

FREE!

FISH
POSTER



**EGG-
STRAVAGANZA**

It's not just birds
that lay eggs!



**SKETCH
SKILLS**

Learn to draw
a kingfisher



Issue 105 **Spring 2023**

Wildlife Watch

MAGAZINE

**ON
THE
FLY**

Meet the
orange-tip,
a true spring
butterfly!



The
Wildlife
Trusts





Editor's corner

TOM HIBBERT
Editor, Wildlife Watch

One of my favourite parts of editing Wildlife Watch is seeing all your amazing artwork. It's always really hard to choose just 12 pictures for the gallery – I wish I could feature all of them! One of the most popular animals our readers like to draw is the kingfisher. It's not surprising as it's a beautiful bird! So, I thought you might enjoy a guide to drawing a kingfisher from a professional artist – turn to page 20 for some top tips!

Spring is famous for being the season of love, with animals pairing up to create the next generation. Birds across the UK will be sitting in their nests, keeping their eggs warm – but birds aren't the only creatures that lay eggs! Head to page six to find out what other animals lay them, too.

Finally, have you spotted any butterflies yet? As spring gets going, look out for the lovely orange-tip in parks and gardens. You can learn all about them on page 12.

Have a super spring!

Tom



GET IN TOUCH

Email us at: watch@wildlifetrusts.org

Ring us on: 01636 677711

Write to us at:
Wildlife Watch
The Kiln, Mather Road
Newark, Notts
NG24 1WT

[f](https://www.facebook.com/wildlifetrusts) wildlifetrusts
[@wildlifetrusts](https://twitter.com/wildlifetrusts)
[@thewildlifetrusts](https://www.instagram.com/thewildlifetrusts)
[WildlifeWatchUK](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

WILD THINGS

News from our Wildlife Watchers

IVY INVESTIGATION

Finlay (aged 13) from Lincolnshire recently received his Nature Ranger award for studying the ivy near his house. Ivy is a wonderful plant that brings so many benefits. Finlay put together an interesting report on ivy and all the wildlife it supports – from insects to birds. Well done, Finlay!



HEDGEHOG HERO

Ellen Rose (aged 7) from County Down put together this wonderful hedgehog house and even included a welcoming sign! That should make a hedgehog very happy.



PINE CONE CREATIONS

Seven-year-old Tilda from Bristol used the 'make your own' guide in our winter magazine to create her own pine cone creatures. What a wonderful way to spend a snowy Sunday! If you get inspired by any of our "How to..." activities don't forget to send in photos of your wonderful creations.

FOX IN A BOX



Luna (aged 4) from Worcestershire was inspired by Wildlife Watch to make a footprint trap in her garden. She was amazed to discover a fox had visited. Great detective work, Luna!



Resting sperm whales © Wild Wonders of Europe / Lundgren / naturepl.com

23



Small copper eggs © Peter Feiles

06 12



Snail © Jon Hawkins - Surrey Hills Photography

16



Orange-tip butterfly © Ross Hadcroft / 2020VISION

IN THIS ISSUE



Regulars

- 02** Wild Things
- 04** The Science Section
- 05** Your Photos
- 10** Heroic Habitats
Super scrub
- 11** Grass Snake Poster
- 14** Gallery
- 16** Weird Nature
Freaky feet
- 17** How to...
Do wild yoga
- 22** Feature Creature
Polecat
- 23** How Do Dolphins Sleep?
- 24** Competitions

Features

- 06** Eggs-traordinary!
It's not just birds that lay eggs
- 08** Secrets of the Soil
- 12** A Splash of Orange
Meet the orange-tip butterfly
- 18** Working with Nature
Jobs that help the planet
- 20** Draw a Kingfisher!

WILDLIFE WATCH 105

Editor: Tom Hibbert

Editorial Team: Ashleigh Carter, Duncan Coleman, Gina Gavigan, Joanna Richards, Leanne Smart, Louise Francis, Mike Watson

Design: Sean Coleman



Check out [wildlifetrusts.org/privacy-policy](https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/privacy-policy) to find out how we keep your information safe.

