



NATURE NETWORK 2025 IMPACT REPORT

A nature engagement project for KS3 students



WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?

Our aim is to work with students in Year 7 and 8 to improve wellbeing and access to nature using science, creativity and nature connection.

We want to minimise the dip in nature engagement that often comes with the transition from primary to secondary school and as young people move into adolescence.

We have three primary objectives

- To build young peoples confidence in accessing and spending time in green spaces, and their confidence in engaging with nature
- To improve young peoples science capital by using small fieldwork investigations - gathering and analysing data, doing practical work and recording information.
- To help young people utilise the mental and physical wellbeing benefits of spending time in nature.



LONG TERM BENEFITS:

The natural world needs passionate advocates now more than ever. We recognise that it is beyond the scope of this project to evaluate, but by helping young people and the adults that work with them to engage with nature we will be;

- Encouraging young people to feel more confident studying science and natural history - perhaps one day to make a career of it and become the scientists of the future!
- Ultimately improving the diversity of the sector - the natural world includes all of us, but the environment and conservation sector still has some way to go to adequately represent that.
- Setting schools up to feel more confident with delivering, and students more interested in opting into, the future proposed Natural History GCSE.



WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE IN YEAR 1



WE WORKED WITH A DIVERSE GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE

89 KS3 students (aged 11 - 14) in five schools across John Lyon's Action boroughs: Ealing, Camden and Kensington & Chelsea.

- 18% SEN
- 12% eligible for pupil premium
 - 29% White
 - 27% Black / African Caribbean / Black British
 - 21% Asian / Asian British
 - 11% Mixed / Multiple ethnicities
 - 12% Other



WE HAD GREAT FEEDBACK FROM STAFF INVOLVED

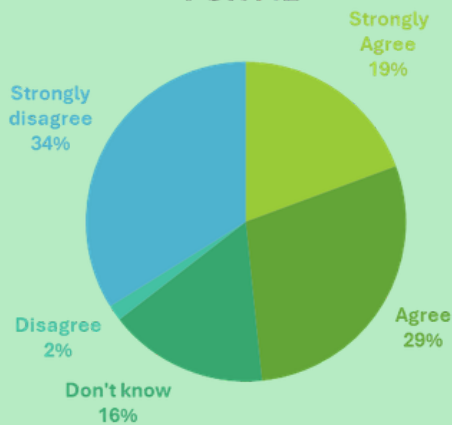
- 100% of staff providing feedback Strongly Agreed that 'Students have been able to relax and enjoy time in nature'
- 100% of staff agree that 'Students have shown more confidence in using nature spaces'.



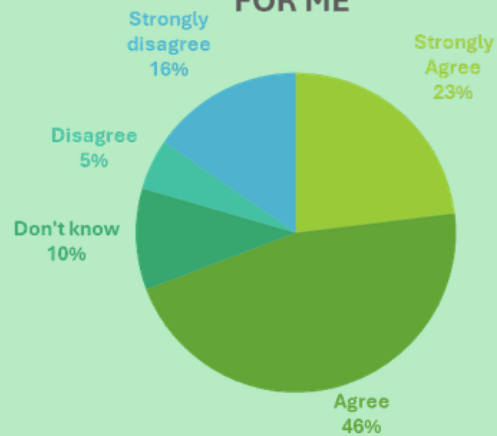
A MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE IN NATURE FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Using pre and post delivery surveys, we found that across the board young people showed a more positive attitude and interest in nature and the environment.

**PRE-SESSION QUESTIONNAIRE:
'I LIKE NATURE, I FEEL LIKE IT'S
FOR ME'**



**POST-SESSION QUESTIONNAIRE:
'I LIKE NATURE, I FEEL LIKE IT'S
FOR ME'**



The percentage of students who Agree or Strongly agree with the statement 'I like nature, I feel like it's for me' increased from 48% to 69%.

Some of the feedback provided from students when asked 'How does spending time in nature make you feel?'

'I really enjoy nature. My favourite things to look for are birds. At home we have a bird feeder and I always fill it up.'

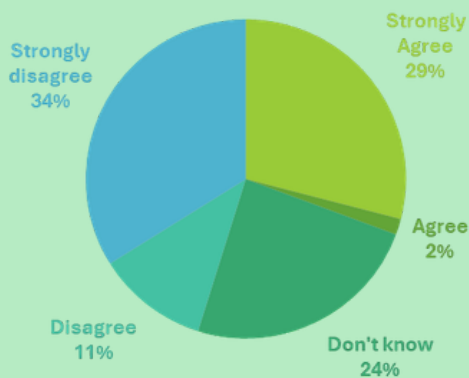
'I feel happy outside'

'I LOVE NATURE'

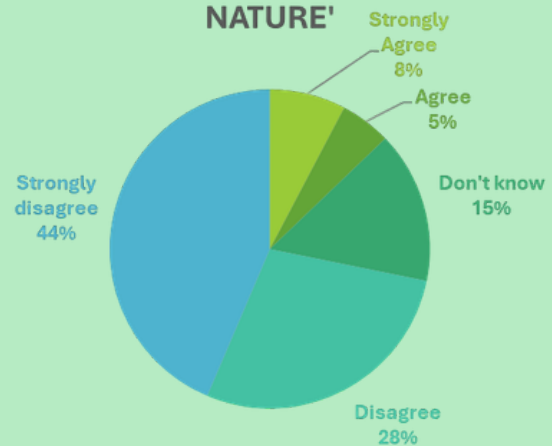
'Spending time in nature is relaxing.'



