

# Wildlife Explorer Pack

Autumn Edition!




**Lincolnshire**  
Wildlife Trust

# What's Inside?

Join us this autumn to discover how the wildlife around you is transforming and preparing for winter. As the leaves turn to fiery bursts of colour and the days become shorter, it's a magical time of year and a great time to get out and explore the natural world around us.

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Keep a look out for the QR codes in the pack, scan them to watch 'how to' videos.


# Action for Wildlife



Autumn is a crucial time for a lot of our wildlife. As they begin to hunker down for winter it's vital that they get the nutrition and support they need to survive the cold months ahead. Therefore it's even more important that we do what we can to help. There are lots of easy ways we can do this at home.

## Did you know?

The only mammals that truly hibernate in the UK are hedgehogs, dormice and bats.



To find out more about hibernation head over to page 27.

# Bonfire Night and Wildlife

As fun as Bonfire Night can be for us humans, it can be an incredibly scary and dangerous time for our wild friends. If you want to help them this 5th November, follow these simple tips.



If your building a bonfire always be sure to check it thoroughly before lighting. Or to avoid any of our wild friends finding shelter inside, make it the day of the event.



Hedgehogs are well known for seeking shelter in wood piles, however they are not the only ones. Many other species such as toads, newts and frogs often need help too.



To try and divert our wild friends away from bonfires, create separate small log or leaf piles for them.









Although it may be tempting to burn all excess wood and leaves, try to leave some for shelter.



When setting off fireworks, try to keep a good distance away from trees, hedgerows and nesting boxes to avoid disturbance.

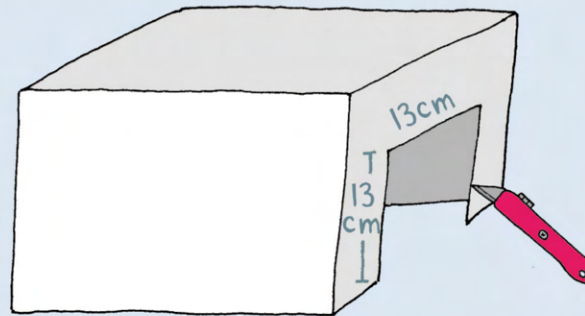
# Make a hedgehog feeding station

## You will need:

- Medium-sized plastic storage box 
- Stanley knife 
- Electrical tape / masking tape 
- A brick or heavy rock(s) 
- Two shallow bowls 
- High-quality hedgehog food or meaty pet food 

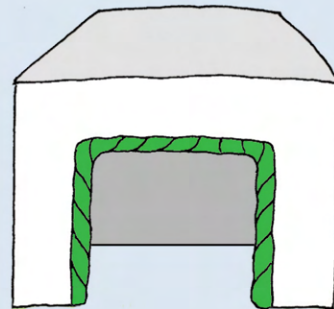
A feeding station is really easy to make and will allow visiting hedgehogs to feed safely away from other animals such as foxes or neighbourhood cats.

1 Cut an entrance into the plastic box.



Add a little bit of body text

2 Protect sharp cut edges with the tape

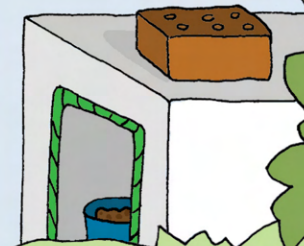
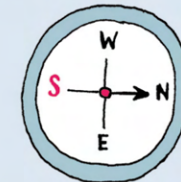


3 Fill a bowl each with food and clean water and place in the box, tucking it near a hedge (with the entrance facing south if possible).



4 Add your brick or heavy rock on top of the box to prevent it from being knocked over.

Keep the box clean by replacing the food and water each night to prevent the spread of disease.



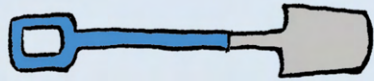
# Build a hibernaculum

Great for amphibians and reptiles!

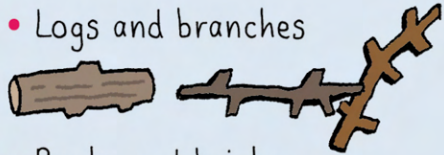


## You will need:

- Spade



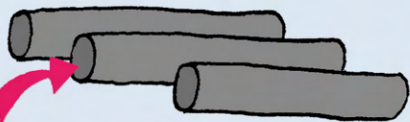
- Logs and branches



- Rocks and bricks

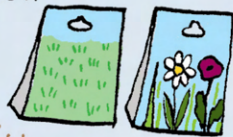


- 2-3 drainpipe off-cuts or cement pipes

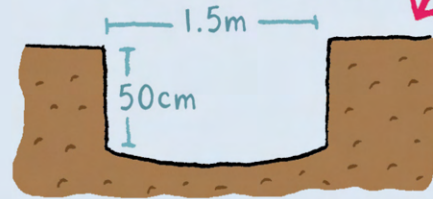


If using plastic drainpipes, roughen the insides with sandpaper so that they are not too slippery for animals to climb

- Turf or meadow flower seeds (optional)



- 1 In a sunny spot, dig a hole about 50cm deep and 1.5 metres across.



Be careful not to build your hibernaculum on free-draining sites or where the soil gets waterlogged

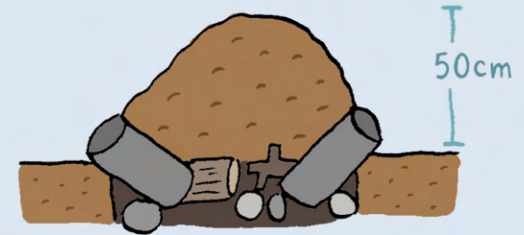
- 2 Fill with logs, branches, bricks and rocks, leaving plenty of gaps in between.



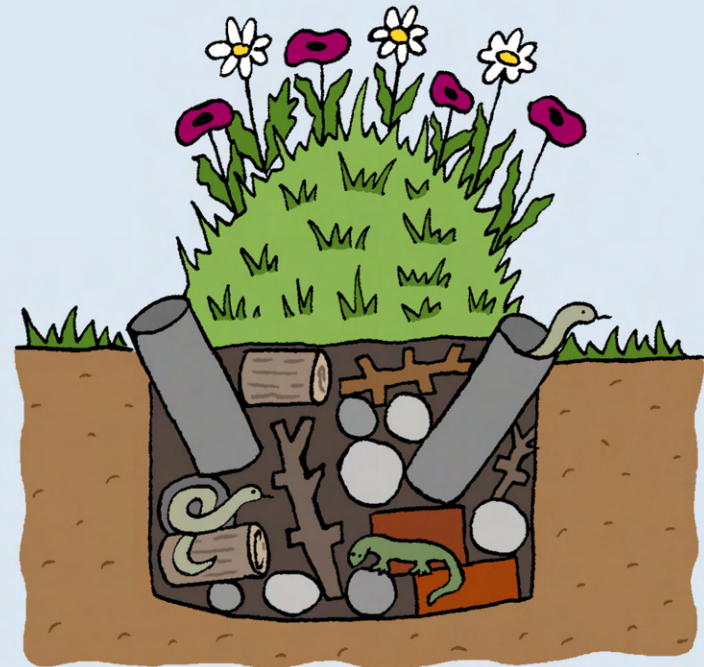
- 3 Insert entrance tubes (drainpipes) at ground level into the pile.



