
THIS IS A SENSATIONALIST HEADLINE

AND THIS IS TOPICAL FISH..



ISSUE #1

Oil prices leap like salmon!

Economy is in a bad place!

Olympic

torch

FLOUNDERS

Economy

Home searchers
chasing for
cheap ideas!

Topical fish



Louise Gold

Sea Shepherd

by Dan Glass



The Sea Shepherds conjure up a magnificent range of images. For some, 'violent pirates of the sea' for others, 'committed activists determined to stop the destruction of the oceans'. My interest in joining was drawn from the fact that, within the context of climate change, we hear a lot about implications on the land-in forestry, agriculture, on-land-biodiversity- but what of the sea? When I stare out at the vast blue sea I realise that I don't have the faintest idea how the whole system works, it mocks me. Indeed, it is incredible that scientists didn't believe there was life in the deep blue until 150 years ago and makes me wonder what else have we missed before its too late. So I was proud to help the Sea Shepherds mission in any way possible and to publicly connect the dots between the illegal slaughter of whales and seals, the effect this has on the whole ecosystem and potentially the undoing of the human species.

It seems back in Blighty we are comfortably aware of the destruction of our surrounding environment; the green fauna and the species that depend on the forests. But in the middle of an ever-increasing urban environment, the blue conservation movement seems to take a back step. Would we allow a trawler net, which sweeps the ocean floor dragging everything in its wake, through the rainforest? So I decided that I would devote a portion of my life to investigate, understand and finally document the effects of oceanic destruction.

With well-accepted environmental collapse, for me, Sea Shepherds do not believe in pie-in the sky eco-ideologies and instead use effective, front-line direct action approaches to protect the environment, putting beliefs into action. Sea Shepherds understand that there is no time to waste. On ship in Australia preparing for the annual voyage to the Antarctic, my admiration further grew for the group when I learnt about all the intricacies of all the hard-line action taken (sinking whaling ships in the dead of the night when they are empty and ramming whalers down in the Antarctic) and how they have got away with never being charged. Sea-Shepherds state they are 'law-enforcers' not 'breakers'. There are multiple policies, from The International Act on Endangered Flora and Fauna, the World Charter for Nature and the policies within the International Whaling Commission all forbidding whaling. But these policies are futile, if the governments are not going to enforce them. They only leave it up to the environmental movement to reject these laws which destroy the planet and enforce the already existing law for the betterment of the Earth. ☞

The actions taken by Sea Shepherds aren't the only reasons for their fame. Their structure also provides some notoriety; to the extent some cheekily alter the name after its founder, leaving it called, the 'Paul Watson Conservation Society'. The reason I felt that Sea Shepherds were failing in their ambition to save the worlds oceans, was not because they were intrinsically evil but because the structure is flawed. It allows too few people to usurp too much power: a powerful hierarchy which doesn't allow for democratic decision-making or a multi-faceted approach and elite who states they don't allow for any 'consensus shit.'

Undeniably, this authoritarianism doesn't allow for any detraction away from their 'single-issue' campaigns. The biggest threat to the world's whales isn't whaling- it is climate change. More and more environmental groups are seeing that climate change is so complex that it is impossible for it not to seep into the cracks of their campaigns. Public money and energy should indeed be spent on the glamorous chase of whale poachers. Public money should also be spent on attacking the others; those who think it a genius idea to spill chemicals into the sea and thus kill all the krill- which feed most of the sea, including the whales.

The Sea Shepherds taught me a lot within the months I was there, primarily, the importance of being within nature whilst it is alive. Society today is fixated on dealing with statistics and dead creatures, it talks about spending trillions flying to mars to find new life, all the while we are killing off the most intelligent creatures that we have on this Earth. In the battle against Climate Change, we have to use all our weaponry, arguments and intelligence, and the laws if needs-must, to bypass ego and battle together against those fixated on the destruction of humanity as we know it. Action by any means necessary. 🐉

Religions

by Aubrey

A Catholic and a Sikh
And a Muslim and a Banker
And a Lad and a Whore
And a Child and a Cancer
And a Drinker and an Eater
And a Knower and a Man
And a Muso and a Filmo
And a Techy and a Fan

And a Hoper and a Poker
And a Goner and a Choker
And a Winner and a Sinner
And a Fatter and a Thinner
And a Binman and a Suit
And a Worker and a Mute
And a Smoker and a Junkie
And a Tortoise and a Fruit 🍌

EXPLORING FAITH THROUGH
THE BEAUTY OF DESIGN.



