

# School gardening notes for December

## Nótaí garraíodóireachta scoile do Mhí na Nollag



Making clay bird feeder in St Joseph's JNS, Tullamore.

### Teachers

#### Class Indoor

Junior In. Make bird feeders from apples and sunflower seeds. See [old.gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/Activities/A30.pdf](http://old.gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/Activities/A30.pdf)

Senior In. Do.  
First Make bird feeders from clay and bird seed. See [www.biodiversityinschools.com/uploads/6/2/6/2/6262929/bis\\_activity\\_sheet\\_-\\_bird\\_feeders.pdf](http://www.biodiversityinschools.com/uploads/6/2/6/2/6262929/bis_activity_sheet_-_bird_feeders.pdf)

Second Do.  
Third Make pine-cone feeders etc. See [www.pinterest.com/ggfisher/school-bird-feeders-for-3rd-graders/](http://www.pinterest.com/ggfisher/school-bird-feeders-for-3rd-graders/)

Fourth Do.  
Fifth Observe birds outside the classroom feeding on recycled plastic bottles. Use binoculars and bird identification guides to record species and frequency of visits. See [schooleartheid.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-nov-birdfeeder.htm](http://schooleartheid.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-nov-birdfeeder.htm)

Sixth Do.

✳ Training: SEED provide training in the basic skills of school gardening to whole school staffs. See [www.schooleartheid.ie](http://www.schooleartheid.ie)

✳ Stratify holly berries. Young holly trees are always popular at school plant-sales. See [www.schooleartheid.ie/pdf/intouch/Zoom\\_in\\_on\\_hollyandIvy.pdf](http://www.schooleartheid.ie/pdf/intouch/Zoom_in_on_hollyandIvy.pdf)



Robin on bird table – Cormac Madden

### Cookery

Make festive baked apples. See: [www.growingschools.org.uk/Resources/Downloads/GrowingSchools\\_YearPlanner.pdf](http://www.growingschools.org.uk/Resources/Downloads/GrowingSchools_YearPlanner.pdf)

### Weed of the month

This month's weed is the Couch Grass or Scutch Grass.

Dig up roots carefully ensuring that they are not broken in the process.



Cotoneaster

### Literacy/Litearthacht

**Detritivores/drámhóirí:** Creatures that eat decomposing matter.

*Neacha a itheann ábhar atá ag meath*

**Queen wasp/cráin fhoiche:** The only survivor from the summer's colony. She will hibernate until the spring in a dry, sheltered spot.

*An t-aon fhoiche a thagann slán ó choilínacht an tsamhraidh. Déanfaidh sí codladh geimhridh go dtí an t-earrach in áit tirim faoi fhothain.*

**Hibernating butterflies/féileacáin a dhéanann codladh geimhridh:** Brimstones, peacocks and small tortoiseshells hibernate until the spring. *Déanann buíoga ruibheacha, péacóga agus ruáin bheaga codladh geimhridh go dtí an t-earrach.*

**Bird table/bord éan:** A flat board on a stand on which bird food is placed. It should be light so that it can be moved regularly. *Clár cothrom ar sheastán ar a gcuirtear bia d'éin. Ba chóir dó a bheith éadrom ionas gur féidir é a bhogadh go rialta.*

**Bird box/bosca éan:** A box for nesting birds which can have different sized openings. It is usually positioned facing east or south-east. *Bosca d'éin neide. Is féidir oscailtí de thoisí éagsúla a bheith aige. De ghnáth, cuirtear é le haghaidh ar an oirthear nó le haghaidh soir ó dheas.*



Female holly



Pot of holly berries



It's the month of rest.  
Nature closes down.  
It's a good month for  
children to study birds.



Wren on  
author's hand

### Living things

#### Study:

Robin (junior infants); Holly (senior infants);  
Fox (first); Hibernating bee (second);  
Hibernating snail (third); Hibernating butterflies (fourth);  
Hibernating earthworm (fifth); Hibernating queen wasp (sixth).

See: [www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Publications/Education/Wildlife\\_in\\_Schools.pdf](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Education/Wildlife_in_Schools.pdf)

For art projects and outdoor exploring see  
[www.naturedetectives.org.uk/search.htm?search=Christmas](http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/search.htm?search=Christmas)

### Biodiversity

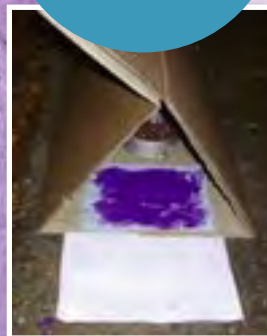
- ✎ Make a mammal footprint tunnel and a bird-friendly Christmas tree. See [www.biodiversityinschools.com/lesson-plans.html](http://www.biodiversityinschools.com/lesson-plans.html)
- ✎ Make a bird-feeder from a plastic bottle. See [www.blackrockec.ie/content/december](http://www.blackrockec.ie/content/december)
- ✎ Make a bird table. See [www.blackrockec.ie/content/december](http://www.blackrockec.ie/content/december)
- ✎ Make a bird bath. See [www.blackrockec.ie/content/december](http://www.blackrockec.ie/content/december)
- ✎ Hang a bird box. See [www.blackrockec.ie/content/december](http://www.blackrockec.ie/content/december)
- ✎ Do a bird survey. See [www.schooleartheid.ie/pdf/intouch/Hands\\_On\\_Dec2014.pdf](http://www.schooleartheid.ie/pdf/intouch/Hands_On_Dec2014.pdf)



Recycled  
birdfeeder  
– Eamon O  
Murchú

### General

All my previous *InTouch*  
articles are now available  
on [www.schooleartheid.ie/  
intouch-pdfs.html](http://www.schooleartheid.ie/intouch-pdfs.html)  
as well as INTO website



Mammal  
tunnel



Tits on feeder  
– Cormac Madden



Ben Ward, St Joseph's JNS, Tullamore  
with clay bird feeder



**PADDY MADDEN** lectures on SESE in the Marino Institute of Education. He also gives short courses to whole staffs on school gardening. His book *Go Wild At School*, has recently been reprinted. Available for €18 from [paddy.madden@mie.ie](mailto:paddy.madden@mie.ie) (Includes p&p).