- 4 Cover the pile with soil (to about 50cm high).



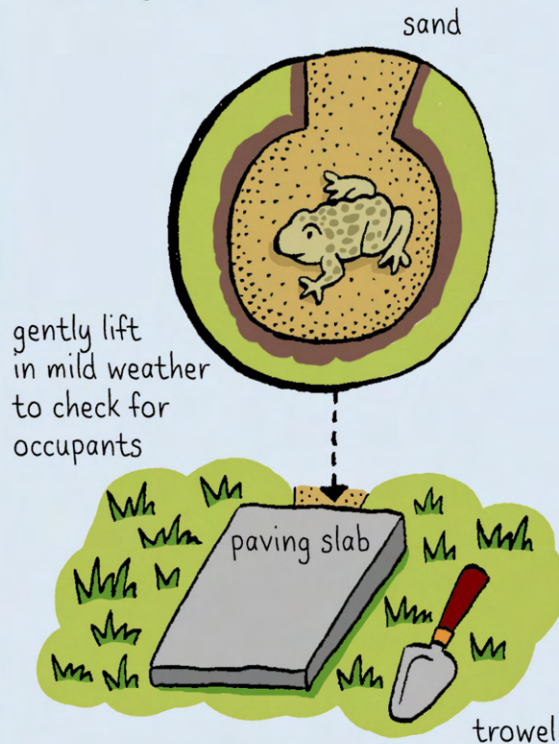
- 5 You can plant meadow seeds or turf over the mound.



# How to build hidey holes

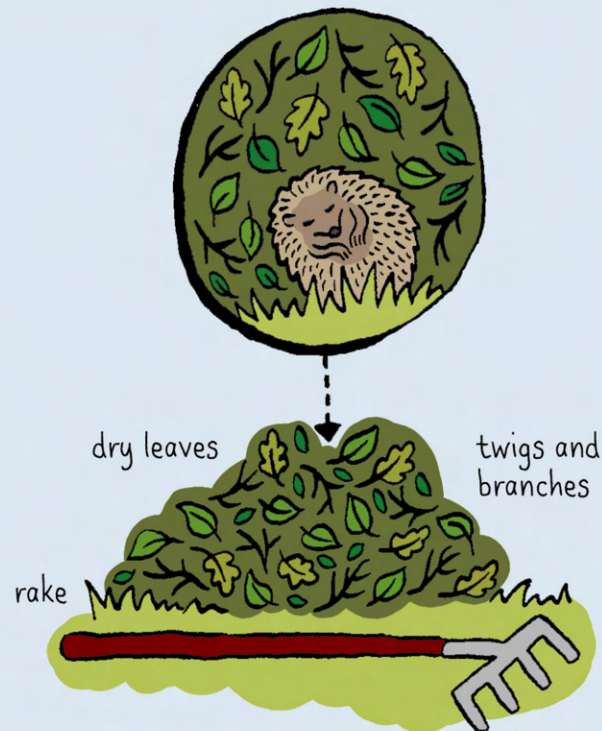
## For amphibians

In a damp, cool area of the garden, dig a shallow bowl in the ground and line with sand. Cover with a slab, leaving enough room for an upward sloping tunnel.



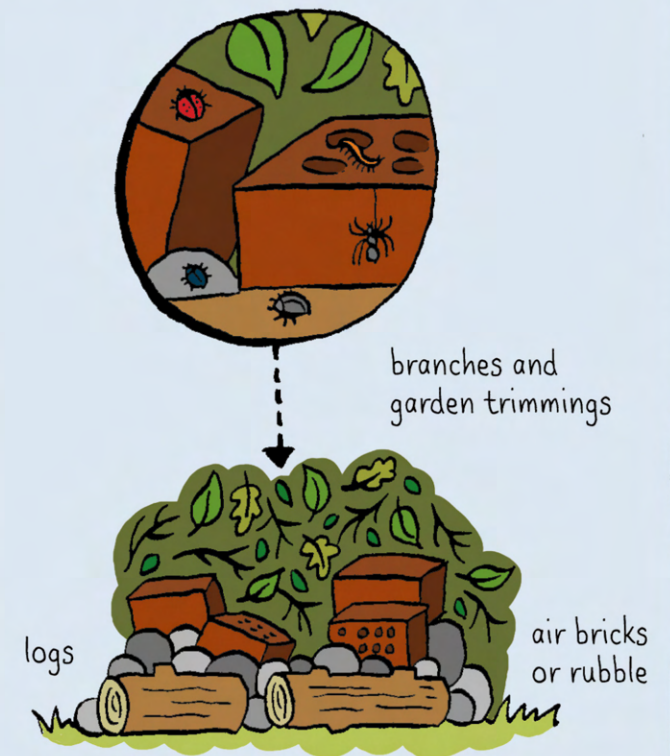
## For hedgehogs

Rake a pile of dry leaves in a quiet, unused corner of the garden (under a bush is best). Build a mesh of twigs and branches around the pile, and leave an entrance space at the bottom.



## For minibeasts

Stack up a log pile as the bottom layer and cover with rubble or bricks (air bricks have ready made hidey holes!) Cover the pile with branches and garden cuttings.





