



## Eco CHURCH CHRISTMAS TREE

This year we have a '*caring for winter animals*' theme. But what is the meaning behind each of our decorations on the tree? What is Eco Church? How can we be more 'eco' this Christmas? Read on to find out more....

### Our Eco Tree Decorations

#### Winter woodland creatures

Some animals like hedgehogs will hibernate over winter. Others like squirrels will be dependent on their fat stores.



#### Birds, feeders and bird boxes

Birds need access to seeds, berries and nuts over winter to keep them warm. Providing bird feeders with a range of seeds and suet can provide the help they need for the harsh winter months.

You could also put up bird boxes to provide a dry, warm space for them.

#### Leaves

Keeping foliage and berries on trees and hedges can provide a food source. For example, birds love ivy and rowan berries, therefore save any pruning till all the fruit has gone.

Also, remember messier is better for wildlife. Grouping together fallen leaves and foliage can provide a hibernation space for animals.



#### Snowflakes

Wildlife needs access to fresh water throughout winter, so if you have a pond or bird bath which has frozen over gently melt a hole by placing a hot pan on the ice. Don't pour boiling water or hit the ice as this can damage the wildlife living in the water.

## Bug Houses

Bugs need somewhere warm and dry to stay over winter months. Bugs are vital to allow pollination of the plants in our gardens.

You could buy a bug house or make your own. At St Mary's Church in Car Colston we have our own 'Bug Church', which we can see pictures of on the tree.



## The Tree

Real Christmas trees are better for the environment than artificial trees, especially if you have a 'potted' Christmas tree. These can be planted in the garden most the year then dug up again to use as a Christmas tree year after year.

We could also consider hiring locally grown trees like the trees here today.

Did you know you can recycle your Christmas tree? In Rushcliffe you can place in or beside your green waste bin, or you can take to your local recycling centre.



**Our 'Star'** - the Bronze Eco Church Award, St Mary's Church Car Colston.

In 2021 St Mary's completed the A Rocha Eco Church Scheme, a Christian Charity to encourage care of our environment. This is a big achievement for a small village Church. Rev Ruth would like all five churches in our group to be Eco Churches. As part of this we have Eco Champions to drive these changes.

**All the decorations on our tree have been made considering the environmental impact. We have used recycled paper, LED lights and homemade salt dough. The bird feeders will be re-used in our churchyards.**

If you would like to know more or help the Eco Church challenge for your local church please contact our Eco Champions via [gemmabignall87@gmail.com](mailto:gemmabignall87@gmail.com).