

In nature seeds germinate and grow secretly. There are many examples of the fruits and new growth that have silently followed the flowering of shrubs. It's even worth looking under the hedge. The blue lupin is still silently producing many babies. To the right of the arch you may spot the occasional Passion Flower. These are very shy flowers. They bloom for only a day at a time and are often hidden, but they are of special beauty with their symbols of Christ's nails and crown of thorns.

At this time of day the birds have fallen silent, though they may still be seen on the feeders. We do have a couple of visiting cats, an occasional frog from next door's pond, the odd mouse and a squirrel, but they don't usually 'say' much.

The Peace of Wild Things

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

by Wendell Berry

Leaflet created by Katharine Cheney, Summerscales, Quiet Garden

SILENCE AND NATURE



To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour

William Blake

SSSHHH

Please do not engage in conversation during this part of the evening. There will be plenty of opportunity for this when convene in the house!

Take a few moments to quieten yourself in prayer.

Have a few deep breaths of fresh air. Air is the Sustainer of life, day and night. Like the air you breathe, God holds you in being at every moment of your existence.

Now pause and quietly experience the silence of nature as you walk or sit in the garden.

Please use the prayer chalet if you want to (but allow others to do so as well) – and when you feel ready come into the house. Our senses, apart from speech, can be used in silence.

SIGHT

Enjoy the colour, shape, depth, texture, movement, etc in everything around you. Please feel free to pick leaves and flower heads. You may like to look at them more closely with the magnifying glasses in the prayer chalet.

By the troughs at the back door, take a look at the two or three unusual stones and their makeup. How quietly have they developed over the years.



HEARING

Are there sounds in this garden? You may even be listening to silence. At the far end are the bees. Don't go into that area but watch quietly and listen for them. They are probably going to bed at present.

TOUCH

Pick an apple, a pod of beans, some berries or other 'fruits' and feel their texture. Perhaps you would like to cut them up and look at their construction or draw them (there are pastels and coloured pens in the prayer chalet).

TASTE

Eat a piece of apple, or taste one of the herbs or flowers used for culinary purposes – nasturtiums, borage.

SMELL

Rub some of the leaves of aromatic plants and herbs – lavender, rosemary, lad's love. Savour the small of the air, the flowers, the trees, the earth.