# How to make your own bird feeder

## What you need:

- dry ingredients
  - bird seed
  - cooked rice
  - grated cheese
  - dried fruit
  - breadcrumbs
  - chopped nuts
- hard cooking fat (lard or suet)
- a pine cone, coconut shell or yoghurt pot
  - Use an old yoghurt pot for this, and always recycle after it's been used
- string

1 Mix all the dry ingredients together in a bowl



2 Add the fat and give it a good mix around

3 Choose your feeder



plaster all over a pine cone



put it round the inside of a coconut shell



press into a yoghurt pot

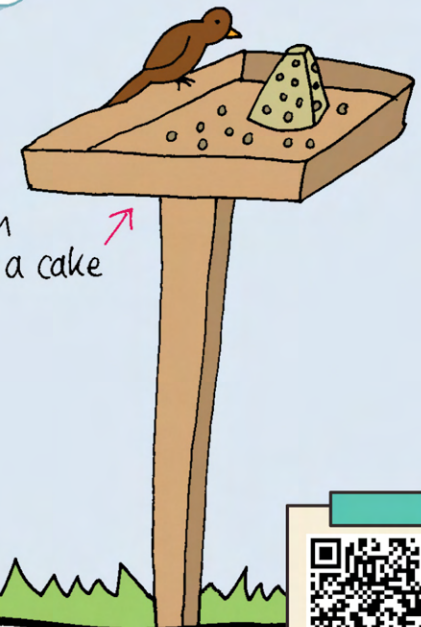
You can hang this upside down like a bell or turn it out like a cake

4 Hang your feeders with string (you may need to make holes and tie the string in before adding the mix)



Hang your feeder where you can watch birds without disturbing them

If you need to melt the fat, ask an adult to help



Scan me with your phone camera



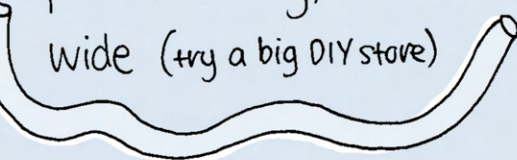








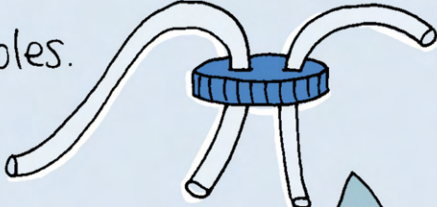
# How to make a pooter





## What you need:


- plasticine 
- jar with lid 
- 40cm of clear, flexible plastic tubing, 7-10cm wide (try a big DIY store) 
- a small piece of gauze, net curtains or tights 
- elastic band 
- green and red stickers or tape 

**1** Make 2 holes in the lid (ask an adult to help with this) 

**2** Cut 2 lengths of tubing about 15cm and 25cm long and poke them through the holes. 

**3** Put the gauze over the end of the shorter tube and mark the other end with a green sticker/tape. 

**4** Mark the longer tube with a red sticker/tape (red means 'don't suck this tube'). 

**5** Put some plasticine around the tube holes to make them airtight. 

Now you're ready to pooter!



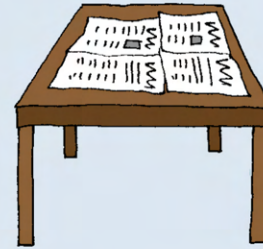
# Build a bird's nest

## You will need

- Newspaper
- Bags or baskets to collect nesting material
- Access to: sticks, grass, leaves, various other natural materials like pine needles, feathers, moss and mud



1 Lay some newspaper on the ground or a table where you want to make your nest – things are going to get messy!



2 Head outdoors and collect all your natural materials and bring it back to your working area. Empty it all out onto the newspaper.



3 Weave your twigs, grass and moss and your natural materials together, and use some mud to keep it all in place.

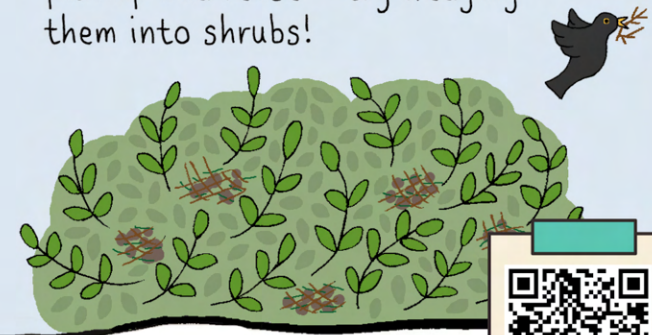


Try weaving your nest with two fingers, like a bird's beak!

4 When you've finished, show your nests to each other. Would eggs be snug and cosy? How strong is your nest? How many chocolate eggs you can fit inside?



5 Consider dismantling your nests and leave the materials for real birds to pick up and reuse – try wedging them into shrubs!



# How to have a plastic-free Halloween

## Get creative and make decorations

that are recyclable! Such as paper ghosts, Halloween wreaths made from twigs and leaves, or use brown string to create spider webs.

## Reusable treat containers

Upcycle a plastic tub, pillowcase or tote bag by decorating it with a spooky design.

## Home-baked treats

Instead of individual plastic-wrapped sweets, cook up some fudge or bake your own spooky cookies. Children will love decorating them!

Bring costumes back from the dead by reusing old costumes, swap costumes with friends or family, or even rent a costume just for the night. If you are looking for a waste-free costume, face paint is the perfect option!

How about using the leftovers to make a pumpkin pie or soup? Alternatively, roasted pumpkin seeds make a quick and easy snack!

# Wildlife Discovery

For many plants, insects and some mammals, autumn is a time of slowing down in preparation for winter. But for fungi, it's a time of growth and the best time to explore this magical miniature kingdom: you may be surprised at how many you find! Take a look at our activities and spotter sheets to help you discover autumn wildlife.

## Did you know?

Fungi grow in every habitat and you don't need to go to a nature reserve to find them. There will more than likely be several species in your garden.



Head over to page 19  
for our fungi spotter sheet

# How to make a journey stick

## You will need

- Strong, sturdy stick



- String (or double-sided tape)



- Scissors (if using string)



- Walking shoes



Always respect wildlife.  
NEVER pick wildflowers.



- 1 Go for a walk, taking your stick and string (or tape).



- 2 Pick up things that interest you on the way...



Leaves



Feathers



Petals



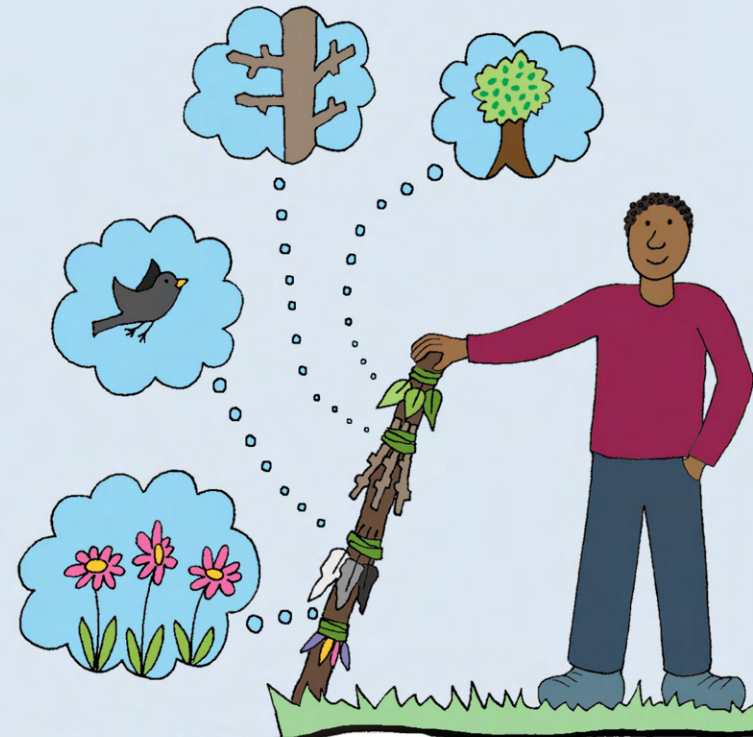
Twigs

Remember: always wash your hands thoroughly before eating or drinking.

