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Elevate your mood - reflections on spring and birdsong



Make and create - origami and colouring to try yourself



Poems, words and images shared by our readers



take the time

bringing colour and inspiration to you

Issue No. 9

Painting is just another way of keeping a diary

- Pablo Picasso

Have you ever taken a sneaky peak at someone's diary, unable to resist the urge to find out their innermost thoughts and feelings? These intimate journals are so fascinating to us, yet if they are our own, we rarely want to share them. Or read them back when we are older, instead cringing at our naive younger selves.

On the 12th May 2021, the Mass Observation Archive repeated its yearly call for day diaries, capturing the everyday lives of people across the UK. These diaries are stored and used for research, teaching and learning.

The first Mass Observation took place on 12th May 1937, the day of George VI's Coronation. It called for people all over the UK to record everything they did from when they woke up in the morning to when they went to sleep at night. The resulting diaries provided a wonderful slice of everyday lives and a social time capsule.

It is the seemingly insignificant details contained in the diary that interest us looking back. "I was late for dancing 'cos the book for Henry VI wasn't in the library, I think Lauren got it", reminds me now that there was no looking things up on the internet back in my school days!

Writing a diary can be reflecting on life's ups and downs or it can be a way of observing, paying attention to what is

happening around us. Picasso remarked that 'Painting is just another way of keeping a diary'. Art, photography, video or voice recording, there are many other ways of keeping a daily diary. Social media posts have given us access to a vast amount of personal diaries too. And unlike the traditional written diary it's not so secret!

Find out more about the Mass Observation Project at:
www.massobs.org.uk

by Hazel Stock, ArtCare



A stay at Harnwood Hospital

Salisbury Healthcare History

As well as creative projects, ArtCare also care for the hospital's historic collections. These date from around 1760, when the Salisbury General Infirmary opened, to the present day. As well as being an excellent resource for medicine, nursing, science and health care they are also a wonderful insight into local social history.

It's people's everyday observations that enrich our understanding of the past and provide a fuller picture of what life was really like. D. Cousins shared with us his memories and photos of Harnwood Hospital from 1962, during a 5 month stay for tuberculosis treatment. The first hand account of his stay describes how he passed the time during his confinement - as many of have done more recently befriending nature. His black and white photos also provide a further glimpse into how decor, clothing and equipment was at this time compared to now.

"Den and I were the youngest patients at the time. He was into the music scene and close friends with Dave Dee and his gang. I remember him finding a way to connect his guitar to the bedside radio feed, a short-lived experiment that



Orderly cleaning Harnwood Hospital 1962



Kitty operating the stove in kitchen at Harnwood Hospital 1962

incurred matron's wrath. The circular decorations on the wall behind him (see photo below) were fashioned from multiple cigarette packets by an elderly patient 'Jock' who also sold them to visitors to fund his habit! Once one was considered fit enough, a graded exercise regime was introduced, culminating in putting competitions on the green at the back of the hospital which overlooked the City. I'm on the left in this picture and the chap on the right was a keen golfer. On the day of his discharge he celebrated by driving a ball towards the Cathedral, a spectacular shot to behold.

The other photos are of Kitty in the high tech kitchen and an orderly doing a thorough floor clean. These were shot on my Rolleiflex twin lens camera, so I shot the floor cleaning photo by leaning out of the other side on the bed.

I also remember that I tamed a Robin to the point where he would fly in the window and feed from crumbs on my bed table. This was frowned upon by matron, but I never established whether it was because I or he might become infected!"



Den Jessey with guitar in ward bed, Harnwood Hospital 1962



Playing golf at Harnwood Hospital



Kitty operating the stove in kitchen at Harnwood Hospital 1962

Read more at:
www.salisburyhealthcarehistory.uk

A little bit of fun

Top notch bird feeders!

Look at what our amazing hospital staff have been creating. During lockdown, ArtCare teamed up with Wiltshire Creative to provide pottery@home packs for staff to make their own bird feeder. These were fired and returned to staff for decoration. What bird would not feel honoured to feed from this one by Gail? Wiltshire Creative run regular pottery classes for adults at their studio in Salisbury Arts Centre if you fancy having a go.



Bird search

Can you find the names of these birds in the grid below? Words can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal and either read forwards or backwards.

