

IT'S TIME TO  
*Rewild Yourself*  
REWILD YOURSELF



# Senses

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JULY CHALLENGE

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ACTIVITY BOOK

AN ADVENTURE IN NATURE CONNECTION FOR HUMAN X NATURE WELLBEING

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FOR HUMAN X NATURE WELLBEING



# It's time to Rewild Yourself



JOURNEY THROUGH THE FIVE PATHWAYS WITH US...

## Five Pathways to Nature Connection

Connecting with Nature has never been more crucial. Expert research has shown that building a relationship with the natural world boosts our wellbeing, and makes us more likely to help Nature. So how do we build closer relationships with Nature? Research has found that connecting with Nature involves

more than just spending a few minutes outside. The Nature Connectedness Research Group at University of Derby identified five pathways to Nature connection – ways of experiencing and engaging with the natural world that help us grow stronger and deeper relationships with the rest of Nature.



### Senses

Explore, take a closer look and get in touch with the natural world. Engage with Nature through the senses for pleasure e.g. *listening to birdsong, smelling wild flowers, watching the sunset.*



### Emotion

Find happiness and wonder. Find an emotional bond with, and love, for Nature e.g. *talking about, and reflecting on your feelings about Nature.*



SOURCE: The Nature Connectedness Research Group, University of Derby.



### Meaning

Consider what Nature means to you. Using natural symbolism (e.g. language and metaphors) to represent an idea, thinking about the meaning and signs of Nature, e.g. *the first swallow of summer.*



### Beauty

Take time to appreciate the beauty of Mother Nature. Engage with the aesthetic qualities e.g. *appreciating natural scenery or connecting through the arts.*



### Compassion

Think about what you could do for Nature. Extending the self to include Nature, leading to a moral and ethical concern e.g. *making ethical product choices, concerned with animal welfare.*

Let's go...



# Senses

## Your checklist for a mini adventure connecting with Nature

*Take a few beats outside...*



### Charge your mic / phone

First explorer's rule is check your equipment! Just don't forget to snooze your notifications...



### Dress the part

Choose your comfiest clothes. Make sure you are free to move and roam around as needed.



### Pack your curiosity

The world is awe-inspiring and full of wonder... There's always something new to learn and experience.



### Choose your soundscape scene

Nature's music can sneak in anywhere — it's ok if you don't have a big natural space nearby, your backyard or nearest tree will surely have some sonorous surprises.



### Turn into a Nature spy

Be still and listen; sound clues might come in softly at first, be patient...



Let's connect to Nature by tuning into our SENSES...

## What can our *senses* tell us about Nature?

Our senses are perhaps our most direct pathway to Nature connection. But only if you tune-in. Look, but also take time to really **see**. Hear, but also take time to really **listen**.

**Touch, taste, smell**, take it all in.

# Senses

## NATURE SOUNDS CHALLENGE: *creating the ReWild Yourself Playlist*

This July, we invite you to engage your ears and take part in our Nature Sounds Challenge by sending in your audio clips. Together, we will celebrate as many sounds from Nature as we can, to create the ReWild Yourself Community Playlist — the real sound of summer!



1.

### Tune in to Nature

Are there softer sounds you don't notice at first? We want to capture a vast array of Nature's song, so get creative and follow your ears.



2.

### Stay quiet and press record

Once you've found a sound you want to record, use a phone, or any other audio recorder you can find, and press record.



3.

### Send us your sound recordings

Send us a max 30 second clip, along with a description of what it is and where you recorded, so we can add it to our ReWild Yourself Nature Sounds playlist and help others tune into Nature.

**WE ARE NATURE TOO...**  
Though for this challenge we're listening to sounds other than human.  
  
There are no rules, so long as the audio that you capture is from the natural world, and also not human.

**WHAT SINGS OUT TO YOU?**  
We all pick up on different details  
  
It may be a favourite Nature sound, a sound most people have not heard before, a sound from your favourite place in Nature, or a sound you find scary, surprising, peaceful, or even annoying.

**HOW TO SUBMIT**  
Share your 'Nature Sounds' audio recordings via our website...  
[www.rewildyourself.com/time/nature-sounds-challenge](http://www.rewildyourself.com/time/nature-sounds-challenge)  
Or submit via email at...  
[hello@voicefornature.com](mailto:hello@voicefornature.com)



## Meet Mark

### Mark Ferguson

Mark Ferguson is a UK-based wildlife sound recordist and sound artist, whose award-winning work explores the unique and intricate sonic detail of the natural world.