NIRHIL KALGATGHI

2007.

A WORKER'S ENVIRONMENT

by Louise Gold

My position on climate change is pretty simple. Climate change is an unequivocal scientific fact. It is the product of a capitalist economy; thus it requires an anti-capitalist solution. It is from a socialist perspective that I see this solution being realised, and whilst it is the working class who are most effected in the short term by the consequences of climate change, it is also the working class whom have the collective power to restrain it.

The main anthropogenic greenhouse gas causing climate change is carbon dioxide (CO₂). The concentration of CO₂ has increased by 31% since 1750 to a level which is estimated not to have been exceeded for 20 million years. It is difficult to deny that human intervention has had a huge part to play in climate change when faced with this fact. It is largely due to the fossil fuel burning, land-use change, and deforestation of industrial capitalism that this increase has occurred.

Marxism explains Capitalism by focusing on the exploitation of waged labour by capital. This account therefore considers the processes which siphon surplus value from the working class to be the same as those which lead through the capitalist labour process to the degradation of nature. So for instance, in a factory that produces dolls in Cambodia, not only will the owner of the factory pay his workers intolerably low wages to create surplus value i.e. profit, he will also exhaust fossil fuels and create waste for the sake of this same accumulation, but with little thought for the negative effects on the planet.

Capitalism will subsume as much of the globe as it can and now even the skies. A way by which capitalism has attempted to deal with climate change is to see in the potential solution a way to accumulate profit. Carbon is now commodified in trading schemes; it has been given an exchange value. This is interesting because you can't trade what you don't own, and whilst the atmosphere was a global commons, creating property rights of the atmosphere has lent legitimacy to 'legally tolerated' emissions. Capitalism will in this sense create "a constant stream of commodities that permit the realisation of value however wasteful this may be and the attempt to keep consumption at a level at which this realisation can be assured." (Paul Vernadsky; A workers' programme against climate change; Solidarity-3126-7-february-2008)

The notion of carbon trading exemplifies how capitalism cannot deal with its own effects. The problem of international treatise too is that nation states and the international market are incestuously locked in a corporate web that weds political decision making with capitalist interest. The Rio Summit in 1992, the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and the more recent talks in Bali have been attempts to reduce carbon emissions but which are seriously hindered by capitalist interest by allowing countries and firms to exceed their quotas of carbon emission if they pay the market price.

I consider the working class to be all of us who are not holding the purse strings, those whom work for a wage or salary because we have to but who have little to no control or ownership over the industries or workplaces that we spend much of our time in. I see our interest in stopping climate change as being bound up in the considerable links between our own exploitation and that of the planet's resources, for capitalist gain. We will be hardest hit by the effects of climate change- as well as the global poorest already being devastated by it's consequences- expected to pay for market inspired "solutions" like lower wages, higher prices and higher regressive taxation. Workers however have the power to strike, to occupy workplaces and to bring production to a standstill. So preventing climate change, through the control workers can have over labour processes under capitalism and hence over carbon emissions, is a matter of international solidarity and action. Socialism is the step further still, a society where in workers not their bosses control the mode of production, and can do so for public benefit not private interest.