The Wildlife Trusts
Registered
Charity No
207238



What's Wildlife Watch?

Wildlife Watch is the junior branch of The Wildlife Trusts. Join Wildlife Watch and start your nature adventure. Prices range from £10-£24 per year for child-only membership and £30-£60 for family membership.

You'll receive a starter pack and four issues of Wildlife Watch magazine a year. This is

packed full of amazing pictures, posters and competitions. We also have a really wild website and e-newsletter full of wild ideas and nature-spotting tips. Plus you get access to local events and groups. Go to [wildlifewatch.org.uk](https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk) to find out more.

KEEP WATCHING!

The Science Section

Always wondered what that weird-sounding word meant or desperate to know what the latest wonderful wildlife discovery is? Well, here we bring you a fact-packed science section so you can impress your friends with your knowledge!

WILD WORDS

Wow your friends with new words from the world of wildlife science!

TAXONOMY

(taks-on-uh-me)
The science of organising things into groups, particularly living things. For example, humans, monkeys and other similar animals are put in a group called primates.

WARREN

(worr-uhn)
A network of joined-up burrows where rabbits live.

ENDEMIC

(en-dem-ik)
The word used for a living thing that is only found in one very specific area. For example, the Scottish crossbill is endemic to Scotland because it is only found there.

RECENT DISCOVERIES

SUPER POOPER

There are lots of different ways that plants can spread from one place to another, including in poo! An animal eats a plant's seeds, wanders off and then poops them out somewhere else – unwittingly transporting the plant to a new location. Birds can be very good for

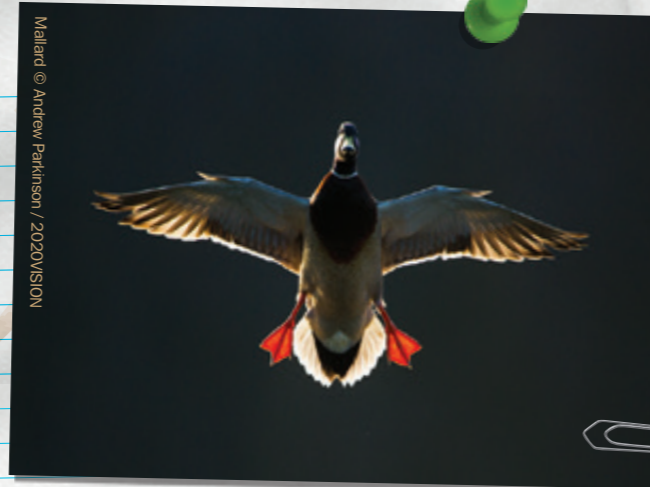
spreading plants as they can fly and carry seeds a long way. A recent study investigated the role that mallards, the familiar ducks we see on ponds in the park, play in spreading seeds. They looked at hundreds



of mallard droppings and found 5,760 seeds from 35 different kinds

of plant! Mallards move around a lot and even migrate between countries,

so they could be spreading plants all over Europe.



Mallard © Andrew Parkinson / 2020VISION

FIREWORK FRIGHT



Barnacle geese © David Tipling / 2020VISION

If you have a pet, you may know that fireworks can be very frightening for animals. The loud bangs and bright flashes are also stressful for wildlife. There is lots of evidence that fireworks cause birds to panic, lose sleep, and fly away. New Year's Eve is a particularly stressful time for wildlife because there are so many fireworks across a large area. A team of scientists studied

the movements of four species of geese around New Year's Eve for the last eight years. They found that the fireworks caused geese to leave their sleeping area and fly to new roost sites, flying farther and higher than usual. Some geese flew hundreds of kilometres! In the days after New Year's Eve, the geese spent extra time feeding, suggesting they had to get back the energy they lost fleeing from the fireworks.