His ongoing creative and research interests include: the development of new narrative approaches for bat detecting; electroacoustic music composition with wildlife sounds; the potentialities of audio practice for conservation and environmental awareness-raising; and wildlife sound cataloguing.

Mark's recordings and projects have been broadcast by the BBC, mentioned by the Guardian, and featured in leading arts and cultural venues worldwide. He is a member of the Wildlife Sound Recording Society, Bat Conservation Trust and Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, and is an established contributor to the Wildlife and Environmental Sound Archives at the British Library.



#### EXPLORE MARK'S WORK AND HIS CAPTIVATING SOUND COMPOSITIONS

VISIT [linktr.ee/fergusonic](https://linktr.ee/fergusonic)

BANDCAMP [markferguson.bandcamp.com](https://markferguson.bandcamp.com)

SOUNDCLOUD [soundcloud.com/fergusounds](https://soundcloud.com/fergusounds)

# Sound recording tips from Mark

## Mark Ferguson

1.

#### Listen.

Honestly, just be still and listen. Leave your phone behind, or turn it off. Don't speak: instead, focus on the sounds other species are making.



2.

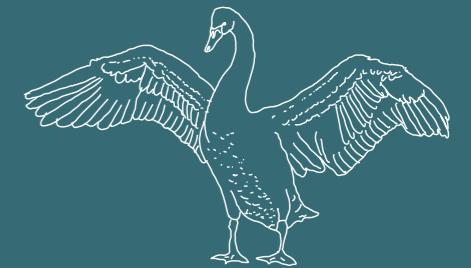
#### Take time.

We are a visually driven species, and since visual communication is immediate, we often expect an 'immediate return' when using our other senses. Sound, by its very Nature, takes time to process.

3.

#### Focus on fieldcraft.

In my experience, around 80 or 90% of wildlife sound recording is fieldcraft (*i.e. observing species, developing your approaches, and reading the soundscape*). Do not get sucked into ongoing conversations about what audio recording equipment is best, since this will only blind you to its true purpose of capturing interesting, audible animal behaviours.



4.

#### Wear quiet clothing.

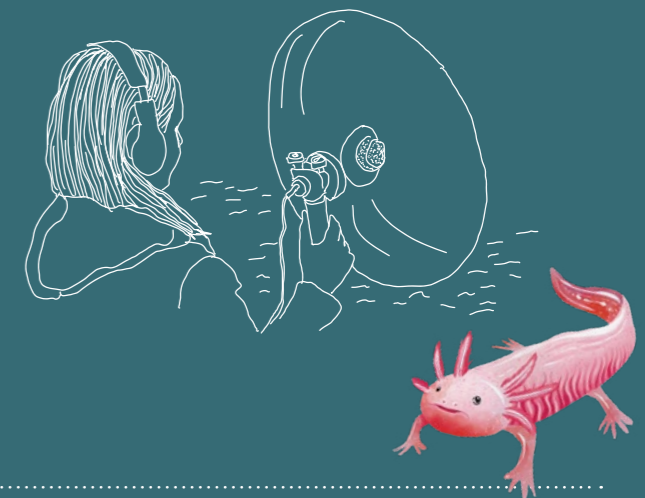
A lot of materials suitable for photography won't be ideal, since the slightest movement of a sleeve or turn of a head will be captured by your microphones (if they are placed nearby). Soft clothes are best, and they shouldn't flap around in the wind.



5.

#### Do something useful with your recordings.

Sound is an incredibly powerful phenomenon, but this fact is easily forgotten in our visually saturated culture (to understand this better, try muting your favourite series or film for a few minutes). Sound recording has the power to highlight habitat loss and issues of conservation importance in a way that visual material never can, because it demands an investment of time. We need to harness this, and use microphones to raise awareness through audible storytelling.





# INSPIRATION GALLERY

Audio recordings generously supplied by Mark Ferguson



TAP SOUND ICONS TO LISTEN VIA REWILD YOURSELF



Mark recording a bumblebee © Mark Ferguson

## Worn Bumblebee Wings

Outside one of southwest England's busiest shopping malls, I came across a lengthy strip of lavender planted on the edge of a public car park. There were at least two hundred bumblebees working their way along the entire strip, with early, buff-tailed, white-tailed and common carder workers well represented.

