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Special Edition February 2021

What's on this month?

- **Gearing up for an eco-filled Spring!**
- **Citizen science with The Pod's March events**
- **Eco-Schools goes virtual**
- **Eco lessons for at home or in school**

Gearing up for an eco-filled Spring!



From World Wildlife Day to Global Recycling Day and Earth Day, February, March and April are chock full with eco-themed days to celebrate.

Spring signifies new growth which aligns perfectly with some of the most celebrated environmentally focused days of the year.

Over the next few months there will be many opportunities to schedule in environmental topics into your lesson plan. Some of these campaigns might also be the perfect basis for when it's your turn to plan the morning assembly. The international nature of these special events can help reinforce the idea that their local environment connects to the wider, global one.

A range of eco-programmes kick off in February with topics ranging from women in science to sustainability and more general areas of conservation. **Thursday 11 February** is the [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#). You can find inspiration for lessons about the important women currently in the sciences on

the [Women in STEM](#) webpage. The [Students Organising for Sustainability \(SOS\)](#) third annual [Global Goals Teach In](#) will be running from **Monday 22 February to Friday 5 March**. The week-long event is tailored specifically for teachers, with the goal of dedicating some of their lesson planning to teaching about the 17 Global Goals in the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) – providing free [resources](#) and [information](#). Falling in the middle of the Teach In on **Saturday 27 February** is [International Polar Bear Day](#). You can even combine both events as several of the Global Goals directly correlate with the conservation of polar bears and their habitat.

The environmental schedule is packed with exciting events in March too, starting on **Wednesday 3 March** with [World Wildlife Day](#). The theme for this year's wildlife day is sustaining all life on Earth, which could be another great opportunity to tie in with Global Goals, specifically goals 1, 12, 14 and 15. **Thursday 18 March** is [Global Recycling Day](#), bringing awareness to the importance of recycling to the health of the planet, as well as to highlight the importance of being less wasteful. If you are interested, we do free school talks about recycling and litter – [email us](#) to organise a virtual talk. This is closely followed by the [Global Day of Climate Action \(GDCA\)](#) on **Friday 16 March**. The GDCA is part of Greta Thunberg's [Fridays for Future](#) organisation which has grown into an important global movement for climate action. The month is capped off with [Earth Hour](#) on **Saturday 27 March**. Other notable dates in March include the [International Day of Action for Rivers](#), [International Day of Forests](#) and [World Water Day](#).

April is the quietest of the next few months with the main event being [Earth Day](#) taking place on **Thursday 22 April**. This year's theme is 'Restoring Our Earth'. Celebrating Earth Day 2021 can be anything from lessons on nature, activities like litter picking or crafts like bug hotels. Look for some inspiration on our [Top tips for a green 2021](#) page. The slower pace of April will hopefully allow some extra time to plan your school's litter picking event for the [Great British Spring Clean](#) taking place throughout May and June.

Citizen science with The Pod's March Events

Give your children the opportunity to be involved in real scientific research through citizen science and inspire the next generation of scientists.

Two of [The Pod](#)'s biggest annual campaigns are taking place in March. Throughout the entirety of the month is the ongoing citizen science project, [What's Under Your Feet?](#)

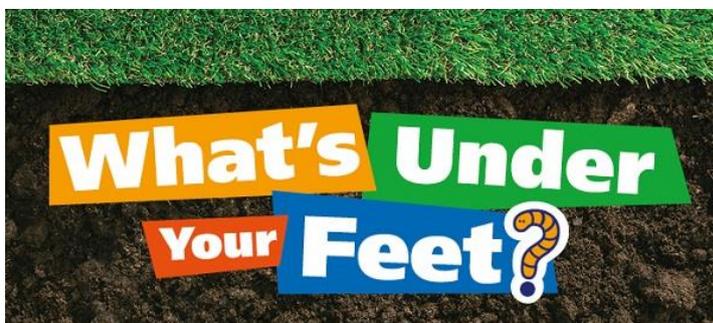
[2020/21](#). In partnership with the [British Trust for Ornithology](#) (BTO), the project is open for any submissions from around the country during the months of October, March and June. Taking part is as simple as digging up a small patch of turf in your school field or local green space, making a record of the insects found and [uploading your record sheet](#) back onto The Pod. This can be a great eco activity to integrate into the month's science lessons and is suitable for either in-class or at home learning. You can find a quick guide to the campaign [here](#).

[Let us know](#) how your class found their survey work and we'll share it in the next issue of the SEED. Be sure to send us any good photos of your students in action.

Running during the week of **8 to 14 March**, [Waste Week 2021](#) will pick up on previous years with a focus on plastic waste. This Waste Week comes at an important time with our outdoor spaces having a surge in use during the pandemic, sadly resulting in a concerning rise in litter – [particularly COVID-related litter](#). As the weather gets warmer, highlighting the harmful impacts of plastic waste and pollution might help reduce some of the local litter as children will be outside more with their families.