Peter Stanners

I cite the working class as being able to transform a system that is potentially heading us toward catastrophic climate change, but I do not want to undermine the significant transformatory power of making and abetting transitional demands in everyday struggle. A transitional demand is that which both bargains for the system to be changed for collective good with collective power, but that in the meanwhile portrays the impossibility of that system being able to sustain itself whilst still run for individual profit. So for instance, mobilisation of workers in industry could secure environmental ☞

regulation on several things, for instance preventing waste, forcing companies to use low emissions technology, making demands to outlaw deforestation or for free public transport, regulating land use and planning. If workers are at the head of making decisions about how their industries can change, then perhaps together we can create a just transition plan for a future of sustainable industry everywhere.

I am involved in a recent initiative called WCA; Workers' Climate Action. The ideas I have expressed in this article however are not those of the WCA but are my own. WCA is a group of politically disparate individuals (not all Marxists) who together hope to create national unity between the grassroots labour movement, and activists from the environmental milieu, to change current trade union policy, and create just transition plans for a future of sustainable industry. We make all our decisions by consensus, and are in the process of building a website which will serve as an educational resource.

Next meeting: Saturday and Sunday 24th and 25th of May, time and place to be confirmed. All welcome. Website soon at: www.workersclimateaction.com, alternatively e-mail: workerclimateaction@lists.riseup.net 🐞

Book Review by Dan Glass

Jay Griffiths, *Wild: An Elemental Journey*: 2006, Penguin

Derrick Jensen, *A Language Older than Words*: 2002, Souvenir Press

Today, thanks to authors such as Jay Griffiths, Derrick Jensen and fellow anti-civilisation critiques, it is almost axiomatic for thousands, possibly millions, to understand that human 'civilisation' as we know it, is flawed. These authors highlight that 'civilisation' has brought equal (if not more) abundance of disconnections, disparities and despair to the human-environment relationship that the shining economy, glittering corporations and powerful cities has brought to modern industrial society.

The founding themes of both autobiographical books' anti-civilisation messages are not ideological, but intensely political. They reach out to a (particularly urbanised) popular audience, who within the current condition of mainstream climate change realisation may feel materially well-off but morally uncomfortable.


Throughout 'Wild' the medium is the message. Very rarely does language so successfully portray a point whilst also living and breathing it; of mining, deforestation, loss of indigenous knowledge and perpetual rationalisation. Soaring with eloquence, it dramatically touches those who exist in the shadow of unnerving, relentless, mechanistic and dominating society. Within the context of Griffiths' travellers-tales of exploration, which follow her from the dark streets of East London, where she felt 'mocked by the ugliness and stupidity of the city' to the Arctic, rainforest and deserts and back again; it may be easy for the reader to relate to the need to 'look for the will of the wild.' 🐞

And, if I were to choose one of Jensen's 'Language Older than Words' major contributions to progressive literature, it would be the fact that merely within his first chapter he manages to unmask the ugly, manipulative and ruthless paradigms perpetrated throughout the last centuries upon people and planet that exist behind that beautiful, sunny word 'civilisation'. Continuing through the book, rationally and empirically, he embarks on his programme of inquisition with an anarchist's instinctive mistrust of power. He encourages the reader to pick up a dart, throw it at a world map pinned to the wall and then discover what (predominantly) white; western society has done to natural environments.




Joe Mc Gahan

The messages beg the reader to take a step back, examine the worth of their contribution to the planet and their very existence. Not often does writing achieve these mighty stakes. They humbly made me question 'when do we truly listen to the sounds of the winds, applaud the awe of the sky, thank the birds for singing beautifully, feel the leaves between our fingers and comprehend the magnanimous realisation that one day this may all be gone?' Powerfully, Jensen states that 'to lose your land is to lose your language, and to lose your language is to lose your mind'; a book disguised as a self-help reality guide in acclimatising to the daily weight of despair, some might say.


Too-often seen as unsophisticated (by publishing houses) in writing, the writers are not scared to take positions, with a powerful mixture of Griffiths speaking with emotion and Jensen through action. They have opinions, they take sides and they have a point of 

view for those scratching about in the backyard looking for answers. As Griffiths writes, there are two sides; 'the agents of waste and the lovers of the wild. Either for life or against it.' And each of us has to choose.