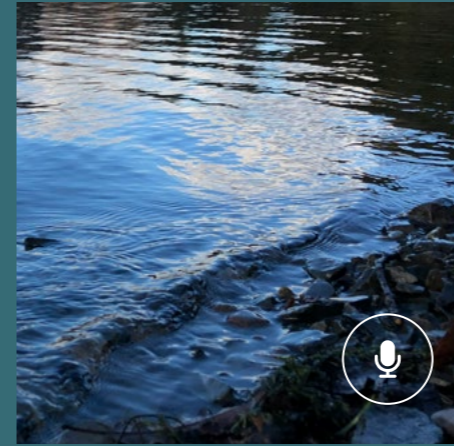
When I returned later in the week to record, I noticed that many of the bees' wings were badly worn (the result of months of general wear and tear). This track attempts to convey the overall condition of the wings, with their less powerful, characteristically mellow buzzes.

Also featured on *Humble*, Track 5. Notes adapted from album.

[markferguson.bandcamp.com/track/worn-wings-mellow-buzzes](https://markferguson.bandcamp.com/track/worn-wings-mellow-buzzes)

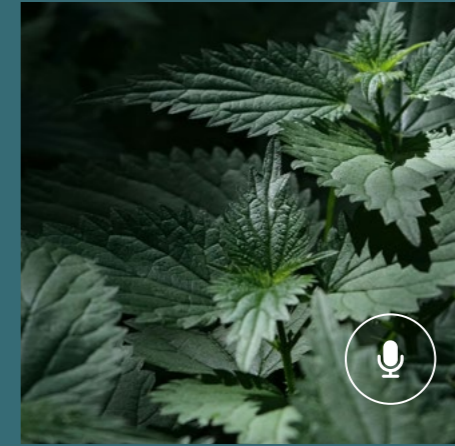


Scan with your smart phone to listen to Mark's Inspiration Gallery on ReWild Yourself



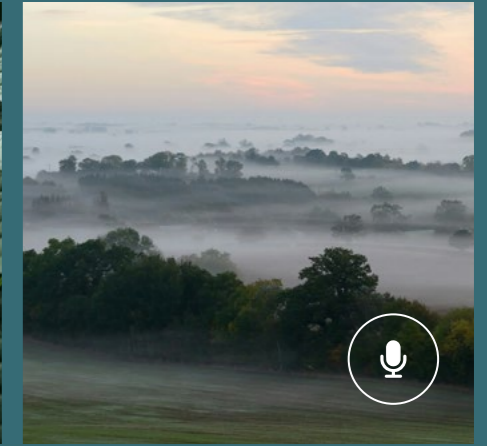
## Lapping Waves

The sounds of freshwater lake waves, gently lapping and splashing against basalt rocks. Recorded along the edge of Kebble Lough on Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland.



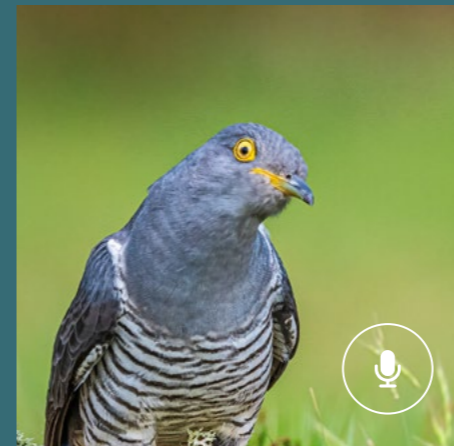
## Nettle Vibrations

I recorded the internal vibrations of this leafless nettle stalk using two contact microphones, clipped directly onto the main structure of the plant. The microphones picked up the internal sounds of the nettle as it swayed back and forth in strong gusts.



## Cotswold Dawn Chorus

An excerpt from the mid portion of a dawn chorus, recorded in a Cotswold valley at around 4am. Two microphones were placed near a small stream, which was running through the middle of the valley. The sound of running water helped add some spatial context to the avian vocalisations emanating from nearby woodland.