N	D	T	H	R	U	S	H	A	L	G	C	K	M	V
W	B	O	E	L	A	G	N	I	T	H	G	I	N	P
O	R	K	Y	H	N	A	I	R	P	E	O	N	V	O
R	S	E	E	C	O	S	P	H	X	B	L	H	K	S
R	T	U	N	B	U	Z	Z	A	R	D	F	C	G	T
A	J	H	C	N	I	F	D	L	O	G	S	N	A	R
P	N	A	W	Q	Y	B	U	V	L	I	G	I	M	I
S	K	L	C	Y	A	V	E	Y	R	W	J	F	S	C
I	E	Z	X	K	A	R	R	M	A	T	Q	F	D	H
E	S	I	O	U	D	J	I	L	F	I	Y	A	J	R
G	T	V	N	C	R	A	C	I	E	T	S	H	P	S
R	R	A	U	O	K	F	W	R	N	F	A	C	A	N
E	E	W	B	S	D	S	P	I	O	L	W	O	Q	L
T	L	I	L	T	Z	C	U	T	R	A	V	E	N	O
A	N	O	E	G	I	P	S	B	L	U	E	T	I	T

Bluetit
Buzzard
Chaffinch
Dove
Egret
Goldfinch
Jackdaw
Jay
Kestrel
Nightingale
Ostrich
Pigeon
Raven
Robin
Sparrow
Swift
Thrush
Wren

Bird sayings

We make use of a lot of bird related phrases and sayings in our language. Can you complete the following phrases? Do you know what they mean? Can you think of any more of your own? (Answers below - turn the page)

A bird in the bush, is worth ___ in the ____

As light as a _____

As the ____ flies

Up with the ____

Put the ___ amongst the pigeons

Round _____

The early bird catches the ____

Watch you like a ____

Wouldn't say boo to a _____

One _____ doesn't make a summer

Like a ____ to water

Cloud _____ land

Your contributions

Have you been inspired? Would you like to contribute some of your own reflections, a poem or image for our next edition on the general theme of summertime?

Please send to:
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www.artcaresalisbury.uk
www.starsappeal.org



Answers to bird phrases: 'A bird in the bush is worth two in the hand'; 'As light as a feather'; 'As the crow flies'; 'Up with the lark'; 'Put the cat amongst the pigeons'; 'Round Robin'; 'The early bird catches the worm'; 'Watch you like a hawk'; 'Wouldn't say boo to a goose'; 'One swallow doesn't make a summer'; 'Like a duck to water'; 'Cloud cuckoo land'



Dawn Chorus Day: Using funny word phrases to remember our birdsong our Elevate artist David Davies gives us an insight into these early risers!

The nightingale has a lyre of gold,
The lark's is a clarion call,
And the blackbird plays but a boxwood flute,
But I love him best of all.
For his song is all of the joy of life,
And we in the mad, spring weather,
We two have listened till he sang
Our hearts and lips together.
William Henley (1849-1902)

This time of year, Britain's dawn chorus is at its height. This natural concert starts early and extends until the sun has risen. Birdsong carries up to 20 times further during the cooler hours of morning, enabling male birdsong to reach more females. Entering into early summer, birds begin singing from 4am and a few even before this. So it's likely in early Spring you might hear the beginnings of the dawn chorus just as the long-eared owl ('hoo hoo hoo') and the barn or 'screech' owl are ending what sounds like their closing conversations.



Around this early, quiet time, your ears would tune into the steady sound made by the breeze catching the tops of trees – conifers and pines give a steady rushing sound like distant running water whilst deciduous woodland is more restless like the sea.

Around this early, quiet time, your ears would tune into the steady sound made by the breeze catching the tops of trees....

matter how tuneful and eloquent, is effectively telling neighbours of the same species to keep away.

Early rising birds have an order to performing. First to start piping up in the chorus sequence are blackbirds, wrens and robins. Then come the wood pigeons, carrion crows, magpies and goldfinches, who in turn are followed by dunnocks, sparrows and blackcaps.

Birdsong has two functions. Male birds sing to convince females that they will be a good mate to raise chicks with. The second function is a bit like a garden

So do only male birds sing? Females do sing but usually less often and more quietly as females are staying hidden (and are also typically less colourful and patterned) so it's much easier to miss their song.

