

POPPY Goes Wild



With a foreword by
Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall

WRITTEN BY
Nick Powell

ILLUSTRATED BY
Becca Hall

Teaching Notes

Poppy Goes Wild

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About the Story

Poppy is on a mission to save her grandad's farm by returning the countryside to a time when flower meadows grew wild and native animals flourished. Can Poppy succeed in helping nature to work its magic?

Foreword by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall - the multi-award-winning writer and broadcaster known for his uncompromising commitment to seasonal, ethically produced food and his concern for the environment.

About the Author

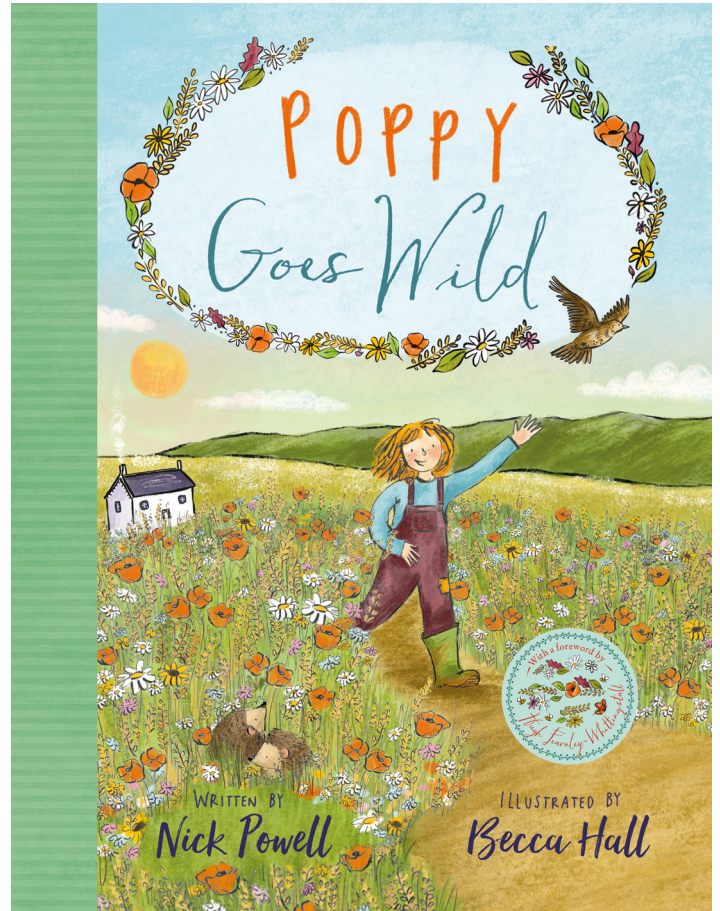
Nick is a multi-award winning television producer whose credits include launching the series *Supernanny*, *Escape to River Cottage*, *Nigella Bites*, *Food Unwrapped* and *Blood, Sweat and T-Shirts*. Born and raised in the Black Country, Nick grew up with a strong appreciation of the rivers, wild meadows and rolling hills of the surrounding countryside. As a teenager he was transfixed by the magical sight of an otter catching a fish and sunning itself on the riverbank. He didn't see another one in

the wild until decades later, when rivers began to be cleaned up. He is now lucky enough to divide his time between living alongside the South Downs National Park and the wildflower meadows of the French Alps.

About the Illustrator

Becca Hall is a freelance illustrator from the Lake District, now living in Cornwall. She studied illustration in Manchester and, since graduating, she has worked on a variety of children's books and other projects, as well as launching her own range of homewares and gifts. She loves to draw and paint by hand. Discovering nature is a theme that Becca is especially excited about. As a child, her grandparents let her explore and play in their woodland in the Langdales, where she made dens from broken branches and little gardens for the hedgehogs from moss and leaves, all while watching deer and badgers rustle about.

Visit her website at <https://www.beccahallillustration.co.uk>



Understanding Rewilding

'Rewilding is the large-scale restoration of ecosystems where nature can take care of itself. It seeks to reinstate natural processes and, where appropriate, missing species – allowing them to shape the landscape and the habitats within.

Rewilding encourages a balance between people and the rest of nature where each can thrive. It provides opportunities for communities to diversify and create nature-based economies; for living systems to provide the ecological functions on which we all depend; and for people to re-connect with wild nature.'

(Quoted from <https://www.rewildingbritain.org.uk/>, you can visit their website for more information)

You've seen Poppy and Grandad complete the process of rewilding in the story, and bring back the native wildlife. Here are some amazing examples of rewilding in real life.

