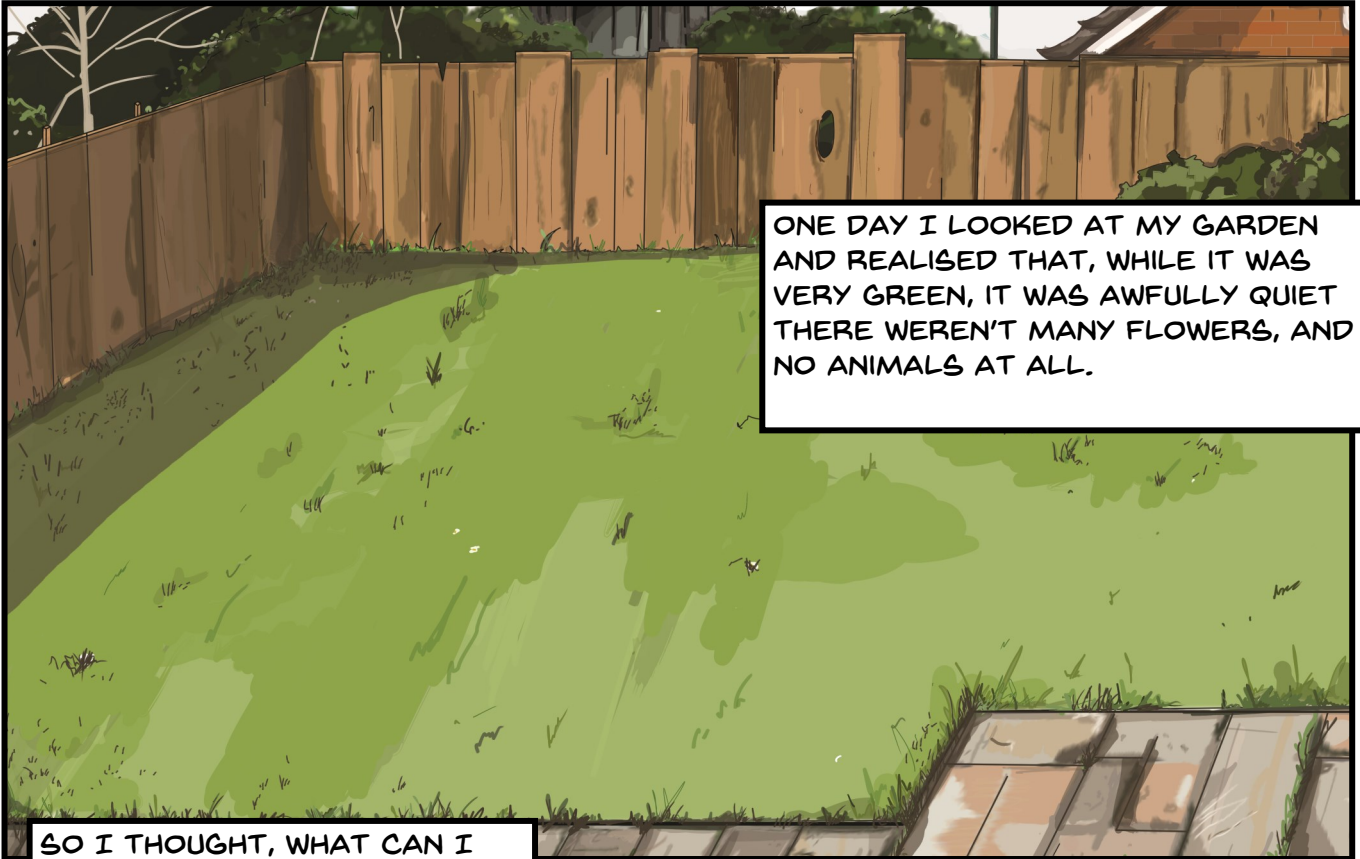


A SHORT STORY ON MAKING
SPACE FOR NATURE IN YOUR
GARDEN.