- 3 Use your string (or tape) to attach them to your stick.



- 4 When you get home, you can use your stick to remember, and talk about, your journey.



# Nut hunting

Who's nibbled that nut?



## Dormouse

- Smooth inner rim of hole
- Tooth marks on surface of nut at angles in a spiral around the hole



## Wood mouse

- Parallel tooth marks on inner rim of hole
- Rough tooth marks around outer rim of hole



## Bank vole

- Parallel tooth marks on inner rim of hole
- No tooth marks on surface of nut



## Squirrel

- Smooth - no tooth marks
- Cracks nutshells open cleanly



## Woodpecker and nuthatch

- Wedge nuts into crevices
- Cracks nutshells open by hammering with beak



# Start a nature table

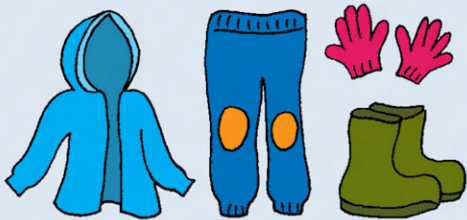
Start a nature table at home, your workplace or school to share your wild findings with colleagues, friends and family. From feathers, mosses, pine cones, fossils to animal bones and egg shells – make it as interesting as possible!



# Puddle jumping!

## You will need

- Waterproof jacket with a hood, gloves if cold, waterproof trousers and wellies.



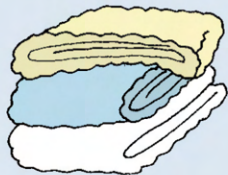
- Puddles – if they are muddy puddles, all the better!



- Hot drinks



- Towels and a warm dry area to go to afterwards.



Bring a change of clothes just in case!

## We all like jumping in puddles!

There is no need to stay inside during or after rain. Playing in puddles can introduce all sorts of concepts, from depth and width, floating and sinking, to what it feels like to be muddy or stuck in mud. You can make squelchy and splashing noises, and jumping is great exercise and helps promote balance.

## Try and find a range of puddles

(but don't play near a road, no matter how good the puddle looks).

Ask an adult to check the puddles out first to make sure that they are safe to jump across or into.

Who can make the biggest splash?  
Try two people jumping in at the same time.

Can you float a leaf or a stone?

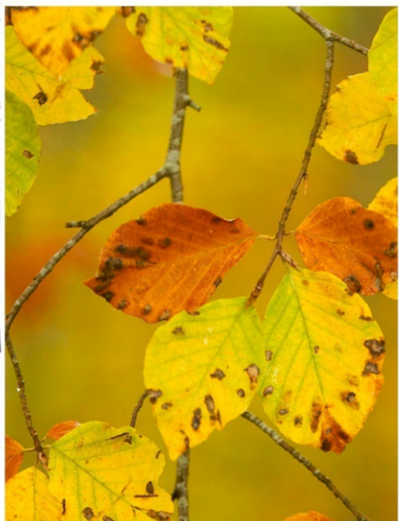
Can you creep across quietly with no splashing?  
Who leaves the smallest ripples?

Who can cross the puddle like a frog?





# Autumn tree and leaf detective



Beech



Ash



Oak



Sweet chestnut



Horse chestnut



Hazel



Silver birch



Sycamore



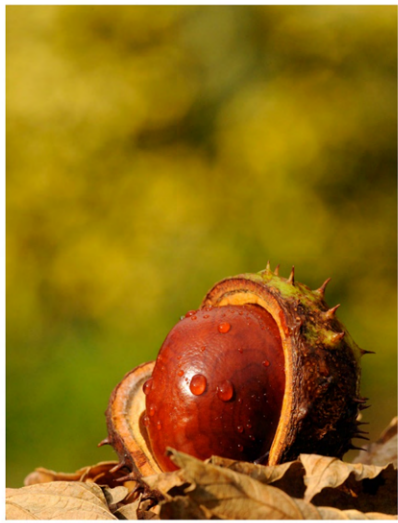
Hawthorn



Elder



# Woodland wildlife in autumn



Conker



Jay



Grey squirrel



Beech mast



Nuthatch



Crane fly



Fly agaric



Wood mouse



Acorn

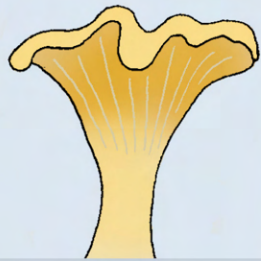


Puffballs

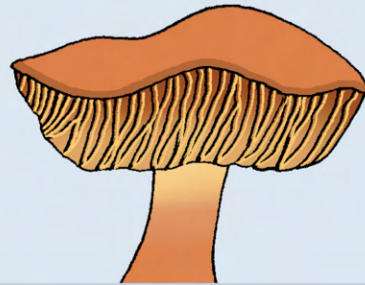


# Fungi identification

NEVER  
pick and eat  
wild mushrooms  
unless you're  
with a qualified  
expert who has  
told you it  
is safe.