Knepp Estate

Knepp is a 3,500 acre estate just south of Horsham, West Sussex. Since 2001, the land – once intensively farmed – has been devoted to a pioneering rewilding project. Using grazing animals as the drivers of habitat creation, and with the restoration of dynamic, natural water courses, the project has seen extraordinary increases in wildlife. Extremely rare species like turtle doves, nightingales, peregrine falcons and purple emperor butterflies are now breeding here; and populations of more common species are rocketing.

The vision of the Knepp Wildland Project is radically different to conventional nature conservation in that it is not driven by specific goals or target species. Instead, its driving principle is to establish a functioning ecosystem where nature is given as much freedom as possible.

Learn more about Knepp Estate at <https://knepp.co.uk/>

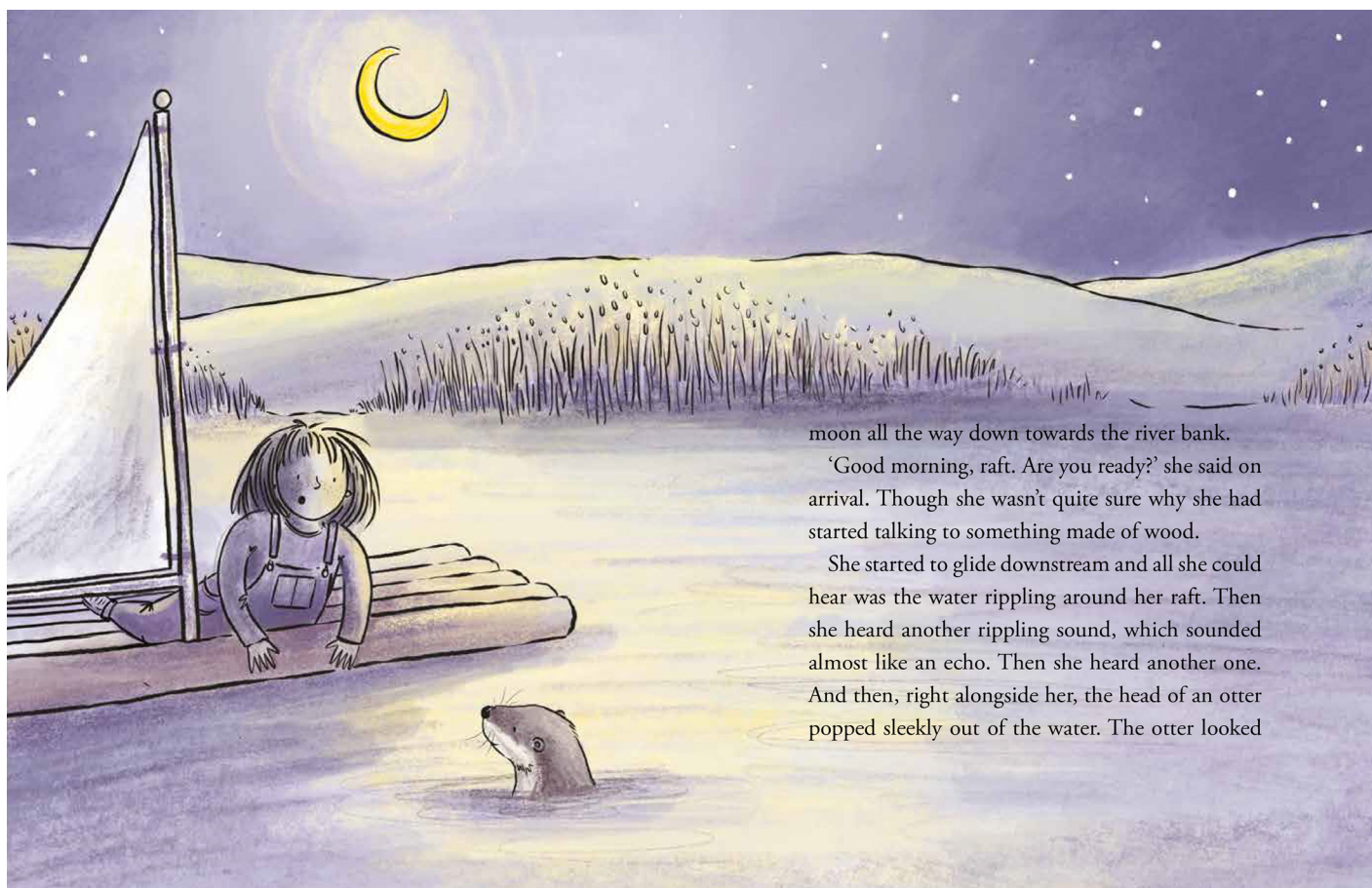
Dundreggan

Dundreggan, nestled in the heart of the Highlands, was part of an ancient hunting grounds of kings and lairds from the 14th century onwards. Now the land has been rewilded by Trees for Life, since it was purchased in 2008. They have planted trees to create a new wild forest, allowing the land to recover from centuries of grazing and browsing by sheep, goat, cattle and deer. They have helped the forest recover through natural regeneration and test new tree growing and land management techniques. Over 4,000 species of plants and animals are found at Dundreggan, including many rare and protected species.