YOUR PHOTOS

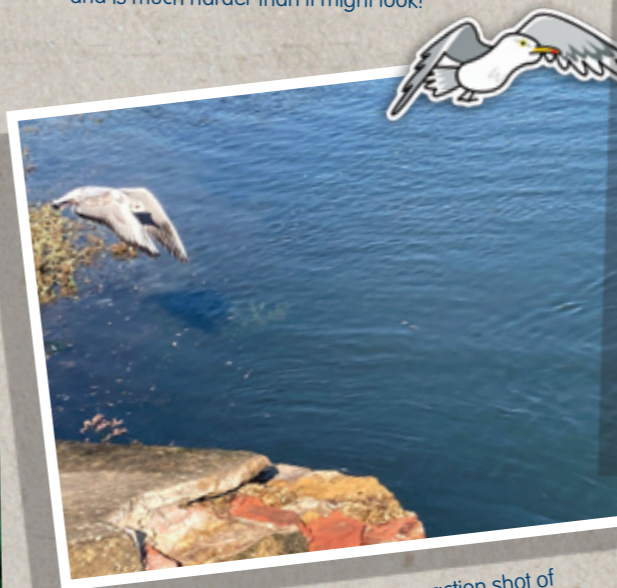
Keep sharing your amazing photos with us, we love to see them all!



Molly (aged 13) snapped this incredible photo of a fly. The level of detail is amazing! Taking up-close photos of tiny creatures like this is called macro photography and is much harder than it might look!



Robert (aged 9) caught this seal bobbing in the sea on camera. The rippling water gives the whole scene a really nice texture.



Iris (aged 11) managed to capture an action shot of a young black-headed gull in flight. You need to be really quick to photograph a flying bird!



Daniel (aged 11) took this wonderful photo of a dragonfly on a nature reserve on Anglesey. Dragonflies can be tricky to photograph as they're restless creatures that spend a lot of time flying around.



Send your stories, ideas, and photos to watch@wildlifetrusts.org

Introducing an eggs-travaganza of weird and wonderful eggs!

EGGS-TRAORDINARY!

by
Pete
Dommett

Eggs are *eggs-quisite* little life-support systems! They protect and provide the baby animals growing inside them with all they need until it's time to hatch out. But it's not just birds that lay eggs – plenty of other creatures produce them too.

CUCKOO

The cunning cuckoo is famous for laying its eggs in the nests of other birds. To trick them into thinking the egg is one of their own, the cuckoo must lay an egg that closely matches those of the hoodwinked hosts. After the cuckoo chick has hatched, it heaves any of its foster parents' eggs out of the nest so it will get all the food!

DID YOU KNOW?

In the UK, cuckoos mostly lay their eggs in the nests of meadow pipits, reed warblers and dunnocks.



SAND LIZARD

This rare reptile is the only native lizard in the UK that lays eggs. In late spring, females dig burrows in sunny, sandy places and bury between five and 15 eggs. The baby lizards hatch out at the end of summer – each one has a special 'egg tooth' to help it *eggs-it* the tough, leathery shell!

DID YOU KNOW?

The grass snake is the UK's only other native reptile (and our only species of snake) to lay eggs!

CUTTLEFISH

Go beachcombing in spring and you might just find a bunch of 'sea grapes'. These are the eggs of cuttlefish, stained black by the ink produced by this squid-like marine mollusc. The newborn cuttlefish that eventually emerge from the eggs are only 12-20mm long, but they can swim, feed and squirt ink straight away – *eggs-actly* like their parents!



COMMON GREEN SHIELDBUG

Shieldbugs certainly produce egg-ceedingly strange eggs! In spring, common green shieldbugs lay clusters of eggs on the undersides of leaves – they look like little green barrels with smiley emoji faces! These hatch into wingless young known as 'nymphs'. The nymphs go through five stages of growth (called an 'instar') before they become adult bugs at the end of summer.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are more than 40 different species of shieldbug in the UK, including the hairy shieldbug, bronze shieldbug and spiked shieldbug. They all lay eggs!



COMMON WHELK

Is that a scrunched-up ball of bubble wrap? No, it's actually the empty egg cases of the UK's largest sea snail! Common whelks lay these weird 'egg clouds' (as they're sometimes called) on the seabed, but they wash up on beaches after the baby whelks have hatched. The first few whelks to emerge from the eggs often eat their still-developing siblings!