Use funny word phrases to identify birdsong! We remember the yellowhammer's song as "A little bit of bread and no cheeese" whilst wood pigeons say "Steal two cows, Taffy" (yes, they do) and collared doves, of course, chant "Uni-ted, Uni-ted, Uni-ted"...

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust makes some

great suggestions for remembering birdsong: the song thrush sounds a bit like 'Vince, Vince, Vince, Vince; Jennifer, Jennifer, Jennifer; Hannah, Hannah, Hannah, Hannah'. The Robin's melodious warbling song, from both sexes, is often written as "Twiddle-oo, twiddle-ee-dee, twiddle-oo twiddle", whilst the silvery blue tit song is a bright, cheery "P. P. P. Diddy, P. Diddy Diddy Diddy". Birders will often say a Yellow Warbler sings "Sweet Sweet Sweet, I'm so so so Sweet" and the great tit has a bright rocking backwards and forwards often between two notes – "teacher-teacher" like a squeaky bicycle pump. More unsure, is the coal tit's song, something like "Itsy witsy teeny weeny". Singing their own names are the steady cuckoo and the two-note lilting, stumbling chiffchaff.

Among the early songbirds is the Skylark which sings in flight in open country, full of life, energy and enthusiasm. Starting their song at ground level they work up into the sky, higher and higher until they're just a speck.

Discover more about songbirds and their dawn chorus online:

<https://www.discoverwildlife.com/how-to/watch-wildlife/dawn-chorus-guide/>

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/blog/guest/deciphering-dawn-chorus>

<https://community.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/b/notesonnature/posts/birdsong-masterclass>

<https://www.garden-birds.co.uk/information/tutorials/tutorial3.html>
<https://www.thespruce.com/dawn-chorus-meaning-386220>



May, named after Maia goddess of springtime and growth, is such a pretty month and begins with celebrations all around the world as we delight in the season.

On 1st May young girls used to rush out and wash their faces in the May dew which is said to have magical properties, anyone who washes their face in it will have a beautiful complexion for the whole year.

In France sprigs of Lily of the Valley are given as tokens of good luck for the year ahead. As the birth flower for May it means 'the return of happiness'.

On May Day, people used to cut down young trees and stick them in the ground in the village to dance around in celebration of the end of winter and the start of the fine weather that would allow planting to begin.

I wonder if you ever danced around a maypole? On the village green or in the school playground? Were you a May Queen or a Morris dancer?

The tallest maypole is said to have been erected in London on the Strand in 1661; it stood over 143 feet high. It was felled in 1717, when it was used by Isaac Newton to support Huygen's new reflecting telescope.



'Ne'er cast a clout 'til May be out'

Lots of differing opinions about this expression. Does it mean the end of the month or the May blossom is blooming? Whatever, the weather is certainly unpredictable and warm clothes should not be packed away yet.

**'May is a blue and gold and green,
Not a trace of cloud is seen;
Yet I find along the way
Snowflakes falling all the day.'**

from the poem May Snow by Annette Whynn

A Bank Holiday at each end of the month. Hawthorn blossom and cow parsley froth in the lanes. Everything green and white and vibrant, not surprising then that people would go out before sunrise to gather flowers and greenery to decorate their houses and villages in the belief that the vegetation spirits would bring good fortune.

You could write your own May poem. Sit and imagine the scent of Lily of the Valley and May blossoms like snow in the air and let your mind drift to all the things May makes you think of, the sights, sounds, smells, colours, weather,

flowers, food, people, activities? Write them as a list beginning with, 'May is...'





the odd orchid. The meadow will continue to delight for many months to come.



Meanwhile, above it all, the birds have been disseminating their magnificent sounds through the bird waves. This year, we installed a bird box, bird table and bird bath, and in line with International Dawn Chorus Day, helped to organise a 'Bird Week' in the village, where villagers noted bird sounds and sightings on blackboards. I find it soothing to know that the birds are still in action after such an unusual year for humanity. I hope you enjoy the photographs.

I live off-grid in a small holding in Somerset. I love to write a daily journal and find great comfort in the handwritten word on the page. I do hope you enjoy reading my reflections and observations.