There may be no easy rational solutions to an irrational society, but unlike so many environmental commentators today, they do so much more than paralyse audiences with the 'doom' of the situation. If civilisation is such a relentless, ecologically destructive machine, the reader might reasonably ask 'why bother doing anything?' This is where Griffiths and Jensen give the answer: life is good. Life is really really good. Not mediated life. Not televisions, aeroplanes, satellite dishes and motorways. But life. Waking up with a lover, opening the window to fresh unpolluted air, climbing thick, lush mountains on a spring morning, swimming in meandering cool rivers. These bootks reveal nothing more than the fundamentals of love itself. If you are in love, you act to defend your beloved. Indeed for many (myself included), these authors reach further than the pragmatic reasons for ecological collapse and wrench at the reader's heartstrings with a dizzying love for the mystery and magic of this planet and incense the reader to collectively organise to do all in their capacity to stop the destruction in its place.

Undeniably, you will precede the writings with two new choices at your fingertips; you can carry on sitting in front of the screen, existing in the shadow of heavy industry, or run up a mountain, howl at the moon and blow up the instruments that silence the earth. As Jensen states, 'the point is the battle must be joined', and Griffiths, 'we must actively pursue relationships again with the natural world and rage against those who detest this colourful, wild and self-willed earth.' Indeed, soon enough, the reader may contemplate, what took them so long to get started. 

 by aubrey

t eleven he leavened my bread, and amidst the drippings of adolescence' foul breath, a song.

Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —
Globules of warm sticky fluid, drooling from raspberry gums and plum tongue, trickles, Ages tears over Youths spine, encased, Innocence preserved to be jarred and sold as jam.

Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —
At 12 my bread was leavened, arms and legs bound, constrained beneath the dry transparent sickly mess of adolescence, just my head free, with pliers between my teeth.

Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —
At 13 my walls of Jericho finally fell, seven days of horn blowing and drum beating, my city freed to flow forth from within, a crescendo released, as would, my song.

Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —Mascaponi —
At 14 my family ate my bread, buttered with silverware, dripping between the teeth of my mother and my father, consumed, digested, defecated, moulded, and finally consumed once more in the pedals of completion.

VOX POP

Answers from the land. Your land. OUR land.

How Much is Too Much?



"Surely it depends on what you're referring to? I can't answer the question without knowing what you have in mind because with some things, even a negligible amount is too much, but with others you could have a lot and it still wouldn't be enough. So you see it really does depend." – **Jeremy Vine**, selling analyst with computers.

"I was very disappointed with the metric system, 247kg being a particular low point...I would have to say 247kg." – **Casper Parkinsons**, quantity expert.



"Young people wearing hoodies, women wearing jeans to work, men not wearing hats in public, dogs sporting pretty waistcoats, koalas smoking long Davidoff ciggarettes, pygmy marmosets interrupting the House of Lords. This is all **TOO MUCH**." – **Norma Lemont**, teen icon

"Definitely a squillion" – **Lee Jasper**, speculator



"You know my son, sometimes something is enough, sometimes a number of things is enough, sometimes not having something is ever enough, something is enough and sometimes enough is enough...can you make sure you put in that 'enough is enough' part because it's actually a very intelligent, really cool way of answering the question" – **Robert Sportsman**, celebrity enthusiast.

"I am very smart and I know that there are many answers. Indeed, 'tis a veritable Hydra. You may think I will say infinity, but from the panoply I say this is a non-sequiter. The formulation seems ontological at first, but at its tristesse it is epistemic... You're tempting me into a false dichotomy here, I shan't fall for it. OK, for fear of but a mere Pyrrhic victory I will take the law of diminishing returns - it is my fait accompli if you will - this leads me to the garden of apotheosis, herein rests the kernel of truthhoodmanship". **Gary Nevelli**, from the Institute of a United Manchester.