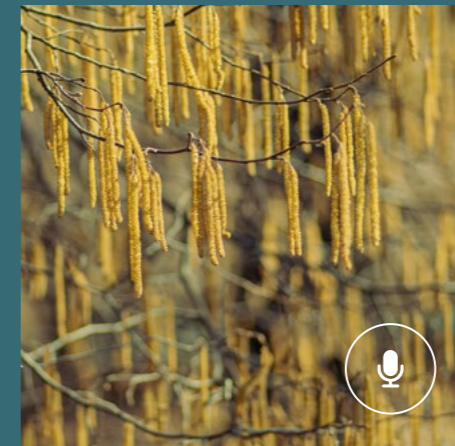


## Common Cuckoo

This male cuckoo was recorded in Dartmoor National Park, after an entire year of preparation and thought about where to position my microphones.

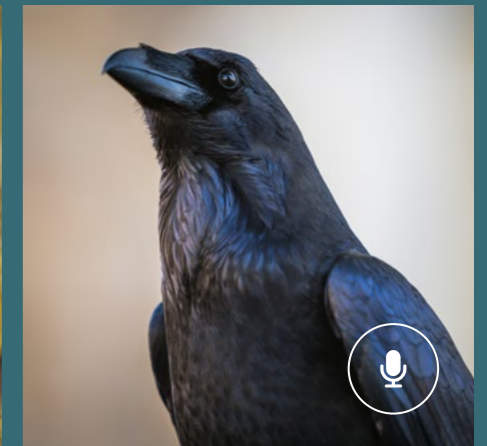
Also featured on *Avian*, Track 1.

[markferguson.bandcamp.com/track/cuckoo](https://markferguson.bandcamp.com/track/cuckoo)



## Creaking Ancient Hazel Tree

The delicate creaks of an ancient hazel tree. Two miniature omnidirectional mics were clipped near a point of friction between two coppiced stems, allowing both the internal creaks of the tree and the wider soundscape to be recorded simultaneously.



## Common Ravens

A territorial dispute between two pairs of ravens, recorded after a lengthy wait in Northern Ireland's Sperrin Mountains. The four birds had their quarrel, then left. A parabolic reflector was used to isolate the raven calls, from a concealed position amongst conifer trees.

Also featured on *Avian*, Track 6. Notes adapted from album.

[markferguson.bandcamp.com/track/ravens](https://markferguson.bandcamp.com/track/ravens)



## Meet Ben

*Ben Mirin*

Ben combines his love of music and birds to create wildlife stories that are accessible and inclusive, showing everyone in the world that their gifts are not only welcome in conservation, but needed. As a bioacoustic researcher, he has traveled the world, documenting the sounds of Nature (some never before recorded) and

creating dazzling wild soundscapes and music, many of which featured on his National Geographic children's television series, 'Wildbeats'. Ben is currently completing his PHD at Cornell University, researching cultural connections with birdsong in Indonesia, and planning his next adventure!



BEN IS A 2024 REWILD YOURSELF CHAMPION...

DISCOVER ALL TEN CHAMPIONS, EACH INSPIRING QUALITY NATURE CONNECTION IN THEIR OWN WAY.

VISIT [REWILDYOURSELF.COM](https://www.rewildyourself.com)

# Sound recording tips from Ben

*Ben Mirin*



1.

### Go outside and listen.

The natural world is singing constantly in a symphony that never sleeps. No matter where you are on the planet, you can go outside and appreciate it. It's a part of you and you are a part of it.



2.

### If you don't have access to a natural space near your home, don't worry.

There is no other soundscape like the one in your backyard. It's like your acoustic thumbprint. Consider listening for the balance of Nature and human sounds, and ask yourself questions about the stories your sounds can tell. And if it's noisy during the daytime, try going outside at night as long as it's safe to do so.

3.

### Take your time.

Ecosystems react whenever we walk upon them, often in ways we do not notice. Enter with care, find a place you can sit comfortably, and then wait patiently for animals that might be nearby to relax again so the symphony can resume.



4.

### You don't need a lot of fancy equipment.

Your ears are your best tool, and if you have a smart phone turn off your signal so you aren't getting any notifications and use the microphone instead.



MORE OF BEN'S TIPS THIS WAY



# Sound recording tips from Ben

Ben Mirin



5.

## Submit your recordings to an academic library for research.

Using free apps like Merlin Bird ID from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology will help you identify what you're listening to in real time. And if you like, you can upload those recordings to our library in the app, making them available for researchers to publish new discoveries based on your sounds. It makes you an official community scientist, totally worth the bragging rights.