At this time of year, particularly during a dry spring, it can be tempting to feel there is capacity to initiate new garden projects. The paths are clear, the hedges neatly trimmed, the weeds are fairly under control and the weather is pleasant. Not so!

There are many seedlings that need attention, unexpected frosts to brace for and soon, the garden will explode into life.

Hence, attention has turned to essential maintenance jobs: installing more rainwater harvesting tanks, off-grid maintenance, weeding the vegetable patch and tending to new seedlings. The house is lined with seedling trays and weather forecasting becomes vital, with fleeces coming out to protect seedlings on cold nights and water carefully rationed until further rainfall. Every year

there are lost crops, as there is so much at stake at this point. This year, we have lost all our apricots to the spring frosts, an apple tree fell in the storms, and we appear to have purchased a poor batch of seedling compost. We learn a little more each year, and keep looking forward, preparing for all eventualities. Growing is a good lesson in acceptance, patience and nature's gifts, as well as challenges.

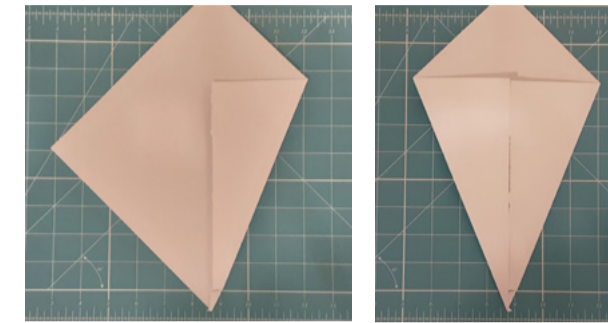
Growing is a good lesson in acceptance, patience and nature's gifts, as well as challenges.

April and May are known to growers as 'the hungry gap', where preserves of fruit and tomatoes are drawn upon, alongside garlic, parsnips, celeriac, fresh salad, rhubarb, leeks and purple sprouting broccoli. We take our annual foraging walks to collect wild garlic for pesto and enjoy the new shoots of fresh herbs in teas and recipes. The strawberry plants will soon give the first fruits and will be covered with netting and surrounded with straw, to avoid animal nibbling. Our wild flower meadow shows great promise, and we are enjoying primroses, bluebells, the beginnings of red campions and even

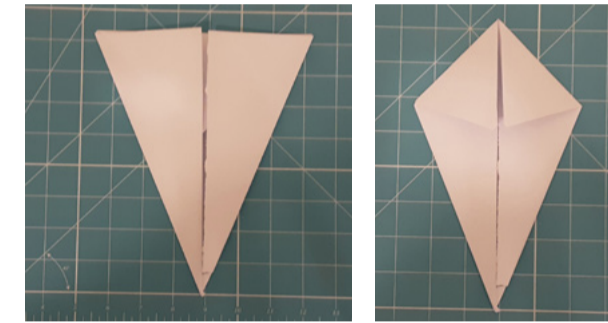


Origami Robin

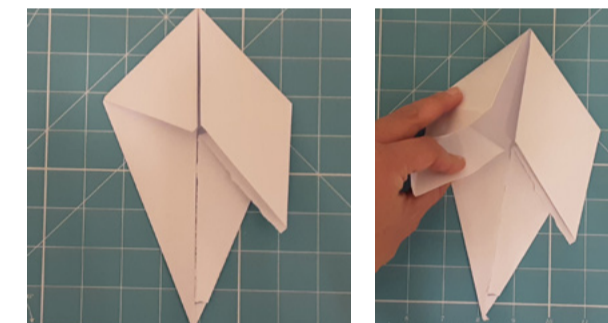
1. Fold a 15cm square piece of paper in half. Fold the two sides in to this centre crease



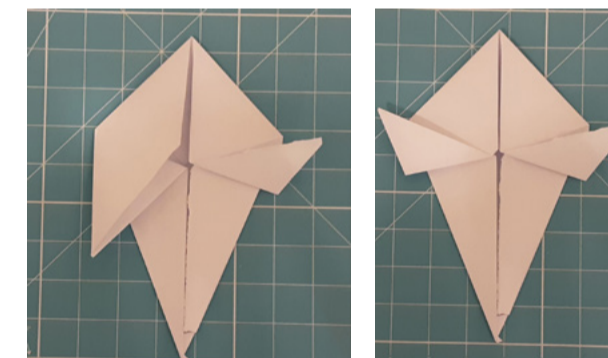
2. Fold the top flap down and tuck under the side flaps. Fold the top corners down to the centre line