DID YOU KNOW?

Whelk egg cases are also known as 'sea wash balls' as sailors once used them to wash with!



SMALL COPPER

Look out for this fast-flying butterfly during spring and summer. Females lay their eggs on the leaves of sorrell or dock plants in sunny spots. The tiny (less than 1mm wide) white eggs look like miniature golf balls! After a week or two, woodlouse-like pink-and-green caterpillars hatch out of these *eggs-tremely* small homes.



FROGS, TOADS AND NEWTS

All of the UK's native amphibians lay eggs. In early spring, common frogs cover the surface of ponds with big clumps of jelly-covered eggs or 'spawn'. Both common and natterjack toads produce long strings of spawn instead. And female newts wrap each one of their eggs in the leaf of an underwater plant to keep it *eggs-tra* safe!

DID YOU KNOW?

Each clump of frog spawn can contain up to 2,000 eggs!



GUILLEMOT

Why did the guillemot lay a pointed egg? It's no joke – this question has seriously puzzled oologists (scientists that study birds' eggs) for centuries. These *eggs-perts* now think the egg's unusual shape helps stop it from falling off the steep cliff ledges that these seabirds nest on... but they're still not 100% sure!

DID YOU KNOW?

Guillemot eggs come in all kinds of colours – from pure white to brown, in different shades of blue and green or sprinkled with spots and speckles!



SECRETS OF THE SOIL

by Tom Hibbert

We all love mud!
You can sculp it with your hands or squelch it between your toes. Though we often take it for granted, there's so much more to soil! It's the skin of the earth, covering the surface of most of our land. It's alive with life and vital for all of us.

LET'S DIG IN...

WHAT IS SOIL?

Soil is the upper layer of the earth. It's made of minerals (tiny bits of broken rock) and bits of rotting plant and animal matter such as fallen leaves, poo, and dead plants and animals. These decaying pieces form a dark material called humus – not to be confused with hummus, the tasty paste made from mashed up chickpeas! Soil also has lots of miniature pockets of space between the pieces, which hold water and air.

It can take hundreds of years for a single centimetre of soil to form. This is because it takes so long for the rock to be broken into tiny pieces by wind, water, and other forces.

PLANT FOOD

One of soil's most important jobs is providing food and water for plants. All the rotting materials and minerals create a soup of nutrients that plants can suck up through their roots. They need these nutrients to grow. Lots of animals (including us) depend on plants in the food chain. Without the soil to feed the plants, we'd be in big trouble!

A CLIMATE CHAMPION!

Soil is also really important for tackling climate change. It holds lots of carbon, locking it away where it can't get into the air and make the climate crisis worse. The carbon is stored in the soil itself, attached to the minerals and inside the bits of plants and animals. Living plants also take carbon dioxide out of the air and store it in their roots, which reach deep into the soil. If we don't look after our soils, this carbon can be released into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide. One way we can help at home is to avoid buying garden plants that were grown in peat – a type of soil with lots of plant material in it. Some companies dig up peat to grow plants or burn for fuel, but we need to keep it in the ground!

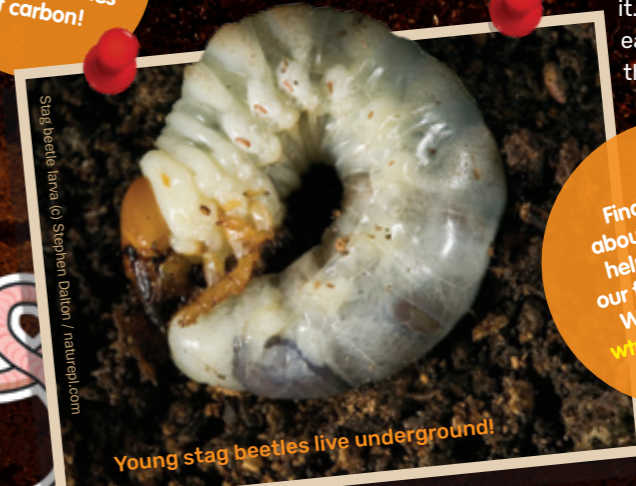
The UK's soil contains about 10 billion tonnes of carbon!