6.

## Create something with your sounds.

You can play them for your friends and family, edit or sample them to create music, or even make a playlist of natural sounds for people to enjoy. Host a listening party and go outside when you're finished to hear the real thing.

7.

## Consider living quietly.

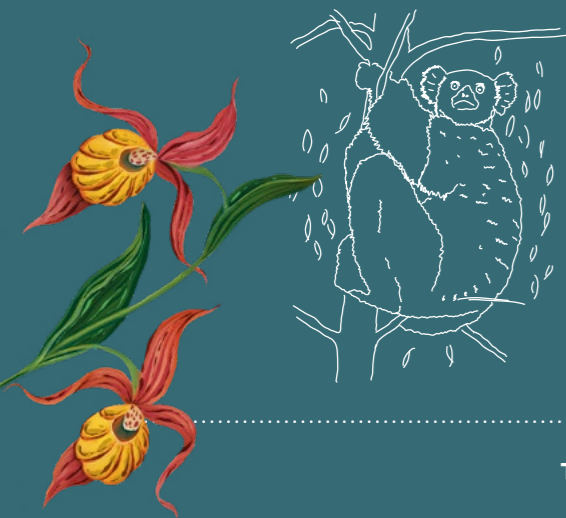
Walk or cycle when you could drive, use a fan instead of an air conditioner, and if you're going to enjoy music, play it at a reasonable volume. Noise can be a form of expression, but it can also be pollution.



8.

## Remember that sound tells stories about our relationships and impact on Nature.

No matter where you live in the world, your backyard has a story to tell. Some of the sounds I'll share with you here are in danger of being silenced forever. But if we can tune into Nature, we will recover more of ourselves. Who knows, you might just be inspired to start asking some big questions about how to save the world.



### TO DISCOVER MORE OF BEN'S WORK

VISIT [benmirin.com](http://benmirin.com)

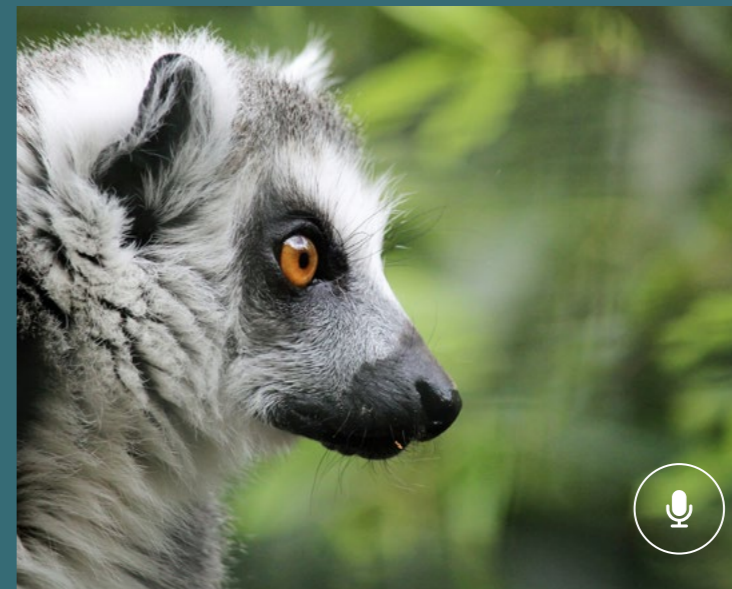
SOUNDCLOUD [soundcloud.com/benmirin](https://soundcloud.com/benmirin)

# INSPIRATION GALLERY

Audio recording generously supplied by Ben Mirin



TAP SOUND ICONS TO LISTEN VIA REWILD YOURSELF



## Dawn in Talatakely

This exquisite soundscape, Dawn in Talatakely, is Track #1 on Ben Mirin's album titled MADA. Journey into the Talatakely Rainforest in Ranomafana, Madagascar through this spectacular sound adventure — you won't regret it.

Featuring performances by bands and artists from across the world, this natural sounds album, MADA, is a musical collaboration to save the rainforests, spiny thickets, and other iconic ecosystems of Madagascar.

The album is available for purchase via [ecotone.bandcamp.com/album/mada](https://ecotone.bandcamp.com/album/mada) and all proceeds from sales will be used to support Malagasy musicians and artists whose work celebrates local wildlife.