"More than your recommended daily allowance of 100% RDA"
Anna Booty, media darling

Interviews by
Mandrake Ohseen

Up On the Roof

by Leo Murray

On a beautiful sunny day at the end of February, my colleagues from Plane Stupid and I scaled the roof of the Houses of Parliament, from where we dropped banners and paper aeroplanes made from confidential Whitehall documents. Our protest was timed to coincide with the end of the 'consultation' period over the plans for a third runway at Heathrow airport.

There are two reasons we chose to make our point in this way. The first is that Britain simply cannot afford the massive leap in greenhouse gas emissions that will arise from this planned increase in air traffic. It is not just common sense that tells us this, but very credible science that maps out the emissions trajectory that the UK will need to take in order to meet our commitments to prevent catastrophic climate change. The current plans to more than double the number of flights using Britain's airports will, on their own, scupper any chance we have of meeting the steep emissions reductions about to become law in the Climate Bill.

And this is where the second reason for Plane Stupid's campaign begins to become clear; the extraordinary level of collusion between the present Labour government and the UK's aviation industry. Because Brown's gang are well aware of the work that shows their aviation and climate policies are mutually incompatible and cannot possibly both succeed. But their response, rather than to revisit the aviation policy, has been to exclude emissions from International air transport from the targets in the Climate Bill. This choice, as well as contradicting and fatally undermining the stated purpose of the Climate Bill, also reveals a great deal about the close relationship between the Brown administration and their aviator mates.

This relationship was thrown into even starker relief by the so-called 'public consultation' process over Heathrow's expansion. As well as being barely comprehensible to an ordinary person (The Plain English campaign called for it to be withdrawn and rewritten) and, bizarrely, not containing any questions at all about climate change, it was actually impossible to say 'no' to the expansion plans by answering the questions posed in the questionnaire. None of this was an accident. Because this 'consultation' was a collaboration between the DfT and Heathrow's owners, BAA – a product of a joint enterprise called 'Project Heathrow' which was put together to push through the expansion plans no matter what. This body has worked tremendously hard to find ingenious ways to override public opinion, as well as doctoring key data on Nitrous oxide levels in order to appear to comply with EU restrictions on local air pollution. ☞

There are lots of good reasons not to build a third runway at Heathrow – the destruction of communities, the spreading blight of aircraft noise, the soaring and probably illegal levels of local air pollution, and the cost to the British taxpayer of subsidising yet more air travel – before we even consider the unacceptable climate change impact. But there is only one argument in favour of the plan – the economic case, and even this is looking increasingly shonky. Once again, the case rests on a set of figures drawn from a couple of economic studies that were commissioned by the DfT, but paid for by, guess who? BAA. Other economic studies examining the financial benefits of expansion at Heathrow have produced wildly different results, yet somehow this work has not been allowed to inform the decision making process.



Gordon Brown's hilarious comment in response to our protest – that decisions in this country should be made 'in this House, and not on the roof of this House', could not have been more apt. The whole point of our action was to highlight the fact that important decisions with great significance for the public interest are not being made in the House of Commons at all, but in corporate boardrooms, by the people who stand to gain the most from these decisions, and at the expense of the rest of us, whose views seem not to matter one jot.

The wider lesson this business over Heathrow teaches us is that in order to actually win the fight against climate change, we are not only going to have to make big changes to the way we as individuals live our own lives. It is now clear that we are also going to have to actively confront powerful vested interests who have undue influence over government policy, and will stop at nothing to prevent the kind of changes our society needs to make to become sustainable. The outcome of the Heathrow struggle will ☞

clearly signal whether or not this government is actually institutionally capable of doing what needs to be done to reduce emissions in line with the climate science.

