

LONG WALKS

& ANARCHO-

PRIMITIVISM

## a blog about change

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Available free on-line at:  
<http://www.fraw.org.uk/lwap/>

View the video for this post here:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPF\\_SKU-eEU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPF_SKU-eEU)

**Spend enough time outdoors and you begin to perceive the countryside differently. This is an [ancient landscape](#); one that our modern sensibilities are barely able to perceive. In part that's because we live in different times; but primarily it's the result of our lifestyle in this “*Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, and Democratic*” (or, [‘WEIRD’](#)) society. Many people have lost the intrinsic, animistic relationship to ‘life’, the landscape, and thus to the essence of being a living animal within a greater living world.**

For me, finding that moment on the hill, almost drowned in the distant urban noise of the darkening evening, was transcendent. But that was just one of many such moments it is still possible to find in the chaos of the modern lifestyle; *but only* if you make a commitment to go and find them.

If we have lost [something intrinsic](#) to perceiving a ‘natural life’, we will not find that again in some mythical distant past of [invented stories](#), conjured [to fill the holes](#) in our modern lifestyle. Likewise archaeology or anthropology, over their history, show themselves to be [fickle sciences](#), subject to [the bias](#) of the observer. And if we want to find new ways to live, nostalgically looking back to some [‘better’ imagined past](#) can't dictate [our future course](#) either (if only because, more than likely, it never existed).

*And what of all those TV natural history films?* Buried in rousing mood music, and

## Part 1: An Introduction... *with Musical Trees*

One evening I was walking back toward the edge of the town; one of my regular late-in-the-day, dash-around-the-block, five to seven mile circuits with what remained of the daylight.

At the top of the hill I paused in the scrubby copse; then sat and just listened to the rhythmic, lilting song being sung by the wind in the trees; with percussive accompaniment from the calls of blackbirds, and the branches above me drumming against one another. In the end I sat until it was dark, so beautiful was the ethereal music.

[anthropomorphised views](#) of the creatures [humans find ‘cute’?](#) They tell us [far more](#) about what's wrong with [how we view](#) the world, rather than giving us [an honest view](#) of world's state, and our place within it.

No. A more sensible relationship between [modern humans](#) and the [the planet](#) will not found: In a [book](#); on the [Internet](#); on [urban protest](#) lines; we will not buy it in shops; and politicians cannot enact laws to make it.

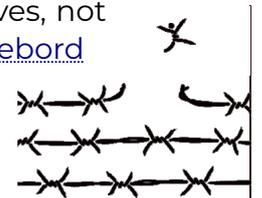
*We need a change in perception:* For that reason we will find it through the direct experience of what it is [to be alive](#) amongst all other *non-human* life...

*We will find it out here;* in the unfiltered, direct experience of being outdoors.

For example, all those nature films on the TV; *do you think people just go out and capture that stuff?* That all those insects, birds, and fluffy creatures are just ‘out there’ doing cute stuff for us to see all the time?

Camera operators spend weeks or even months outdoors, just to get a few minutes of footage; or continuous feeds from hides with automated cameras are edited (these days, by [artificial intelligence](#)) to give just the right [‘orgy of experience’](#) for the viewer.

No; from *Countryfile* to David Attenborough, how [the media](#) has ‘sold’ [the natural world](#) to the public is as an [engineered ‘spectacle’](#) – designed to reinforce our beliefs of how we view ourselves, not the world around us. As [Debord](#) [said](#), “*All that once was directly lived has become mere representation*”.



We see an abstracted view of the world in the mass media; then future reports [abstract that abstracted](#) view further, in order to meet our simplified expectations, until eventually it only represents a bare semblance of its original self. And as we have no 'direct' experience to compare with, we do not know this to be the case.

That lifestyle's not 'real'; it's not natural; it's a highly biased, [human construct](#) designed to reflect an imagined view of ourselves – and certainly not our objective place within nature and the Earth's environment.

Nature TV shows and eco-issues generally, are as suffused with illusory human hubris as the shows on technology or economics. If we want to see the world as it is, then we have to take that constructed view of the world apart; cutting through that curated, engineered 'spectacle', by seeing and experiencing the world [as it is; in person](#).

If Covid should have taught the public anything, it is that – irrespective of any claims to the contrary – politicians and technocrats are not in control. Just as, a decade or so ago, the financial crash demonstrated economists are not in control either.

The reality then?; *no one is in control of technological society*. Those 'at the top' are as effectively trapped in the ['double-bind'](#) of failing 'economic growth', and 'technological progress', as the ordinary consumer.

Now build-in [climate change](#), [resource depletion](#), and [ecological breakdown](#): The public can have no confidence that their lifestyle is being guaranteed by anyone. Or, to quote [Erin Brockovitch's](#) latest soundbite, *"Superman's not coming"*.

As I sat in the musical gloom of the approaching twilight I resolved what I needed to do; where it was I needed to go; most of all, how the work I do needed to change, to reflect this reality, whether people [liked that or not](#).