A WILD GARDEN

BY BETSY GORMAN



ONE DAY I LOOKED AT MY GARDEN AND REALISED THAT, WHILE IT WAS VERY GREEN, IT WAS AWFULLY QUIET THERE WEREN'T MANY FLOWERS, AND NO ANIMALS AT ALL.

SO I THOUGHT, WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE IT MORE WILD...?

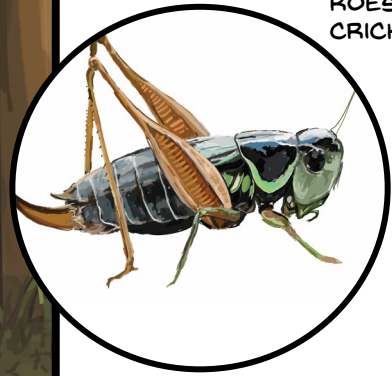


I'LL CUT A HEDGEHOG HOLE IN MY FENCE! HEDGEHOGS CAN TRAVEL UP TO 12 MILES A NIGHT, BUT THEY WOULDN'T GET VERY FAR WITH A FENCE IN THE WAY.
GREAT! NOW MY GREEN SPACE IS A HEDGEHOG HIGHWAY. BUT...THEY PROBABLY WON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT OR HIDE IN WHEN THEY GET HERE....

WHAT NEXT...?

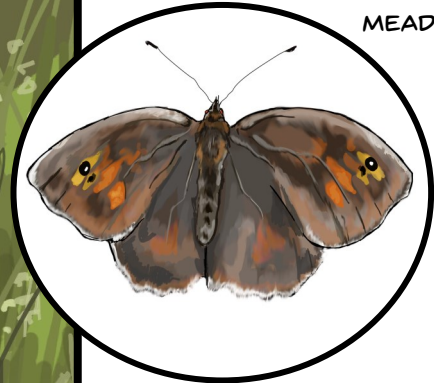
I LET SOME GRASS GROW AROUND THE HEDGEHOG HOLE. THIS MEANT THAT THEY WOULD HAVE A LOT OF SHADE AND A PLACE TO HIDE. BUT THEN OTHER THINGS STARTED TURNING UP!

ROESEL'S BUSH CRICKET



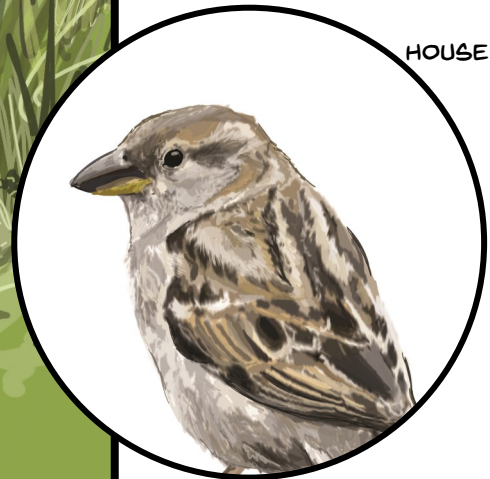
BUSH CRICKET'S STARTED CHIRPING IN THE LONG GRASS.

MEADOW BROWN



MEADOW BROWN BUTTERFLIES WERE ATTRACTED BY THE NEW LARVAL SITES.

HOUSE SPARROW



AND A HOUSE SPARROW MUST HAVE BEEN DRAWN TO THE SOFT SEEDS, APHIDS, AND CATERPILLARS.

ALL I DID WAS STEP BACK AND LET A SECTION OF MY GREEN SPACE GO WITHOUT MOWING. THIS MEANT THAT DIFFERENT GRASS SPECIES STARTED ESTABLISHING ALONG WITH CURLED DOCK, CLOVER AND THE ODD THISTLE. THE TEMPERATURE IS NICE AND REGULATED THERE SO IN THE WINTER I'M SURE IT'LL BE PERFECT FOR SPIDERS AND BEETLES.

LADYBIRD



NEXT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FUN TO MAKE THEM A SAFE PLACE LIKE A LOG PILE ...



