

New Life

There are signs of new life all around us. From shoots of leaves on trees and shrubs, plants pushing up with young leaves and buds and some early wild flowers opening their petals. Lambs and calves and foals are seen in the fields. Birds are busy making nests and soon there will be fledglings in the hedgerows and beside water.

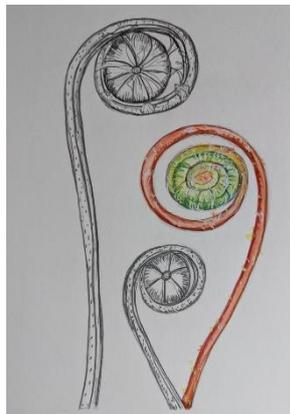
Materials:

- Paper (watercolour, photocopy, coloured),
- Pencils and rubber,
- Paints (watercolour, acrylic),
- Pastels,
- Coloured pencils,
- Felt-tip pens,
- Collage materials,
- Sharp implements.

Activity 1 – Pencil work with painting

I prepared for this activity by doing a few quick sketches and taking some photos. I was lucky that the weather was warm and on a walk I saw these two Brimstone butterflies.

At home I worked on the pencil areas first, giving more depth and texture. I then painted the butterflies with watercolour using a fine brush and quite dry paint. I used the same approach for these beautiful curved fronds of bracken and for the song thrush nest.



Activity 2 – Wax resist

Using small pieces of watercolour paper, start with a light pencil drawing of your design. Using pastels or crayons add your wax marks. Make sure that you do not colour everything as you want there to be a contrast with the paint. Do a watercolour wash over the whole picture.



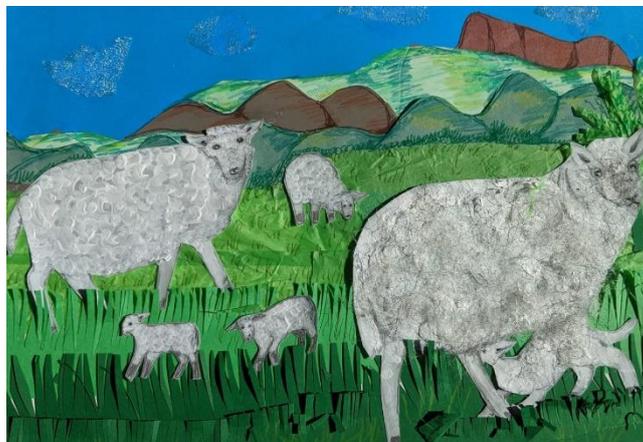
Activity 3 – Collage

It is always fun to play around with mixed media creations. Here are 2 examples of collage work.

A Song Thrush nest and eggs made from thread, wool and feathers.



A landscape with sheep and lambs made with different papers, wool and scraps of material.



Activity 4 – Impressing work

Have some small pieces of watercolour paper ready for your pictures. Work on the less textured side of the paper.

For best results, make a pile of magazines or newspaper to go under your work.

If you make an indentation on a piece of paper with a blunt instrument and then shade over it you will see white lines where the indentation has been made. This can be very effective for leaves, patterns on insects etc.

You could use the 'wrong' end of a paintbrush as your blunt tool. You could draw your picture with a light pencil first and then rub it out once you have made your indentations.

When you have made your picture in indentations, shade over the top using coloured pencils or pastels.