## WATCH Remixing Madagascar

Learn more about Ben's approach and watch the Remixing Madagascar process film that follows Ben in his work as an explorer and sound artist via Ben's website [benmirin.com/remixingmadagascar](http://benmirin.com/remixingmadagascar)

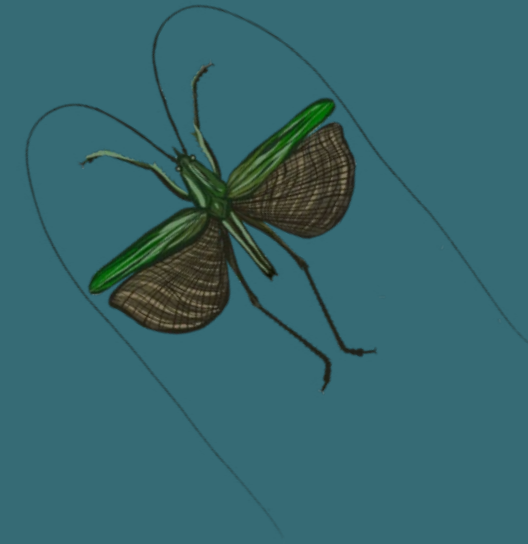


Scan with your smart phone to listen to Ben's Inspiration Gallery on ReWild Yourself



# FIELD NOTES

What was the first Natural sound that you heard? What was making it?



Pause and look around. What do you see? How many colours are there?

**TO WATCH  
THE PATHWAYS COME  
TO LIFE IN ANIMATION  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

[www.rewildyourself.com/time](http://www.rewildyourself.com/time)



Did you feel curious enough to touch something? What did it feel like?



If you would like to share your insights with us on Instagram, go to [@rewildyourself](https://www.instagram.com/rewildyourself) #ItsTimeToReWildYourself

# FIELD NOTES



Take a deep breath and close your eyes. Does it smell like something in particular? Is it good, bad, stinky, sweet...?



Has tuning into your senses helped you appreciate Nature more? Are you curious about what you'll discover next?



If you would like to share your insights with us on Instagram, go to [@rewildyourself](#) #ItsTimeToReWildYourself

## ReWild Yourself

Brought to you by Voice for Nature Foundation, ReWild Yourself is a global programme creating opportunities for individuals and communities to connect with Nature and wild places, uniting both humanity and Nature's wellbeing.

By connecting to the land, we connect back to ourselves, however, access to Nature remains deeply inequitable. We want to bridge that gap, and reunite human and Nature's wellbeing.

## Nature Connectedness Network

The Nature Connectedness Network, from the University of Derby, brings together individuals and organisations whose professional work is focused on helping people grow closer relationships with the more-than-human world, for the mutual wellbeing of people and planet.

**Vision:** A happier and more fulfilled society with a thriving natural environment, forged through a closer relationship with nature.

**Mission:** To discover, share and deliver evidence-based approaches for nurturing closer relationships between people and nature, ensuring a scaling up of nature connection across the UK.



# It's time to ReWild Yourself

Join the community and spread the word...

## 'It's Time to ReWild Yourself' PARTNERS



Scan the QR with your smart phone for more Nature connection fun and resources

## Special Acknowledgments

Svabhu Kohli – full colour artwork

Ben Mirin

Mark Ferguson

Thank you for being a Voice for Nature!





# It's time to ReWild Yourself

An adventure in Nature connection for human x Nature wellbeing

**5 CHALLENGES | 5 MONTHS | 5 PATHWAYS**

Voice for Nature Foundation and the Nature Connectedness Network are on a mission to improve the UK's relationship with the natural world and release our inner wild. An experience for individuals, schools, and families, supported by an exceptional cohort of partners, scientists, explorers, and artists.

This June – October, journey through the five pathways with us and connect more deeply with Nature...

**BEAUTY | SENSES | EMOTION | MEANING | COMPASSION**

We all crave that sense of aliveness and awe that Nature makes us feel. Join us in a series of small yet mighty personal challenges — spaced over 5 months — that will help us unlock our imagination, and find the magic and healing hidden within time in Nature.



[rewildyourself.com](http://rewildyourself.com)

[voicefornaturefoundation.org](http://voicefornaturefoundation.org)

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