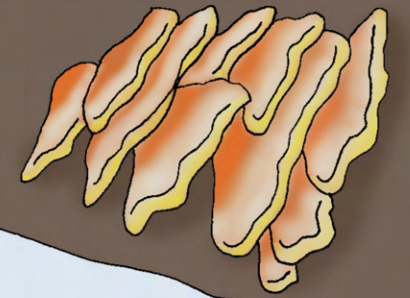
Chanterelle



Waxcap



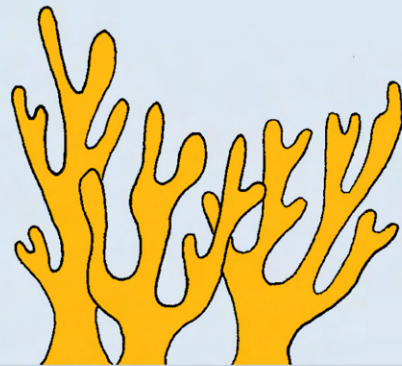
Horn of plenty



Chicken of the woods



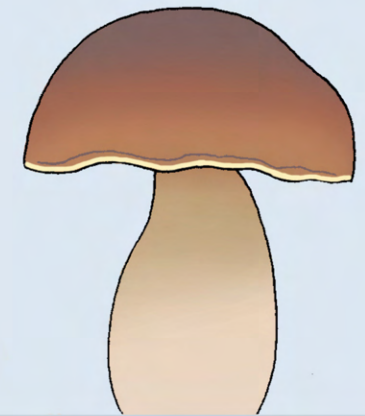
Jelly ear fungus



Yellow stagshorn



Fly agaric



Cep




# Wild Crafts and Cooking

Autumn is the season of the harvest, when the natural world provides us with hedgerows bursting with crops of blackberries, elderberries and even hazelnuts. Why not try foraging for your very own harvest feast? Or let the colours and textures inspire you to get creative!

## Did you know?





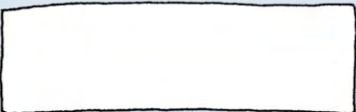


The stinging nettle has been used for food, herbal remedies, dyes and fibres for hundreds of years.



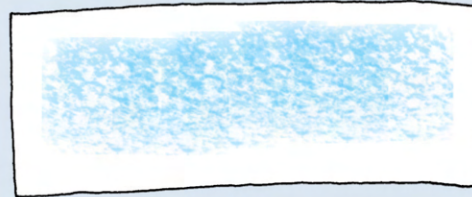
To find out how to make nettle soup head to page 26

# Blow your own forest

## You will need

- Sponge 
- Water-based paint  

- Water 
- Masking tape 
- A long piece of paper  

- Paper drinking straws  

- Pipette 

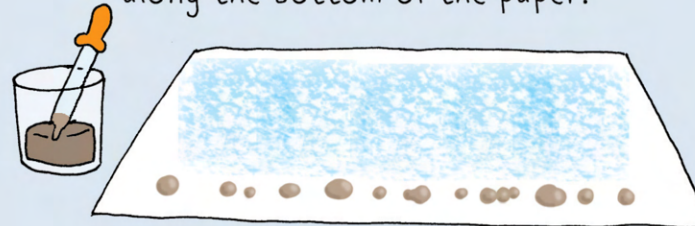
- 1 Use a sponge to dab watery blue or green paint over your piece of paper to create the background of sky or bushes.



- 2 Use masking tape to fix down the wet paper to stop it curling up.



- 3 Use a pipette (or a straw) to put small drops of runny black or brown paint along the bottom of the paper.



- 4 Aim a drinking straw at a blob of paint and blow hard to make it 'grow' up the paper into a tree shape. Neighbouring trees can overlap.



- 5 You can then stick on leaves or drawings to make a fuller scene.



Miniature versions of this can make good greetings cards.

# Make a mushroom spore print

## You will need:

- A mature (fully grown) mushroom



- Scissors



- White paper



- Glass bowl

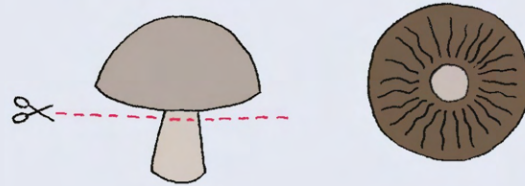


- Hairspray

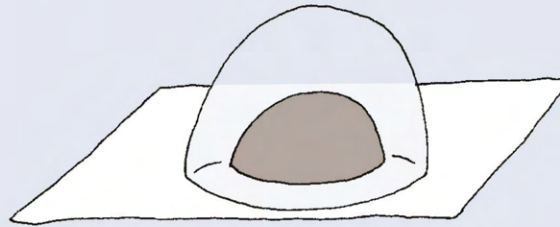


Avoid using mushrooms that are shriveled, bruised or appear old.

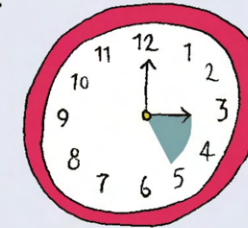
- 1 Cut the stem off the mushroom, so only the cap remains.



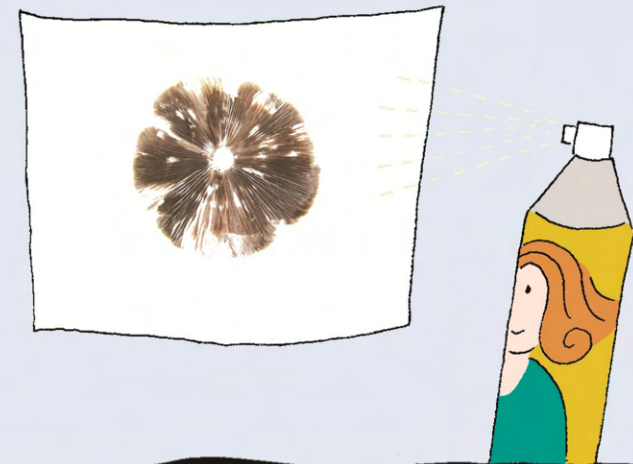
- 2 Place the cap on a piece of paper, gill side down. Cover the mushroom with the glass bowl.



- 3 Leave your mushroom for approximately two hours to allow its spores to fall onto the paper.



- 4 When you think it is ready, remove the bowl and view your print. Spray the print with several coats of hairspray to protect it.



# Make a wild blackberry crumble

## You will need:

- 450g handpicked ripe blackberries



- 2 tablespoons caster sugar



- 225g plain flour



- 150g soft brown sugar



- 75g butter (soft)



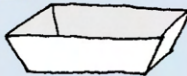
- 1 level teaspoon baking powder



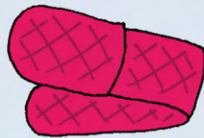
- Mixing bowl



- Ovenproof dish



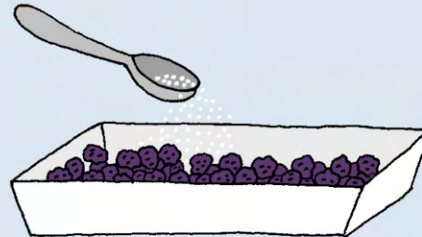
- Oven gloves



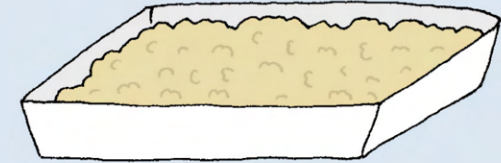
- 1 Between August and October, go out on an adventure picking blackberries.