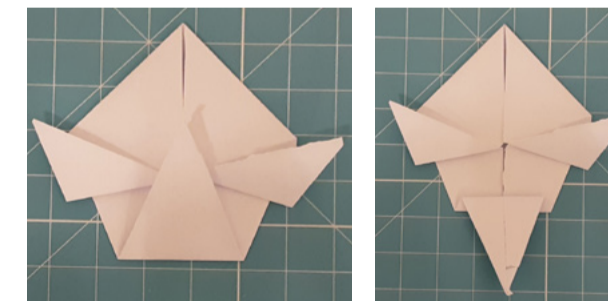
3. Lift up these flaps and reverse the points of each.



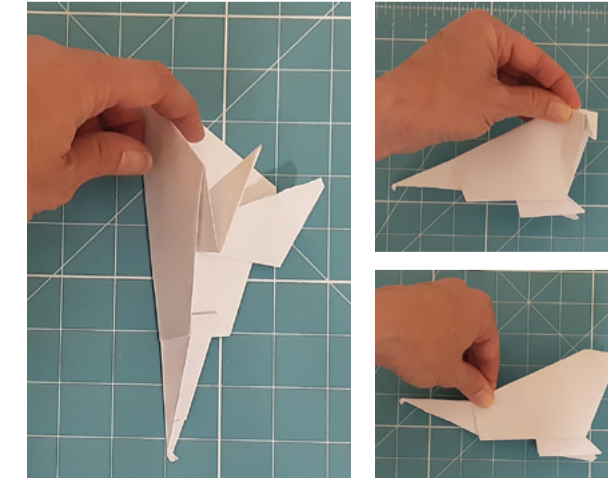
4. Fold up these points to meet the crease line.



5. Fold the bottom point up just beyond flaps. Concertina fold it approx. 1cm nearer the tip.



6. Fold in half. Fold the head inwards to create a beak. Gently tilt the tail upwards.



Colour our spring buttercups



Take the time to share

Words and images from our readers

Bad Hair Day

When I look in the mirror, who do I see,
Someone much, much older than me,
With hair that is long, and straggly and grey,
All traces of brown having faded away.

I want to look younger, so what can I do -
Perhaps a cute little bunch or two.
There's an old Alice band from when I was ten,
Would it be a mistake to wear that again?

I could try a ponytail, pulled nice and tight,
But I've just got a feeling that wouldn't look right.
Or what about back-combed and topped with a bow,
It suited me once, I might give it a go.

My fringe is so long now it covers my eyes,
Shall I cut it myself? No, I don't think that's wise.
And although I wish I could give it a prune,
I don't have the skills of Vidal Sassoon.
I remember the 60's, and love in the air,
When I threw off my clothes and wore flowers in my hair.
But if I did that now I'd be misunderstood,
Then taken away, and locked up for good.

So I'd better try something that's not quite so drastic,
Though how I still wish I could look fantastic.
I'll wear a broad-brimmed hat, and flowing silk scarf,
Designer sunglasses and, of course, Covid mask.

Then even if I look like a large hippopotamus,
At least my face will remain anonymous.

Fiona Crosthwaite Eyre

Blackbird

Beyond the window the
sky scuds grey and white;
dark clouds could bring
stormy weather
but summer wind
now is soft –
soft to touch as bird's wing.

High on the rosebush
blackbird sings and sings
into the shining air –

what is the song?
is there something worth singing out?

I sing the joy of flying
flying through endless spaces of wide blue sky
my wings catching the winds and the weathers
and blue pulse of each precious moment.

Three neat green lawns
with flowers bordering them round;
dahlias and michelmas daisies
black-eyed susans,
delphiniums
and bergamot,
rosemary, violas
Like tiny up-turned faces

Rose Flint



'Sunset with gannets, blackbirds and wrens' - Lily tucker, aged 9

Your contributions

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