**PRE-SESSION QUESTIONNAIRE:
'I DON'T FEEL CONNECTED TO
NATURE'**



**POST-SESSION QUESTIONNAIRE:
'I DON'T FEEL CONNECTED TO
NATURE'**



The percentage of students who Disagree or Strongly disagree with the statement 'I don't feel connected to nature' increased from 45% to 72%.

Activities that were best received by students almost always involved tactile experiences - the chance to get hands on, whether with nature itself or by using specialist resources, for example, bat detectors.

Something as simple as catching invertebrates for classification acted as a great session to get students engaging with their surroundings, and doesn't require anything fancy. It also gave us, leading the session, some of our favourite interactions - initial disgust soon gave way to keen levels of enthusiasm, even from the most unassuming of students!

Negative feedback from students often arose due to the weather, rather than activities. Cold and wet weather definitely put a bit of a dampener on young peoples enjoyment of the outside - hardly a surprise.

There are plenty of activities we can run inside though, with minimal outside time, so hopefully we won't be putting anyone off spending time outside anytime soon!



TESTIMONIALS

From a secondary school teacher in Ealing:

'There has been a significant improvement in motivation to attend sessions.'

'Students speak with excitement about the club and enjoy going. I often have students ask me what we will be up to on Thursdays. Further to this, other year 8 students have heard about the club and asked to be involved themselves.'

'At the beginning of sessions, students have tended to be shy and reluctant to ask or answer questions and get involved. However their confidence has grown and you can see visible enjoyment and excitement by the end.'

Answering the question 'What are the most significant changes seen', one teacher writes:

'Students making a connection with nature and their own lives. Some have really just outside and paid attention to things around them. That nature and 'science' can be artistic. Increased awareness of different species around their community.'



WHAT DID WE LEARN IN YEAR 1?

It's hard to engage with a historically disengaged age range! We struggled in our first year with recruiting schools to work with - we'll take our experience with what worked and what didn't and build on it going forward.

When we do work with a school, we get great results! All the feedback from staff was positive, with noticeable change even over just 6 weeks. All the schools we worked with in year 1 are keen to join us again for year 2.

We also discovered that secondary schools can be a lot more flexible than we planned for. When we put together the initial proposal, we didn't think it would be possible to disrupt the school day, hence running as an after school club, however running sessions in place of lesson slots has worked much easier for some schools.

This does, however, add on some limitations, especially when it comes to timing and structuring a session when students have to get to another class afterwards. Even though this meant in some areas we had to compromise, we were still able to run impactful and fun sessions.



HOW ARE WE CHANGING GOING FORWARD?

- We're going to be more flexible on how we work with schools. We can run sessions during a lesson slot as well as after school, whatever works best within the school's day to day. We can adjust session content and expectations accordingly.
- Following discussions with our funder, John Lyons Charity, we've added the opportunity to continue working with schools beyond a single term - forming longer engagement with students so long as we have the capacity to do so.
- We can use the experiences learned from Year 1 going forward to target schools in areas we've yet to work in - and build upon what we've learned as to what works and what doesn't!

WHO ARE WE?

The Linnean Society of London is the oldest learned society dedicated to the science of natural history. Whilst our fascination with nature continues, the way we work has changed a lot in the last 250 years.

We use our historic collections and modern programmes to bring the natural world to the forefront to people of all ages and backgrounds. Our membership come from all walks of life and include anyone passionate about the natural world.

Across our education offering, we work with schools and organisations to bring science to young people in new, accessible ways. Every year we run the Our Local Nature grant, supporting youth led projects to develop their own nature engagement projects, and our Green Careers Conference invites undergrad students to discover more about the sector.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Nature Network project is kindly funded by the John Lyon's Charity. We have potentially up to 3 years of funding (2025 - 2027) pending successful delivery of the project across each year.

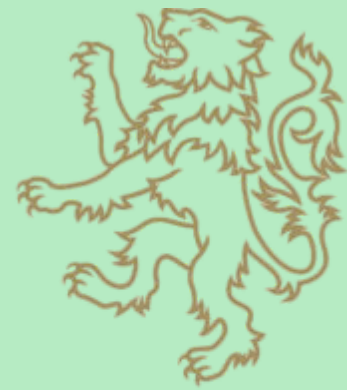
ABOUT THE FUNDER

Website: <https://www.jlc.london/>

John Lyon's Charity gives grants to benefit children and young people up to the age of 25 who live in nine boroughs in North and West London: Barnet, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Kensington & Chelsea and the Cities of London and Westminster. The Charity distributes around £15 million in grants each year.

The Charity's mission is to promote the life-chances of children and young people through education, which is consistent with the interests of our founder, John Lyon, when he founded Harrow School. We see education in its broadest sense and support a wide range of projects that provide opportunities for young people across our beneficial area.

Since 1991, the Charity has distributed over £230 million to a range of services for young people, including youth clubs, Arts projects, emotional wellbeing initiatives, supplementary schools, parental support schemes, sports programmes and academic bursaries.



JOHN LYON'S
CHARITY