves you can also eat*

*Trees coming into leaf and flowering like this horse chestnut - will you be playing conkers in the Autumn?*

*Birds are now all busy breeding*

*Building nests like this wren under a small foot bridge - found by my nephew when he was looking for the TROLL!!*

*These house martins are collecting mud to build or repair their nests*

*Some birds nest on the ground - like this skylark*

*Have you heard it singing - it is difficult to see high in the sky*

*If you do see it watch as it stops singing then drops like a stone to the ground before running to its' nest*

*Many birds nest on the ground so you must be careful when out walking and also keep your dog on a lead*

*Even being careful we startled a pheasant off this nest.*

*If you do find a nest by accident - leave it alone and the bird will probably return and no harm has been done*

*Some birds have already got chicks - like these ducks, geese, moorhens*

*Enjoy your walks in the country and keep your eyes open....*

### **Teachers notes:**

*Jack by the Hedge*

*Jack-By-The-Hedge *Alliaria petiolata* is a common plant that can be found from countryside to the most built up of areas, often poking up through splits in pavements. It has crinkly, kidney shaped green leaves when young becoming more pointy with age. These leaves smell of garlic if lightly rubbed or crushed. As it starts life it appears to carpet the ground and as it ages it becomes quite tall and then produces small white flowers and seed pods, which all have the same garlic scent. As the plant ages further the scent gradually fades, until it is only just noticeable. Jack-by-the-hedge or Garlic Mustard as it is also known, then slowly withers away until the following year.*

*LEAVES – the leaves make ideal sandwich fillers, and if the leaves are finely chopped and mixed with a little olive oil, they make a refreshing and delicate salad dressing.*

*FLOWERS – the flower have a punchy flavour and can also be added to salads.*

*SEED PODS – for me the seed pods are best eaten as a wayside snack, and although have the same flavour as the rest of the plant, they won't make your breath smell as it would if you had eaten a clove of true garlic!*

*<http://www.naturessecretlarder.co.uk/wild-food-useful-plants/jack-by-the-hedge-alliaria-petiolata.htm>*

*Ramsons (Allium ursinum)*

*Ramsons (Allium ursinum) is a woodland-loving plant, which often frequent areas close to water. During the months of April through to June Ramsons, or Wild Garlic as it's more frequently named, carpets woodland floors with a fantastic display of white globe-like heads, which are formed of many smaller star-shaped flowers. One may say that it's a little too abundant to be a wild food, as when you find this species; the chances are there will be lots and lots of the stuff, often forming patches of several acres in size! But for the forager, this is a treat that is simply too good to pass up.*

*Ramsons Flowers*

*Wild garlic is probably among the easiest of all British wild foods to identify. Usually a simple intake of air is enough to know its located close by, and from then in, a simple crushed leaf will emit a pungent aroma of the familiar garlic bulbs which are bought in the shops – enough to aid identification alone in my opinion!*

*Another species which produces the garlic-like aroma is Jack-By-The-Hedge (Alliaria petiolata) but you can't really compare two in the same class, the pungency and strong flavour of Ramsons far surpasses that of its similar counterpart, both are edible so confusion between the two is not a fatal error, but the appearance is quite different nevertheless.*

*One plant which must not be confused with Ramsons is that of Lily of the Valley (Convallaria majalis). The leaves appear quite similar on both species, but remember Lily of the Valley lacks the garlic scent. The flowers of both species differ in the way they are presented, the toxic Lily of Valley has flowers which do not form globes, although they are white.*

*Ramsons have some fantastic edible qualities, and for this reason it has to be viewed as one of the best wild foods to flavour and accompany other dishes.*

*LEAVES – the long green leaves have a slightly milder flavour than the garlic bought in shops, but it's still very flavoursome. These are best chopped and soften in butter with other ingredients to add flavour, or used in mixed salads.*

*FLOWERS – many will leave the flowers alone, but for me these are the best bit, offering a sweet but very power flavour which leaves you with a peppery kick. These are fantastic to add as a garnish to salads, lamb, or even to float on the top of soup.*

*SEED PODS – these are edible too! But they do become very strong in flavour as they mature.*

*BULB/ROOT – this is the part we would traditionally buy in a shop, and although Ramsons is known as wild garlic, in truth it's closer to a wild spring onion, so the bulb will resemble this. These roots are fantastic treats, and although they can be a fiddle to dig up, it is more than worth it! Simply chop into salads or cut into thin slivers and add to good quality olive oil with a squeeze of lemon juice and some flaked salt.*

*<http://www.naturessecretlarder.co.uk/wild-food-useful-plants/ramson-allium-ursinum.htm>*