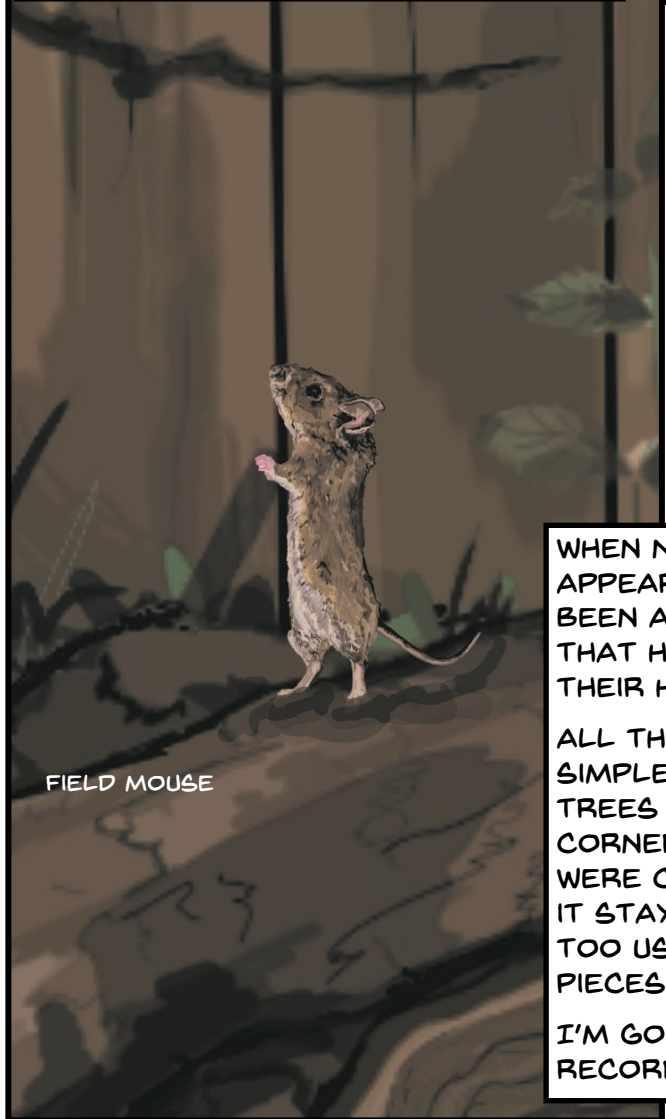
FUNGI STARTED SPROUTING FROM THE DECAYING LOGS...



AND INSECTS LIKE THIS STAG BEETLE AND WOOD BORING WASPS LOVED THE DEADWOOD!



STAG BEETLE



FIELD MOUSE



HEDGEHOG

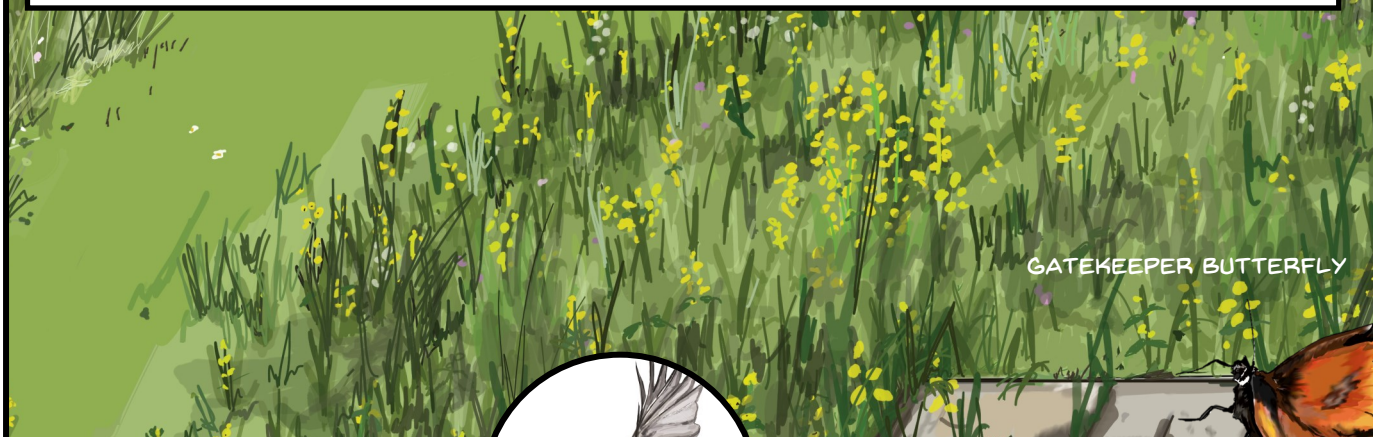
WHEN NIGHT CAME, SOME MORE ANIMALS MADE AN APPEARANCE, INCLUDING A HEDGEHOG. IT MUST HAVE BEEN ATTRACTED BY THE SHELTER AND INSECTS THAT HAD STARTED TO MAKE THE DECAYING WOOD THEIR HOME.