Learn more about Dundreggan here <https://treesforlife.org.uk/dundreggan/>

Discussion Topics

1. Can you explain the process of rewilding in your own words?
2. Poppy and Grandad did a lot of hard work to rewild the farm. Can you remember what Poppy and Grandad did to encourage all the different animals to return? Here is a list of animals, birds and insects that returned to the farm to help you: hares, hedgehogs, kingfisher, skylarks, otters, grasshoppers, butterflies and dragonflies.
3. Why do you think rewilding is important? Can you think of the benefits of rewilding? Why is Poppy so passionate about rewilding?
4. Think about the character of Poppy. What words would you use to describe her? Give reasons for your answer.
5. Why did the otters leave in the first place? (This could also be set as an essay question.)
6. Go back to the moment in which Poppy first sees the otters. How do you think she feels? What kind of atmosphere has the author created? What language does he use and what effect does it have?
7. Do you know of any examples of rewilding? (Use this question to start a discussion about the examples above. Ask if the students know about any additional rewilding projects.)
8. Would like to visit the places discussed above? What would you like to do there? What animals would you like to see? What do you think of Poppy's idea of turning the farm into a visitor attraction? Would you visit the farm?
9. 'But it looks like the adults may have travelled back in time to a forgotten place.' Look at this line on page 78. What do you think the 'forgotten place' is?
10. Grandad and Poppy still want to do more to protect wildlife. What do you think they could do? Are you aware of any real life projects to protect the environment?



moon all the way down towards the river bank.

'Good morning, raft. Are you ready?' she said on arrival. Though she wasn't quite sure why she had started talking to something made of wood.

She started to glide downstream and all she could hear was the water rippling around her raft. Then she heard another rippling sound, which sounded almost like an echo. Then she heard another one. And then, right alongside her, the head of an otter popped sleekly out of the water. The otter looked

Activity 1 Rewilding Projects

To raise awareness about rewilding, why not create a poster about other rewilding projects? There are lots to choose from, have a look at the website below to help you come up with some ideas.

<https://www.rewildingbritain.org.uk/rewilding/rewilding-projects/>

Here are some questions to think about:

- What was the land used for before it was rewilded?
- How did its previous use damage the land?
- Who started the rewilding project?
- What was done to restore the land?
- What is it like now?
- What can you do there?
- Which animals and plants can you see there?

Activity 2 Nature Diary

Keeping a nature diary is a great way to record your experiences of nature and to refresh your memories of these events as you get older.

Getting started is easy, just find yourself any kind of notebook and a pen and start making notes of all the things you've seen or done in nature. This can be anything from going on a picnic to seeing a bird to going on a camping holiday.

When you are in your garden, the park or the countryside look around you and listen carefully to all the sounds you can hear. The more alert you are, the more wildlife you will be able to identify.

Why not try and learn the names and identities of 10 birds and see if you can spot them? And if you or someone in your family has a mobile phone, you could use free apps to record and identify birdsong. You could also have competitions with your family and friends to see who can recognise the birds by their sound.

If you learn what just 3 butterflies look like, you will have hours of fun trying to recognise them flitting around outdoors and you will soon reap the rewards of becoming closer to nature.

You could also illustrate your memories of nature by drawing what you see or taking photographs. And nature is a great source of inspiration, so you might even be inspired to write poems or songs about nature!



metres away from the trees, and tied a line of string between them all.

They stood back to look at the long strip of land they had marked off, which was going to be free from crops from now on.

Poppy clapped her hands.

'When this is overgrown, the wild animals are going to love it, aren't they, Grandad?' she said.

'They will, Poppy, but to make it even more inviting I think we should plant some mustard and sunflower seeds here. And which bird do you think really loves eating the seeds as they fall off the flowers?' smiled her grandad, before raising his eyes to the sky.

Activity 3 Running Wild

There is nothing like getting involved practically, so if you have the chance, why not see for yourself what happens when you allow a piece of land to run wild?

At school

- Bring up this idea up with a teacher and see if you can get permission to create a rewilded area on your school grounds.
- Once you have permission, you can get a group together to sprinkle wildflower seeds around your designated land.
- For a bigger project, you could also suggest that the school looks into putting a pond in the school grounds. You probably won't find otters in the pond but you will be able to see dragonflies.