FULL OF LIFE

There are plenty of things that live in the soil. Did you know there's more life in a teaspoon of soil than there are people on the planet! Some soil dwellers are obvious, like moles and earthworms. Others are smaller, such as ants, beetles, and pseudoscorpions. Many are too tiny to see at all! These miniature organisms include bacteria, fungi, and little worms called nematodes that make earthworms look like giants! Many of these microscopic creatures help keep the soil healthy. They break down the rotting plants and dead animals, and produce the nutrients plants need to survive.

Larger tunnelling creatures like moles and earthworms also play an important part in keeping soil healthy. Their burrowing action mixes up the soil and helps air and water spread through it. This mixing also makes it easier for plants to spread their roots.

Find out more about worms and helping soil with our free Go Wild for Worms booklet! wtru.st/wild-worms



Stag beetle larva (c) Stephen Dalton / naturepic.com

Young stag beetles live underground!



Worm tunnels © Kim Taylor / naturepic.com

SCRUB

by Tom Hibbert



Yellowhammer © Chris General / 2020VISION

What is scrub?

Scrub is an area of scattered trees and bushes, often with some spiky plants like hawthorns, blackthorns or brambles. It's sort of a halfway stage between more open places like grassland or heathland and forests. Over time, larger plants start to grow in grasslands. If these plants aren't eaten by grazing animals or removed by people, they create an area of scrub. Eventually, this scrub can grow into a forest.

Scrub is often found on the edges of forests, or in forgotten urban areas. It's one of our most overlooked habitats. Some people don't like it because they think it looks messy, but it's incredibly important for lots of wildlife.



Black hairstreak © Philip Peasey

What wildlife lives there?

Scrub is home to lots of birds. The spiky bushes help hide and protect their nests. Scrub is vital for rare species like turtle doves and nightingales, but it is just as popular with familiar birds like blackbirds, dunnocks and long-tailed tits. The berries that grow on the bushes from summer to winter help fuel migrant birds like blackcaps for their long journey to Africa.

Scrub is also great for other wildlife, from lizards to dormice and especially insects. Flowers provide pollen and nectar, whilst lots of caterpillars like to munch on the plants that grow there, including rare species like black hairstreaks.



Can they help fight the climate crisis?

As the trees and shrubs in scrubby areas grow, they take carbon out of the air and lock it away in their wood and in the soil. But scrub also plays a bigger role – it helps create forests! When trees drop their seeds and saplings start to grow, they are often nibbled and eaten by animals, preventing them from becoming large trees. When seeds fall in scrubby areas, the spiky bushes make it harder for animals to eat the saplings. The trees are able to grow, eventually turning the scrub into woodland. Letting forests grow naturally like this is really important for fighting the climate crisis and helping nature.



Scrub © David Woodfall / naturepl.com

How can we help scrub?

Scrub needs our help! The best thing we can do is learn to love messy, scrubby wild places and not try to tidy them. Conservationists sometimes have to remove trees to stop scrub becoming woodland, to make sure there's enough of this special habitat for all the wildlife that depends on it. If you have space in your garden, you could create a wild corner with some spiky bushes to shelter nesting birds.



Grass snake © Danny Green / 2020VISION

Sssssuper Sssenses

Snakes, like this grass snake, flick their tongues out to pick up scents. The chemicals that make up a smell stick to the tongue, which carries them back to a special organ in the mouth called the Jacobson's organ. This sends the information to the brain so the snake can work out what it has detected!



A SPLASH OF ORANGE

by Sam Gee

The beautiful butterfly that's springing into action!

Some butterflies such as the brimstone spend the winter as adults, cosying up in sheds and log piles. Others hide away from the cold as an egg or a caterpillar. Orange-tips spend the colder months as a pupa, waiting patiently to emerge when there's more sun, nectar, and somewhere to lay their eggs. Their appearance each year is a sure sign that spring has arrived!