- 2 Wash the blackberries, and arrange in a shallow ovenproof dish. Sprinkle with the caster sugar.



- 3 Mix the remaining ingredients together between your fingers until it goes all crumbly. Sprinkle the crumble mixture on top of the fruit.



- 4 Bake in the oven at 180C / 350F / Gas 4 for 30-40 minutes.



- 5 Leave the crumble to stand for five minutes. Tuck in and enjoy!

Remember to get help from an adult when doing this activity.

Always remember to leave enough for our wild friends

Scan me with your phone camera



# How to make a forest guardian

## You will need

- A pile of mud (firm mud is best) 
- Sticks 
- Leaves 
- Moss 
- Any other natural decorations you like!



**MUDDY HANDS ALERT!**  
Remember to wash your hands thoroughly after making your forest guardian.



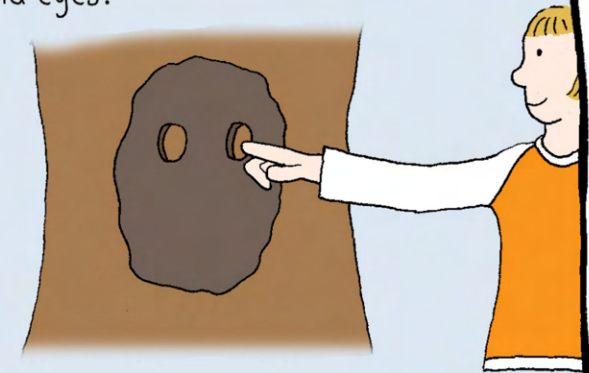
- 1 Pick your tree - choose one that is special to you.



- 2 Use your hands to shape the mud into a face and stick to the trunk of the tree.



- 3 Use your fingers to add a mouth, nose and eyes.



- 4 Press your natural objects into the mud face and decorate your forest guardian!





# Make a leaf tile

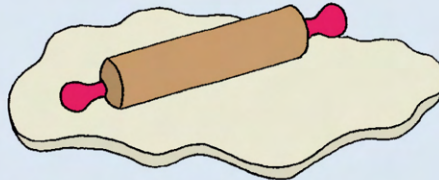
## You will need

- two cups of plain flour 
- one cup of salt 
- one cup of water 
- two tablespoons of cooking oil 
- Mixing bowl 
- Wooden spoon 
- Rolling pin 
- Different types of leaves 
- Knife 
- Paint and brushes 

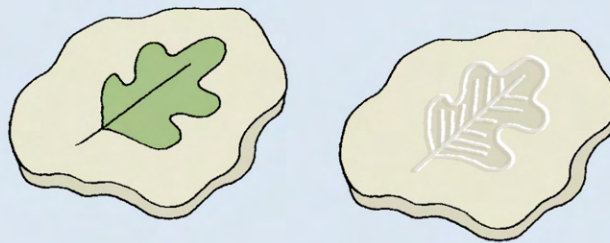
- 1 Mix all your ingredients together in the bowl.



- 2 Roll out the dough until it's about 1cm thick.



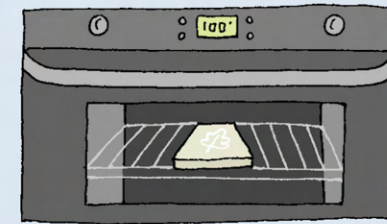
- 3 Carefully press a leaf into the dough (vein-side down). When you pull the leaf away, it should leave an imprint.



- 4 Cut your leaf imprint out of the dough in a square tile.



- 5 Bake at 100°C (gas mark 2) for two hours.



- 6 Paint your tiles. You could paint your leaves a summery green, or an autumnal orange!



Ask an adult to help trimming and baking your tile.



# How to make nettle soup

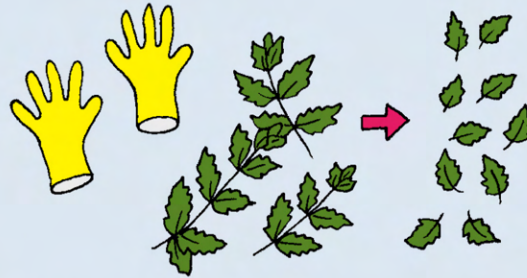
Get your gloves on to forage for nettles  
- once cooked they taste a bit like spinach. Mmm!

You will need

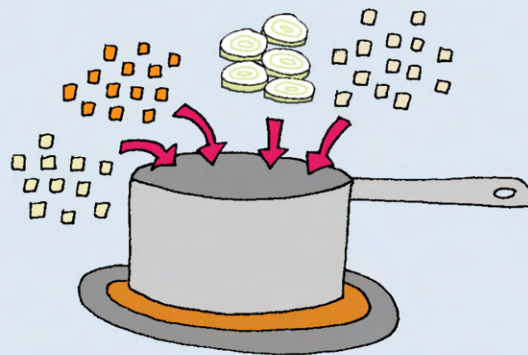
- Rubber gloves
- 400g stinging nettles
- 1 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, diced
- 1 leek, finely sliced
- 1 large floury potato, thinly sliced
- 1 litre vegetable stock
- 50g butter, diced
- 50ml double cream
- Large pan
- Wooden spoon
- Blender



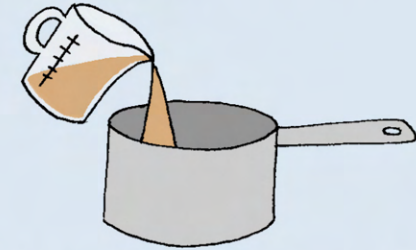
1 Wearing your rubber gloves, wash the nettles, then pick the leaves off the stalks.



2 Heat the oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onion, carrot, leek and potato, and cook for 10 minutes until the vegetables start to soften.



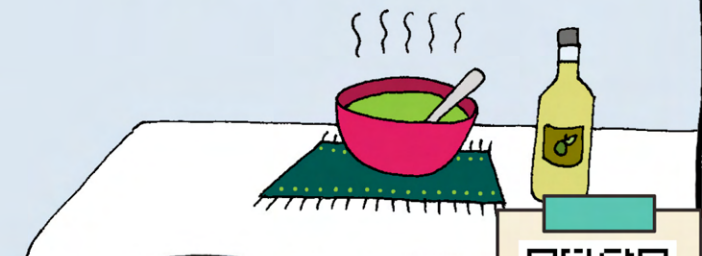
3 Add the stock and cook for a further 10-15 minutes until the potato is soft.