At that point I thought of a label to describe this idea; stating what it was that inspired this way of working, and what it sought to do:



## "Long Walks and Anarcho-Primitivism".

It's a grand title for what is a simple idea: That with minimal consumption, and as little expense as possible, anyone should be able to go and learn the practical skills of simple living; irrespective of the restrictions that the mainstream world tries to impose on our access to the outdoors; precisely because that world has ignored its historic 'duty of care' to protect our future. It is the only practical safeguard open to all, to deal with the kind of world that will inevitably arrive over the next decade or two.

The slow, grinding decline of what many consider 'modernity' is inevitable. This over-developed, [econometric](#) world-view shows itself incapable of the [kinds of change](#) necessary to avoid this – and even many of the people out to 'save the planet' are [still blind](#) to this reality, as they personally find it [so challenging](#) to their [present-day lifestyle](#).

In this new blog I'll produce information and videos to help those who wish to learn the skills of living simply – amidst the madness of our modern-day world. And yes, just like all that nature stuff on TV, this too will be a 'curated' collection. The difference here is that your challenge is not to 'see' what is being shown to you; it is to use the information to try out these activities for yourself. *You take the basic skills shown here, but you must find the 'experience' to give those skills meaning, as you see it.*

If there is a point to this blog it is, I hope, that you might slowly build the confidence to realise [modern society](#), and [the lifestyle](#) it advances, [are illusory](#); that much of the material goods it offers [are unnecessary](#) for a comfortable, [rewarding life](#). And that moving on beyond that [high-consumption](#) life, to something very different and very less materialistic, is not hard once you have the capacity to create it yourself, in cooperation with those around you.

*The best way to start doing that?:* Randomly spend a day on foot, at all times of the year, in whatever weather, walking from a train or bus stop – with no expectation as to what you might find.



If you want to really see the world then dispose of any 'plan' or a 'pretext':

- ◆ If you only go when the sun is shining, you will only see the world for a fraction of the hours in a year;
- ◆ If you only go at noon, you will miss the dusk, dawn, and twilight world;
- ◆ If you only walk in the day, then you will miss the beauty of the world at night;
- ◆ If you only go when you feel happy and energetic, how will you experience what the natural world can do for your spirit when you're sad?

Yes, *that's difficult*, because change is difficult; but the purpose of the blog is to introduce you to the basics of what you need to do this – which will hopefully make it easier.

If there's a solution to our [present problems](#) then it is not to be found in [yet more technology](#); that just compounds the problems of systemic complexity that plagues human society generally.

If a reliable solution is to be found by most people, then it is by living a simpler life, working with natural systems to provide for their basic needs.

The place you will find the inspiration for

that is out here, in the *'desert of the real'*. And yes, compared to those TV natural history programmes, the [monocultured](#) countryside covering much of England is a 'green desert'. If you spend all your time watching nature programmes on TV, it creates an unrealistic view of the world, and so the actual countryside can seem a depressingly empty space – until regular experience shows you how to find those 'special moments' which still exist out there, if you develop the skills to find them.

How you develop those skills, to adapt to the future change we face nationally and globally, is up to you. The only certainty is that in a technologically complex world, utterly dependent upon industrial energy and resources, discovering an ability to live without those things must be advantageous to your future security.

**That is what this blog will explore, both in theory and practice** (see box below). **In an uncertain world, it is sensible to be prepared; but even if we're lucky, and that future doesn't arrive in the very near future, chances are that you'll still have a fun time practising these ideas.**

### The blog and its accompanying videos

One of the great modern writers on the relationship between humans and nature was [Carl Jung](#). In 1921, in *'Psychological Types'*, he wrote:

*"We should not pretend to understand the world only by the intellect; we apprehend it just as much by feeling. Therefore, the judgement of the intellect is, at best, only the half of truth, and must, if it be honest, also come to an understanding of its inadequacy."*

You cannot experience *'feeling'* unless you can undertake some *'intellectual'* action to experience it; and if you do *'intellectual'* activities without *'feeling'*, how do you make sense of what you have done? Unless you work on both sides of that relationship, how can you make progress?

Each 'part' of *'Long Walks and Anarcho-Primitivism'* deliberately explores one or other of these two halves:

- ◆ This sheet is an example of the *'intellectual'* half – lots of words, and links to stuff on-line, telling you lots of things you may or may not know. In contrast

the video which comes with this part is more about *'feeling'*; it's a version of this sheet set to some interesting visuals and sounds.

- ◆ The other half of this approach, to be explored in the future parts, will be 'practical' sheets that focus on the necessary skills to carry out some specific outdoor activity – and the video with that will demonstrate how to do it.

Each part of *'Long Walks and Anarcho-Primitivism'* will follow this same format: 'Wordy' parts looking at a general themes; and 'practical' parts which take an essential skill and explains how to do it, in detail.

Ideally, over time, there will be a complementary balance between the two.



### Long Walks & Anarcho-Primitivism, Part 1: 'An Introduction, with Musical Trees'

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