At home

- If you have a garden at home, you could start your rewilding here.
- Ask your parents if you can have a section of the garden to rewild and do the same thing here, sprinkle wildflower seeds around to encourage their growth and soon enough your patch of wildflowers will be buzzing with life.
- If you don't have a garden, you could grow wildflowers in pots or window boxes.

Sometimes it just isn't possible to grow a rewilded garden at school or at home, but don't worry, there are lots of other ways to join in! Just join your local Wildlife Trust to find other ways of getting involved.

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/support-us1>

Activity 4 Vulnerable Wildlife

Poppy and Grandad did an amazing job of encouraging the animals that seemed to have vanished to come back to the farmland. However, there is still work to do to protect vulnerable wildlife and ensure that they don't disappear. Write a report focusing on one of the species that are considered vulnerable.

Here are some questions to think about when writing your report.

- Where does the animal or bird live?
- What does it eat?
- Behaviours unique to your animal or bird.
- Why did the animal or bird become vulnerable?
- What is being done now to protect them?
- Who is working to protect them?

Activity 5 Wildflower Word Search

L	C	M	H	M	D	O	G	R	O	S	E	O	E
L	O	Y	R	E	P	I	P	Q	U	J	W	S	F
E	O	S	A	A	M	U	D	O	G	Y	O	G	O
B	F	U	H	D	D	V	C	L	P	R	Q	X	F
E	T	H	K	O	I	G	O	R	M	P	E	R	P
U	L	B	B	W	N	Y	G	I	E	Y	Y	M	P
L	A	E	N	S	I	E	R	O	E	T	Q	F	D
B	U	J	S	W	R	P	Y	D	J	E	T	A	Z
F	T	F	T	E	W	A	A	S	X	K	A	U	O
S	A	F	F	E	I	I	R	X	U	E	N	E	B
S	D	O	P	T	S	A	S	X	S	C	N	D	C
Z	L	H	V	Y	J	V	W	J	C	U	K	U	G
R	E	W	O	L	F	N	R	O	C	Q	P	L	Z
C	G	N	F	U	J	B	K	W	K	P	C	C	E

Can you find the nine wildflowers hidden in the word search?

- BLUEBELL
- HONEYSUCKLE
- MEADOWSWEET
- OXEYE DAISY
- PRIMROSE
- POPPY
- DOG ROSE
- BUTTERCUP
- CORNFLOWER

Activity 5 Wildflower Word Search Solution

L	C	M	H	M	D	O	G	R	O	S	E	O	E
L	O	Y	R	E	P	I	P	Q	U	J	W	S	F
E	O	S	A	A	M	U	D	O	G	Y	O	G	O
B	F	U	H	D	D	V	C	L	P	R	Q	X	F
E	T	H	K	O	I	G	O	R	M	P	E	R	P
U	L	B	B	W	N	Y	G	I	E	Y	Y	M	P
L	A	E	N	S	I	E	R	O	E	T	Q	F	D
B	U	J	S	W	R	P	Y	D	J	E	T	A	Z
F	T	F	T	E	W	A	A	S	X	K	A	U	O
S	A	F	F	E	I	I	R	X	U	E	N	E	B
S	D	O	P	T	S	A	S	X	S	C	N	D	C
Z	L	H	V	Y	J	V	W	J	C	U	K	U	G
R	E	W	O	L	F	N	R	O	C	Q	P	L	Z
C	G	N	F	U	J	B	K	W	K	P	C	C	E



Activity 6 Coffee Filter Flowers

There's nothing like a real live flower, but a craft flower can be beautiful in its own way. Using the instructions below, why not use coffee filters to make some lovely flowers?

What you will need:

- Coffee filters
- Thick felt pens
- A squirt bottle filled with water
- Green or brown pipe cleaners

Instructions:

1. Smooth out the coffee filter on a plate.
2. Select several colours and draw concentric circles on the coffee filter, filling in the middle circle completely.
3. Using the squirt bottle, spray the filter two or three times in the centre.
4. Leave it for about five minutes so that the colours run into each other. Add another squirt of water if the colours haven't run to the end of the filter.
5. Leave for about 30 minutes to dry.
6. Cut 3 inches off the pipe cleaner and set this aside.
7. Push the end of the remaining pipe cleaner through the centre of the coffee filter. Push it through until about an inch is sticking out of the flower and roll this inch into a ball.
8. Wrap the three inches of pipe cleaner that you have set aside around the base of the coffee filter.
9. The end result should look a little like these photos!