If, as we at Plane Stupid strongly expect them to, Brown's government gives a green light to the third runway plans, it will be the beginning of a massive and probably unprecedented campaign of peaceful direct action and civil disobedience to prevent its construction. If our elected representatives are unable to make decisions based on the best interests of the British people over the interests of their corporate friends, then we the people will have to protect our interests from them. Plane Stupid are by no means the only ones who will be there to protect the village of Sipson from the bailiffs and bulldozers if and when they try to turn up to begin work. You should be there too, if you want to be able to look your grandchildren in the eye. 🐾

Extract from
THE 999 PROJECT by Trebor Golan

Atriums quivered and held fast, dictated by the contraction of networks that she could feel ending in the tips of flex and rushing to meet the pit of her stomach. Eyes give it all away. The fear of a toilet break or must you talk to a friend. Shy to look into his and see what they told of. Hazel. That's what they were, she knew. And glanced around. From thought to action to thought again she swung in his direction to see him and hear him. *I wondered where you'd got to.* A sofa of plump poked in her back as a fat raver jellied past. All smiles and similes he didn't care and neither did she. Grabbing his hand she took him aside; squeezing, smiling, glancing, checking, checking he was still there. Fingers wrapped enough to let him know that she was there for him. And definitely not the fat man.

Drums of sounds surrounding smothered words for ears and dimples and feet said it all. Jigs in time and out with the mass of bodied matter they stood separated from, brought them together. Softly, softly, pitter patters of neo-natal rain sent network tingles and elusive shocks that would not last for long enough. They kissed.

Darkness enclosed sight as her duvet senses were given to him, passing longing and desire in the best way she knew. He knew and held to her. Close enough to be one another's and no-one else's in the room of many and more outside.

The man in the pulpit devilled away on spinning vinyl stroking the crowd. He was the beast, he was the master of their freedom. One large slave escaped the massive and stumbled toward the two engaged. Staggered blindness could not tell him of their whereabouts and broke them apart in accident and haze. Hazel fell away and down to a snapping that rose above the devil beats. Heads turned to the emergency arisen; it was time to call an ambulance. 🐾

T JOES GUERRILLA GARDEN

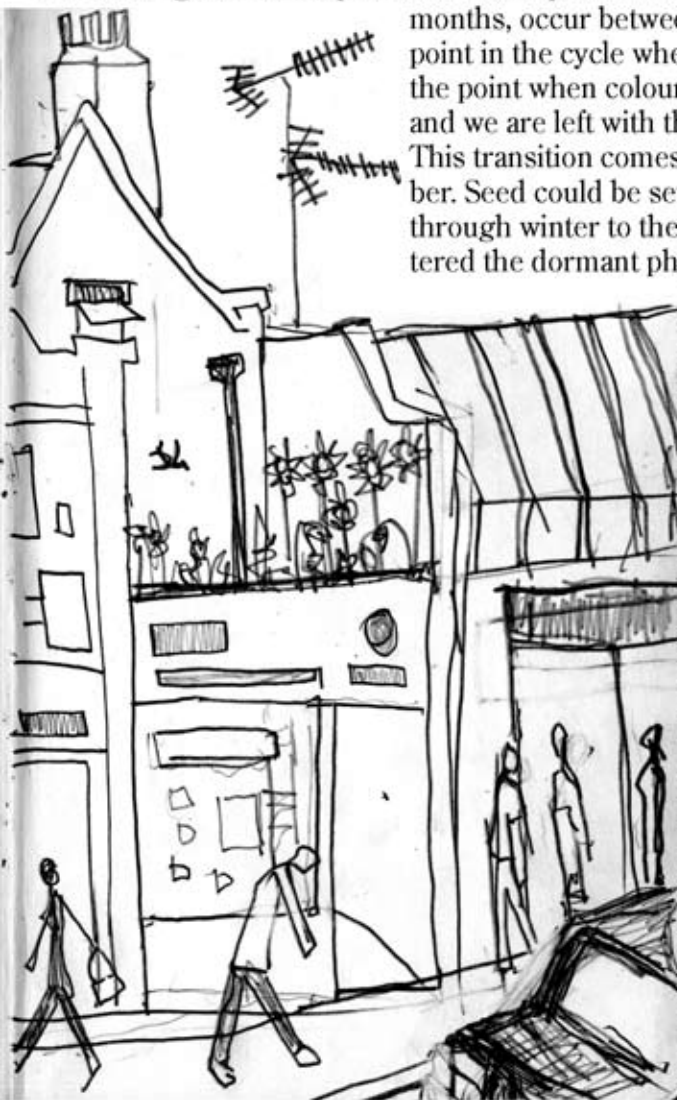
The window of opportunity to sow seed is always left ajar but it is thrown open a couple of times a year. These are when the conditions are suitable for the germination of a seed in spring. Also, in autumn, at the end of a flowering season when the plant would naturally set seed. These points vary from species to species, each adapted to occupy its own ecological niche, but generally speaking for the British climate in its current state the seed of many beautiful, nectar producing, life exuding floriferous plants that we experience throughout the summer