New to The Pod? The charity is an educational platform for teachers and students focusing on environmental topics – free to register. You can find a good collection of resources, like worksheets and lesson plans, on The Pod's [webpage](#).

In addition to The Pod's citizen science surveys, you can also get your class involved in other UK-wide surveys such as the [UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme](#) or [butterfly surveys](#) run by Butterfly Conservation Hertfordshire & Middlesex Branch.



Eco-Schools goes virtual

As schools have had to quickly and impressively adapt to home learning once again, other educational organisations have followed suit.

Schools have played a more crucial role than usual over the last year. With so much to focus on, it can be hard to juggle all the important subjects. In an effort to help keep



the environment in the curriculum, [Eco-Schools](#) have made their [materials and training virtual](#). Even the [award assessments](#) are done virtually via video meetings.

Registering as an eco-school is [free and easy](#). Once signed up, your school can start taking your [seven steps](#) towards attaining all [three eco awards](#).

Remember you can always use litter picks as one of your action plan eco projects. If you're looking for inspiration, Eco-Schools has partnered up to provide some [great go to projects](#). You can always [email us](#) for extra help or support with your eco school journey.

Eco lessons for at home or in school

Put some eco in your eLearning with pre-planned lessons ready to fit right into your curriculum.

If there's one common theme we find when we go into schools for our [litter and recycling talks](#), it's how busy teachers are. Finding extra time to plan special lessons, particularly these days, can be a challenge. Fortunately, more and more organisations are finding ways to bring eco-lessons into the curriculum. You may have already browsed through the [BBC's Bitesize lockdown learning programme](#), which hosts easy to access lesson plans and games in both of their [KS1](#) and [KS2](#) science sections.

In the last issue of The SEED we highlighted the [World Wildlife Foundation's](#) (WWF) KS1



and KS2 programming, notably the [Learn to Love Nature](#) and the [Conservation in the Classroom](#) initiative, which has a number of online sessions about conservation topics running throughout February and March. A number of other organisations have also put together online lesson plans for both key stages. Whether you're looking for lesson plans, activities, assembly content or just browsing for ideas, the [Young People's Trust For the Environment](#), [WWF](#), [Wastebuster](#), [Countryside Classroom](#), [Sustainable Learning](#), [Science & Plants for Schools](#), [British Ecological Society \(BES\)](#), and [Learning Through Landscapes](#) are all good places to start. If your class has an interest with a particular animal, try searching for a conservation charity – as they will likely have some resources as well. For example, [The Shark Trust](#) has their [Pup's Activity Zone](#) and [COVID resource page](#), while the [Amphibian and Reptile Conservation](#) has their [Education page](#) which has activity sheets, quizzes and even offers Zoom sessions about UK snakes to schools.

For those interested in more long-term plans, perhaps linking to an eco-school project, comprehensive guides on integrating sustainability and the environment have been created by the [Energy Saving Trust](#) via their [teacher's handbook and action plan](#), as well as two guides from the UK National Association for Environmental Education; one for [environmental curriculums](#) and the other for [environmental education and sustainable development goals](#).



**amphibian and reptile
conservation**



**energy
saving
trust**

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Crafts

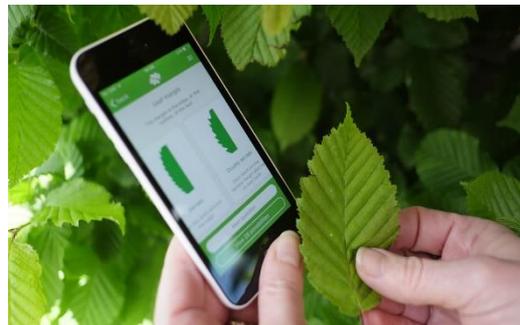
With virtual learning looking to continue for a bit longer, children, and their parents, might be looking for more at-home activities. We've put together a few of our favourite eco-crafts that can be done either at home and also in the classroom for those children of key workers still coming in.

First on our list is from The Wildlife Trust, [Looking After Yourself and Nature](#). The webpage is dedicated to providing COVID safe activities and resources from making hedgehog homes and mini ponds to beeswax wraps and leaf tiles. There are so many different easy crafts to make, even the pickiest student will find something they like.

Next on the crafting agenda is [Upcycling projects for kids](#). Whether it's toilet roll owls or woven magazine coasters, this activity provides entertainment for children and gives used items a new lease of life.

Our last craft can be as easy or detailed as desired. First pick a few common UK tree species from the [Woodland Trusts A-Z of British Trees](#) guide. Your children can then try to draw, paint or build the different leaves of the chosen trees. To take this one step further, they can go with a parent or guardian to a nearby outdoor space to collect some leaves and bring them home to identify them. The Woodland Trust also has a great [quick ID guide](#) in case they get stuck. This can be a fun way to have parents join in with their eco-education. You can even make your own research project out of it with [tree surveying tips from Imperial College London](#).

[Email us](#) a short description and pictures of the crafts or any other eco activities your



class has been up to and you could be featured in the next issue of the SEED!

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