4 Add the nettle leaves, simmer for one minute to wilt, then blend the soup.



5 Season to taste, then stir in the butter and cream. Serve the soup drizzled with extra oil.



Scan me with your phone camera





# Hibernation

## What is hibernation?

During autumn the days are rapidly getting shorter and the sun is becoming lower in the sky. Many of our much-loved creatures begin to prepare for migration and hibernation at this time, but what is hibernation?

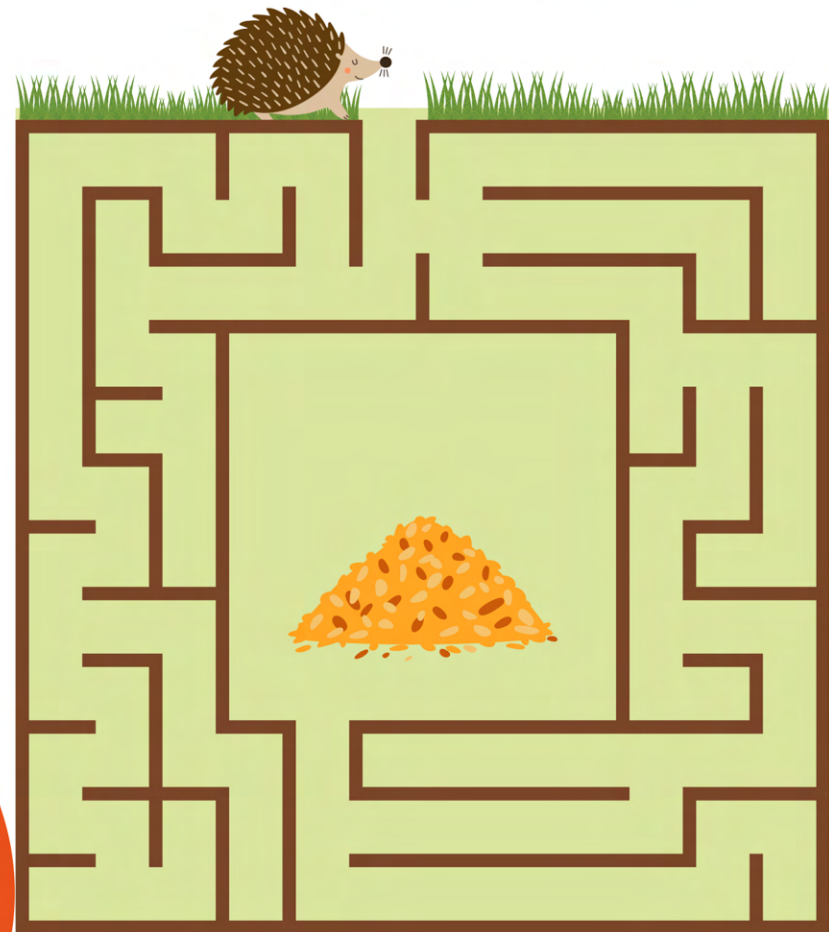
Hibernation is a special state in which an animal's body slows down. Their temperature drops, their heart beats more slowly, and they breathe less often.

This can allow animals to save lots of energy, meaning they can go without eating for a long time. Animals usually hibernate in winter as there is less food around.

### Did you know?

Dormice can spend nearly three-quarters of the year 'asleep' in some form!

Can you help Hoggie find their way to the warm, cosy leaf pile to hibernate in for winter?





**See it**

**Feel it**

**Hear it**



**Squirrel**



**Conker**



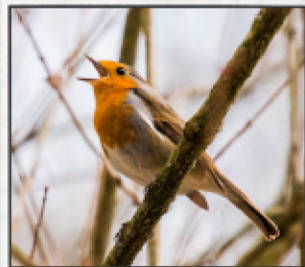
**Crunching**



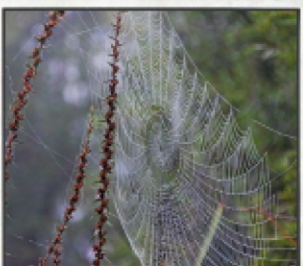
**Fungi**



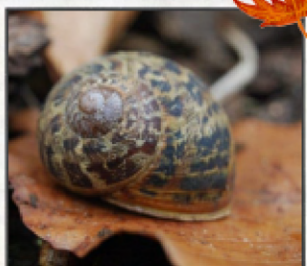
**Tree bark**



**Singing**



**Spider web**



**Snail shell**



**Rustling**

# Leaf Scavenger Hunt

Can you find all the different leaf shapes on your next walk?



## Did you know?

Shorter days and cooler nights trigger colour changes in leaves during autumn.





# My Wild... ➤ October ➤

What was your favourite wild moment in nature this month?

What did you see this month that made you feel a sense of amazement?

What did you learn this month?

Take a crayon and rub onto the paper over your chosen leaf...





# My Wild... ➤ November ➤

What was your favourite wild moment in nature this month?

What did you see this month that made you feel a sense of amazement?

