

# Who Lives in Your Garden?

Information

FS, KS1&2 – Years 1-6  
Science, Maths, English, ICT

*Would you like to know how much wildlife is in your garden or outside areas near your home?*

*Here is a great project to explore all the living things (biodiversity) around you.*

## Goals:

- Recognise and name local species of animal and plant life.
- Explore and understand that a range of wildlife can be found in one habitat and the impact of humans on that habitat.

## Materials/Resources:

Tally chart  
Pencils

Optional:  
Magnifying jar or magnifying glass  
Camera  
Clipboard

## National Curriculum Links:

### Science

- Recording data and results of increasing complexity using scientific diagrams and labels, classification keys, tables, scatter graphs, bar and line graphs
- Reporting and presenting findings from enquiries.
- Describe how living things are classified into broad groups according to common observable characteristics and based on similarities and differences, including micro-organisms, plants and animals
- Give reasons for classifying plants and animals based on specific characteristics.

### Maths

- Complete, read and interpret information in tables, including timetables. (They begin to decide which representations of data are most appropriate and why.)

### English

- Select the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own.

## Background Information

### Children

Did you know your garden is full of wildlife and is a living, breathing habitat?

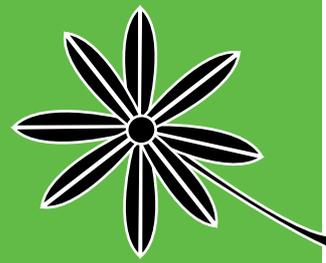
This short [BBC clip](#) shows some common animals or wildlife found in gardens.

To find out more about habitats see this [website](#).

### Parents

This short [David Attenborough video](#) explains why biodiversity is so important for life on earth.

# How to carry out the study



## 1. Discuss and Research

Talk to your child about what they already know. What sort of wildlife would they expect to find in their garden? What do they think encourages plant and animal life? Alternatively what might discourage it? Do they know many of the names of the insects/birds/mammals/reptiles/plants that they will be searching for?

Explain the term biodiversity – a term which describes the variety of plants and animals in their natural environment. The more wild plants and animals you find the greater the biodiversity.

## 2. Plan

Talk about where you might look in the garden, for example under any large stones or in the earth might be a good place to spot an earthworm. This will aid discoveries and discussions on habitat.

Decide how long your child will be outside carrying out their wildlife survey – we recommend half an hour and splitting up your time to focus on plants/mammals/insects/birds/reptiles. You can spend longer if you have more time, as quietness and patience will reward you with more animal sightings.

Print your tally chart or draw one on a piece of paper.

You could use the iNaturalist app to record what you find

Discuss the 'Guide for Observing Wildlife' below.

## 3. The Wildlife Hunt

Complete your tally chart. Remember to note the time of year, the location and the weather. If you are going to repeat your study in the future you will need to complete your wildlife hunt in the same amount of time in order to be a fair test. There are blank lines at the bottom of the tally chart for any additional wildlife you sight.

## 4. Follow Up

Perhaps your child might like to photograph the animals and plants you find – you could make a garden collage.

You can also use your photos to categorize the wildlife or to draw detailed drawings labelling the different parts.

Can your child suggest some scientific questions of their own about their wildlife in their garden? Where are most small insects found? Why? What birds are most commonly found? Why? How can you encourage more/less? Does the weather affect the insects? How? Can you start to build some food chains? Or even a food web?

Many of the UK's species are endangered. Here is a list of [ten endangered species](#). Could you choose one endangered British animal to write a report on?

After completing your wildlife hunt you could get involved in [The Great Bug Hunt](#).

# Guide for Observing Wildlife

- Be calm and quiet – otherwise any living things might hide.
- If you are going to touch a creature, be very gentle – they are delicate so do not harm them.
- Make sure you return any creatures to where you found them.
- If you move rocks or logs make sure you return them to the same spot.
- Make sure you wash your hands after touching any wildlife.

## Vocabulary:

**Wildlife** – wild animals that live free of humans

**Habitat** – the natural environment for a living thing

**Biodiversity** – the diversity of living things in a particular habitat

**Animal** – a living thing that is able to feed itself, can sense what is going on in their surroundings and can use their senses to find safety, food and a mate. Insects, birds, reptiles and mammals are all animals.

## People who use these skills for their work

An **Ecologist** is a scientist who studies the relationship between living things and their habitat. They often work in natural habitats and sometimes work in laboratories.

A **Naturalist** studies plants and animals.

A **Wildlife Officer** works to protect the natural environment and may protect endangered species.