NOT ALWAYS ORANGE

The males give this butterfly its name. They have white wings and, surprise surprise, bright orange tips! The orange colour may be a warning to predators in search of a snack – "I won't taste very good, so leave me alone!" The female orange-tip can be a bit trickier to identify. She has black tips instead of orange, making her easy to mix up with other white butterflies such as the large white. If you're not sure, you can always tell an orange-tip by the pattern on the underside of their wings. Underneath, their wings are white with pretty green and black splodges that give the butterfly fantastic camouflage when resting on a plant.

A SIGN OF SPRING

We usually see the first orange-tips of the season in April. They'll be flying around in May and June too, so there's plenty of time to spot them. You'll see them flying in all kinds of different habitats. As well as visiting our gardens and parks, they can be found flying along country lanes, hedges, and riverbanks. The adults drink nectar from the flowers of lots of different plants, including bluebells, dandelions, and bramble.

Except for the very northern parts of Scotland, orange-tips can be found all across the UK.

ORANGE EGGS

Orange-tips have long, thin eggs that are white when first laid but gradually turn bright orange. They're one of the easiest butterfly eggs to find! Most caterpillars are fussy eaters and only like to eat a small number of plants. Orange-tips are no different and mostly eat cuckooflower and garlic mustard. Look out for bright orange eggs on the stalks of these common plants.

HUNGRY HUNGRY HORROR SHOW

Orange-tip caterpillars emerge from their eggs a week or two after being laid. They are green when fully grown, with a white stripe along the sides. Like all butterfly caterpillars, they have one job – to eat! The first thing they eat is the eggshell they've just come out of, then they'll get started on the plant. They prefer the seedpods but will sometimes eat the leaves and flowers of the plant too. But that's not all...

Some butterflies lay lots of eggs in a cluster on the same leaf. Orange-tip females lay one egg at a time, and with good reason. A hungry orange-tip caterpillar will happily eat other caterpillars given the chance, they're cannibalistic!

THE LONG WINTER WAIT

After the caterpillars have eaten their fill, they will go into the pupal stage of their lives. The caterpillar attaches itself to a plant stem by spinning a silk string to hold it in place. It will stay there as a pupa all winter, finally emerging in spring as one of the first butterflies we see each year and the cycle starts again!

Sam Gee Butterflies are my wildlife passion! Every stage of their lives is fascinating to watch, and I love growing butterfly friendly plants in my garden.



© Peter Eeles

© Peter Richman

© Tom Hibbert

Orange-tip caterpillar © Frank Poch

Pupa © Brian Eversham

© Ross Hindmott / 2020VISION

GALLERY

Send in your photos, poems, artwork and letters for your chance to feature in the gallery. If your artwork is picked as the star entry you'll win your very own drawing kit!
The perfect starter set for any budding wildlife artist.

1



2



7



8



3



4



9



10



11



5



6



12



1) Robin by Marcus, aged 10 ★
 This striking robin really caught our eye!

2) Kingfisher and dolphin by Rosie, aged 7
 Two excellent fish catchers in one drawing! We love the way the kingfisher shimmers.

3) Dragonfly by Molly, aged 13
 The intricate lines on this dragonfly create a beautiful, delicate effect.

4) Dormouse by Rachael, aged 9
 What a cute little creature! Great to see it tucked away safely in a bush.

5) Acorn men by Beatrice, aged 9
 Beatrice got really creative with things you can find on the woodland floor.

6) Hawk-moth by Teddy, aged 7
 It was a lovely touch to place this moth on a leaf!

7) Deer by Sebastian, aged 9
 What a fantastic creative collage. Great work, Sebastian!

8) Magpie by Layla, aged 11
 Just look at the shimmering colours on the magpie's wings and tail – perfect!

9) Swallowtail by Jemima, aged 6
 Jemima has done a great job of capturing the vibrant colours of this bright butterfly.

10) Falcon by Leo, aged 6
 We love this soaring falcon. Those strong feet are ideal for grabbing prey!

11) Pheasant by Lars, aged 8
 A lovely painting of a bird that's often seen around farmland.