ALL THIS LIFE FROM A PILE OF WOOD! IT WAS REALLY SIMPLE TO DO. I LEFT SOME WOODY CUTTINGS FROM TREES AND LARGER PIECES OF WOOD IN A SHADY CORNER OF MY GREEN SPACE. I MADE SURE THEY WERE CONNECTED TO THE GROUND AND COMPACT SO IT STAYED HUMID. I'VE DONE THIS ON MY BALCONY TOO USING A BUCKET FILLED WITH SOIL AND WOOD PIECES.

I'M GOING TO KEEP ADDING WOOD AS IT DECAYS AND RECORD WHAT ELSE TURNS UP!



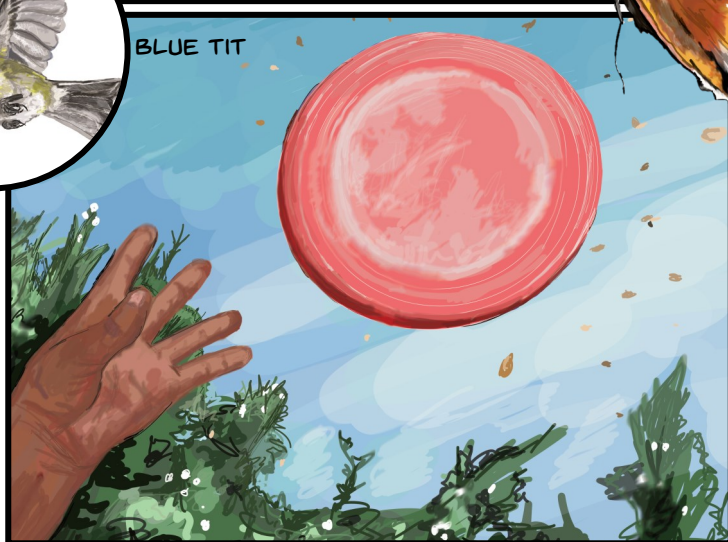
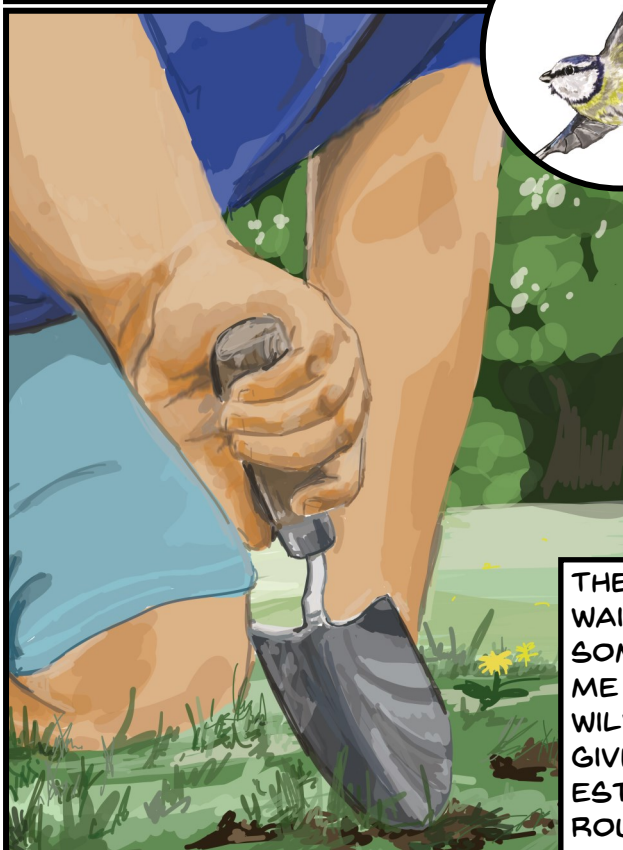
BUT I DON'T WANT TO STOP THERE! A WILDFLOWER MEADOW WOULD BE A REALLY GOOD ADDITION. TO START I PLANTED A BUNCH OF YELLOW RATTLE. THIS IS A BRILLIANT PLANT THAT NOT ONLY FEEDS RARE MOTH SPECIES, BUT COMPETES WITH GRASSES. BY TAKING UP NUTRIENTS IT GIVES OTHER WILD FLOWERS A CHANCE TO GROW IN THE GARDEN. I DID THIS BY NOVEMBER SO THE SEEDS HAD A CHANCE TO GERMINATE IN 4 MONTHS.