months, occur between April and June. The other point in the cycle when seed is effectively sewn is at the point when colour fades from flowers to leaves and we are left with the sculptural forms seedpods. This transition comes about from the end of September. Seed could be sewn at any point from autumn, through winter to the spring. When plant has entered the dormant phase of its life but it is most

practical and effective to do this when the ground is soft and warm at the margins of the growth period.

Sowing seed on any suitable patch of ground is a beautiful and rewarding action. Be it in a garden, on the verge of a road, in a gap between buildings, on a flat roof, in the cracks in paving, in walls behind railings. However, the centre of cities are often spaces where nature is made to retreat. But if we look around even the most barren urban spaces we can take heart from the resilient plants maintaining their right to exist amongst us. Buddleja clinging to cracks in walls, docks popping up from piles of rubble.


Great pleasure can be derived

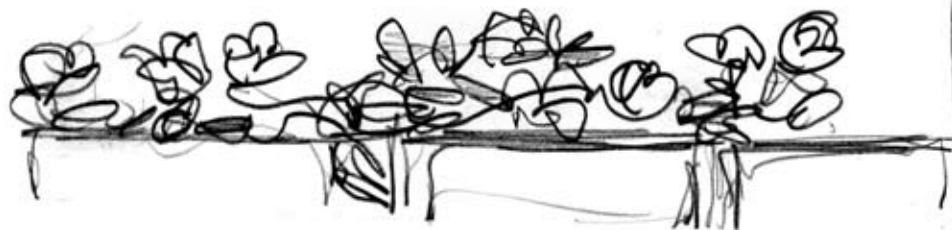


from aiding and abetting them in their valiant struggle.

There is a misconception that for plants to grow they must have neat composted beds. The reality of the matter is that many plants thrive in the uncompetitive environment of an impoverished soil. The most difficult part, in an urban environment is to find spaces that will be relatively undisturbed by human activity, those that will not be walked, driven or mown on a regular basis and will get some sun. These places are numerous if you look around though. From then the process of planting seed is relatively simple. You rake over the surface of the soil, making a fine tilth. The depth to plant a seed is generally around one and a half times its depth. Many seeds are so small though that this amounts to just sprinkling them over the surface. If you are planting in spring it would be best to give them some water but you can rely on nature to do that.

It is very easy to acquire seed that will be posted to your door from the internet. Look for hardy annuals, biennials and perennials. Plants such as Poppies (Papaver), Borage (an edible flower, much loved by bees), Nigella, Helianthus (Sun Flower), Scabiosa, Erysimum... the list of candidates is very long but the information on which can be directly sown and when to sow them is shown clearly on the web sites and in seed catalogues. However, I think that it best to sow a ready prepared ecological seed mix of flowers and grasses as this will give diversity, beauty and life to a space. A really good one is The University of Sheffield Seed Mix. Another easy and edifying way to nurture plants in a hard landscape is to blow the seeds of crevice plants, such as Aubrietia and Alchemilla, into the cracks in relatively sunny walls and areas of paving that will not be heavily trafficked (close to walls or behind railings). Do this in spring and spray the cracks with water and soon they will spill over with vegetation.

Words and pictures by Joe McGahan 



To comment, contribute or donate please email topicalfish@googlemail.com

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Layout and Design help by Pistol Pete

Please pass on to a friend (or recycle).