

Our Place in Nature: Adventures on the John Muir Awards

Hazel Plater

Near Bardon Mill, Northumberland

2019-20

“We live in a time of disconnection, where for so many children, the roll of one mountain into another, the song of a pebble filled stream, the curve of a tadpole’s tail, the sensation of soil and stone beneath bare feet, or a lung full of air untainted by pollution are impossible to experience first-hand. We live in a time where reconnecting to the natural world is vital to our survival.

In this project, Hazel Plater, also known for her street photography work, documents a group of home educated children as they spend time connecting with the changing landscapes of wild Northumberland. Her images capture the wonder, freedom, and inspiration that the natural world can bring when children have the chance to experience it first-hand and beautifully highlight the way that exploration and conservation can go hand in hand with education and adventure.

There are many benefits to an education that happens outside the four walls of an everyday classroom; a freedom that comes with home education that leaves space for children to develop a deeper understanding of all those things which inspire them most. For the children in Hazel’s striking images, there is space to be outside, in the natural world, learning about the landscape by standing in it and being part of it. In this series of images, there is a tangible relationship between photographer and landscape, between children and nature, that tells a story of the importance of the natural world and illustrates the interdependent relationship between the land and the children who will inherit it.”

Kate Stuart - Artist, Writer and Environmental Activist.

This work is submitted for the 'Sustainable' category.