GATEKEEPER BUTTERFLY



BLUE TIT



THERE WILL BE SEEDS IN THE GROUND ALREADY WAITING TO GROW, BUT IT WOULD BE FUN TO TRY SOME GAMES TO CREATE MORE PLANT DIVERSITY! ME AND SOME FRIENDS FIRST PRETENDED TO BE WILD BOAR, DIGGING UP PARTS OF THE GARDEN TO GIVE THE SOIL MORE OXYGEN AND HELP SALLOW ESTABLISH. THEN WE RANDOMLY SCATTERED SEEDS ROUND THE GARDEN BY ATTACHING THEM TO A FRISBEE!



PEACOCK BUTTERFLY

IN SPRING ALL THE WORK WE DID MEANT THAT WILDFLOWERS BLOOMED IN THE GARDENS. THIS ATTRACTED BUTTERFLIES, BEES AND BIRDS, LIKE BLUE TITS, THAT FEED ON INSECTS. THE GARDEN IS NOW BUZZING AND CHIRPING WITH LIFE.

COMMON RYE GRASS
COLTSFOOT
BIRD'S FOOT TREFOIL
CURLED DOCK
RED CLOVER
DANDELION
DAFFODIL
TEASEL
FIELD SCABIOUS

BLUE TIT
SPARROW
STARLING
WREN
BLACKBIRD
ROBIN
PIPISTRELLE BAT
MEADOW BROWN BUTTERFLY
GRASS SNAKE
FIELD MOUSE

I CAN KEEP ADDING HABITATS AND THEN JUST LET NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE. AND I CAN ENJOY IT ALL WITH MY FRIENDS FROM A HOMEMADE FIREPIT!