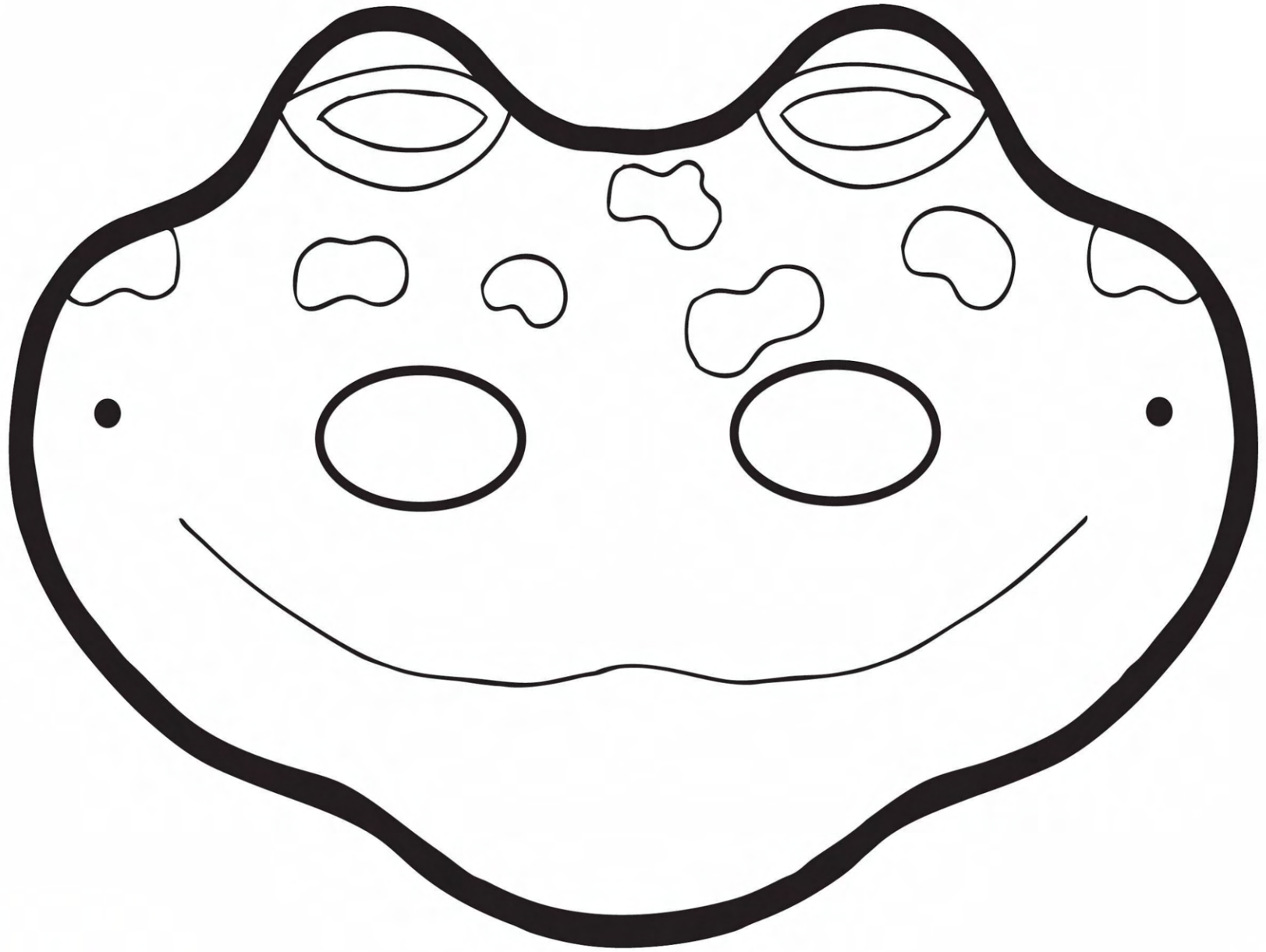
What did you learn this month?

Take a crayon and rub onto the paper over your chosen leaf...

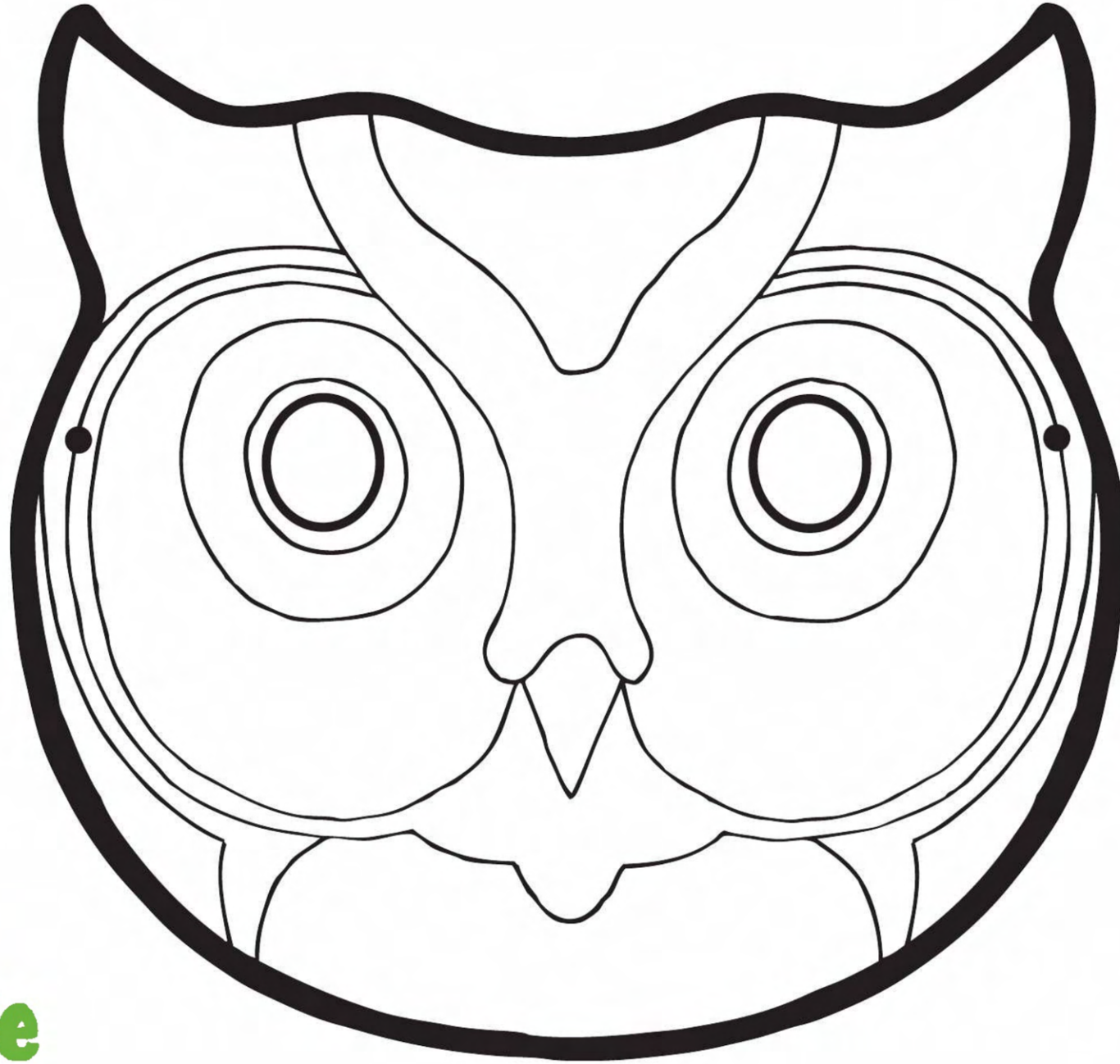
Keep your months and put them all together to see how wildlife changes with the seasons



# Frog



# Long-eared owl



© corinne welch, 2011



# Wildlife Explorer

## Pack 2022

Autumn Edition!

### Enjoyed our pack?

We hope you've loved exploring and helping your local wildlife. Why not become a family member and receive our Wildlife Watch magazine packed full of news, events and activities. To find out more check out the link below.

[lincstrust.org.uk/support-us](https://lincstrust.org.uk/support-us)



**Lincolnshire**  
Wildlife Trust