12) Heron by Xanthe, aged 6
 Xanthe has been really creative making this heron from material.

If we feature your artwork we will need your first name and your age, so don't forget to include them. We might also share it on our website and social media.

HOW TO ENTER
 Email watch@wildlifetrusts.org with the subject line 'Gallery entry' or write to us at:
Wildlife Watch Gallery
The Wildlife Trusts
The Kiln, Mather Road
Newark
Notts NG24 1WT

WEIRD NATURE



THIS ISSUE: FREAKY FEET by Megan Dobson

MOLE

Have you ever seen a mole hill and wondered how it was created? It's all down to the mole's spade-like front paws! Moles are the JCB diggers of the natural world, using their front paws for tunnelling underground and hunting for tasty grubs like earthworms!

COOT

The coot is a master of water and land, all thanks to its odd feet. Their long toes help them climb over water weeds and muddy banks, whilst the wide lobes on each toe help them to push through the water as they swim.

EURASIAN BEAVER

Beavers may be slow on land, but they are lightning fast underwater! Like a duck, they have rear webbed feet, which make them expert swimmers. Their front feet are not webbed but instead have long claws to help them dig and build their dams.

SNAIL

Who knew the snail's whole body is one big foot? Its slimy mucous and muscles of the foot work together to propel the snail. Snails can glide across any surface and lock themselves into place like an anchor, keeping them safe from predators. That's one impressive foot!

FLIES

The feet of flies have a superpower! They whiz around, tasting the world through their feet, looking for food and a safe place to lay eggs. To avoid predators, the fly needs to be fast! The taste buds let it have a sneaky taste before making a quick getaway.

BUMBLEBEES

Like flies, a bumblebee's feet have two functions. Their feet deposit pheromones (chemicals produced by an animal that only other animals of the same species recognise) on flowers, alerting other bees to important information such as "pollen has already been taken from this flower, come back and try again later!"

PALMATE NEWT

To help male palmate newts impress the females during breeding season, they swap their usual feet for something a bit more flashy. The males grow jazzy black webbing on their hind feet, which helps them stand out from the crowd and hopefully attract a mate for the season.

GARDEN SPIDER

The garden spider's specialised feet are their most important tools. Their feet have tiny serrated teeth and claws that allow them to manage the silky, sticky threads of their webs. Spiders couldn't make their impressive webs or catch tasty creepy crawlies without their unusual feet.

How to do wildlife yoga



- You will need**
- Some indoor or outdoor space
 - A yoga mat (ideally)

What to do

You can make your yoga session a bit more 'wild' by trying out some of our wildlife poses!

Make sure to warm up and stretch properly when starting yoga, and always be careful to give yourself plenty of space.

Illustrations: Corinne Welch © Copyright Royal Society of Wildlife Trusters 2020



www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

WORKING WITH NATURE



There are lots of jobs you can do to help wildlife, whether you like to get your hands dirty on a nature reserve or inspire other people about nature. We spoke to THREE WILDLIFE CHAMPIONS to find out more about their work!

Name: Alicia Leow-Dyke
Job title: Welsh Beaver Project Officer
Organisation: North Wales Wildlife Trust

WHAT DO YOU DO?

The main aim of my job is the reintroduction of beavers to Wales! The Eurasian beaver is native to Wales but was hunted to extinction around 500 years ago. However, there are now efforts to bring beavers back to where they were once found – with recent reintroductions in Scotland and England.

My day-to-day job is very varied and involves working both outdoors and indoors. For example, I conduct field surveys to see if sites are suitable for beavers and I visit places where there are beavers. I also write reports and articles, give beaver talks, and attend meetings and conferences.

HOW DOES YOUR JOB HELP NATURE?

Beavers are often referred to as a keystone species because their activities benefit a wide range of other wildlife. By bringing beavers back we can help lots of other wildlife that is in trouble.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE WANTING A SIMILAR JOB?

I recommend volunteering with your local Wildlife Trust or other local wildlife groups to gain some hands-on experience of working in conservation. I used to volunteer on otter and dormouse surveys with my local Wildlife Trust. It's a great way to get involved and meet other people in the conservation world.