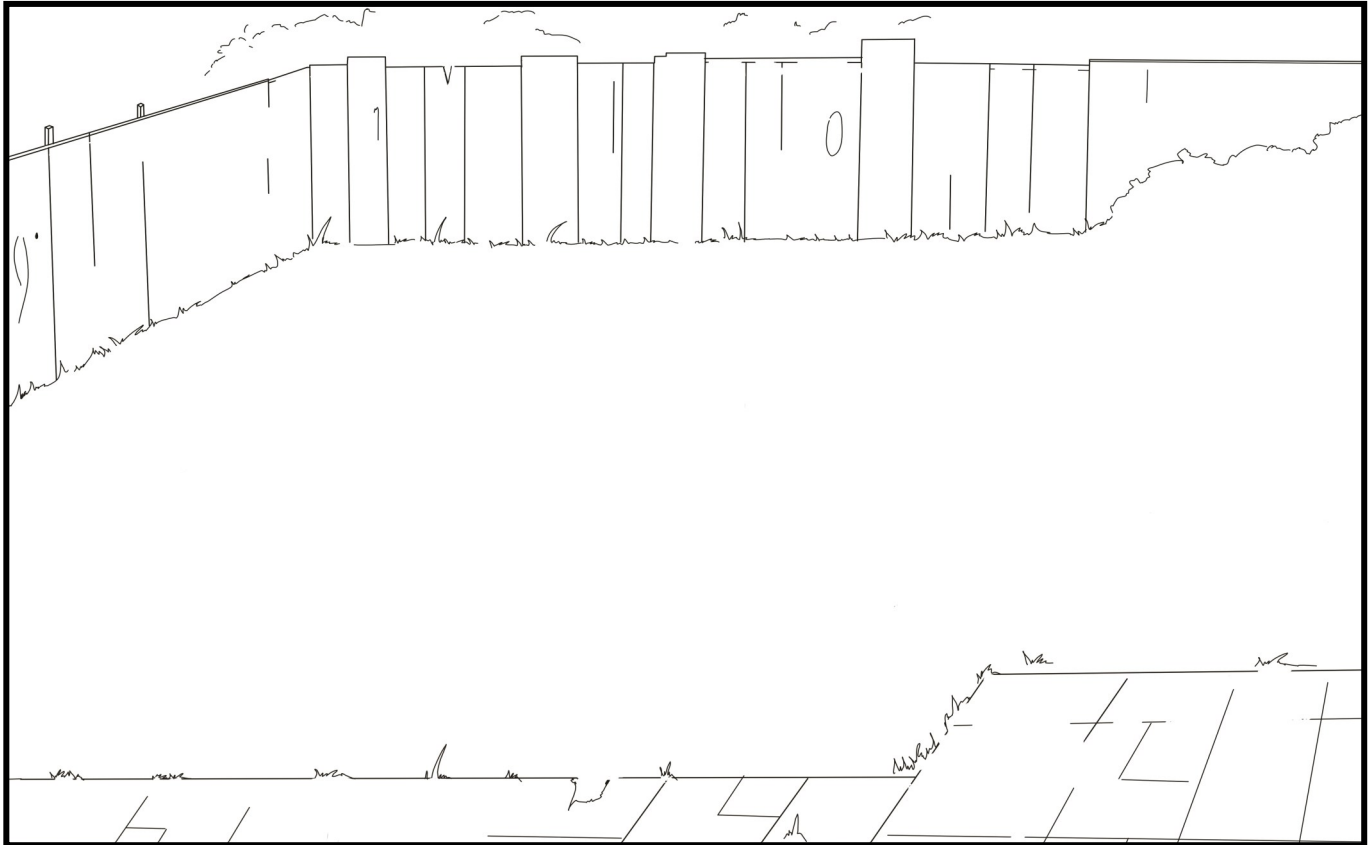
IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER HOW BIG YOUR GARDEN IS OR WHETHER YOU HAVE A GARDEN AT ALL. WE CAN ALL MAKE SPACE FOR NATURE ON OUR ROAD VERGES, WINDOWSILLS, PARKS, GREEN SPACES ETC. WHEREVER THERE IS SPACE, JUST PUTTING A LITTLE ASIDE FOR WILDLIFE MAKES CONNECTIONS BETWEEN FOOD SOURCES AND SHELTER SO ANIMALS AND PLANTS CAN THRIVE.



A WILD GARDEN

NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN
WHAT A WILD GARDEN
CAN LOOK LIKE, WHY NOT
DESIGN YOUR OWN?!

MAKE IT AS WILD AS YOU
WANT. I WONDER WHAT
WILL TURN UP?



WHAT KIND OF ANIMALS WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIVE THERE? WHAT KIND OF PLANTS DO YOU WANT TO GROW THERE? WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR WILD GARDEN?