Name: Alan Wright
Job title: Head of Campaigns and Communications
Organisation: The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside

WHAT DO YOU DO?

A lot of our staff don't realise what an amazing job they are doing and so it is my job to work with my team to tell their stories and to draw attention to the work of the Wildlife Trusts. As a communications officer it is important that you get out on nature reserves and meet the people you are writing about, so my team spends a lot of time on our 42 nature reserves. We write for two magazines and have a newspaper column, and I edit our own Lapwing magazine for members. I arrange for officers to appear on TV and radio and we have a big social media presence. My latest nature reserve campaign will show the importance of our work every day in any weather.

HOW DOES YOUR JOB HELP NATURE?

It raises the profile of nature and conservation, sparking an interest that makes people think more about how important nature is to every one of us and hopefully inspiring them to take action to save it!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE WANTING A SIMILAR JOB?

I started out as a journalist and still use the skills I learnt then now – feeling comfortable talking to lots of people and telling stories. Young people, who use social media on a regular basis, can bring those skills into jobs like mine.



Name: Chantelle Lindsay
Job title: Great North Wood Project Officer
Organisation: London Wildlife Trust

WHAT DO YOU DO?

Alongside my team, I work with local volunteers, councils and landowners to look after a precious ancient woodland landscape called the Great North Wood. It once stretched across south London, but due to development is now broken into smaller green patches. With a group of wonderful volunteers, we plant trees, create new habitats, control invasive plant species, carry out wildlife surveys and more! Community engagement is an equally important part of the job – we run events and school sessions to inspire people to visit, respect and protect these wild spaces.

HOW DOES YOUR JOB HELP NATURE?

The practical conservation work creates and improves habitats for wildlife, helping it cope with climate change, while community engagement empowers people to appreciate and even act for nature.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE WANTING A SIMILAR JOB?

Go for it! Don't be afraid to do something unusual. Believe in yourself and know that all the unique characteristics that make you who you are, are exactly what are needed in the efforts to help our natural world.



DRAW A

KINGFISHER!



Hi! I'm **Crow Artist** (also called Kirsty Yeoman). I love creating illustrations of bird behaviour and showing them in their natural habitat.

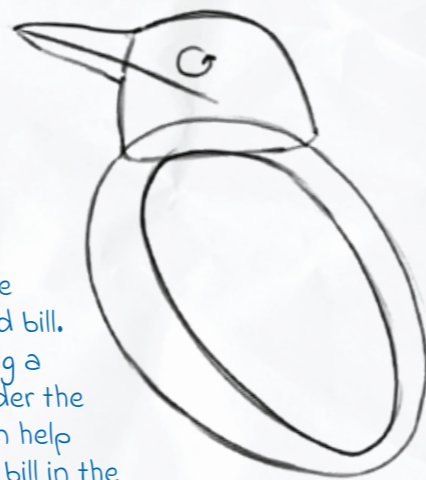
Learn to draw a kingfisher with our easy-to-follow guide from expert bird illustrator **Crow Artist**

01



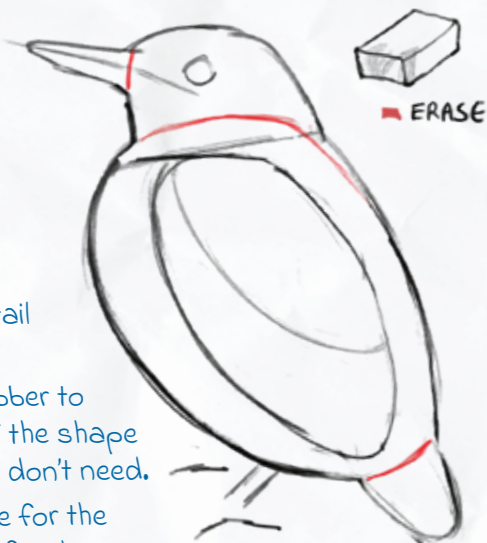
Start with simple shapes to get the proportions of your bird.

02



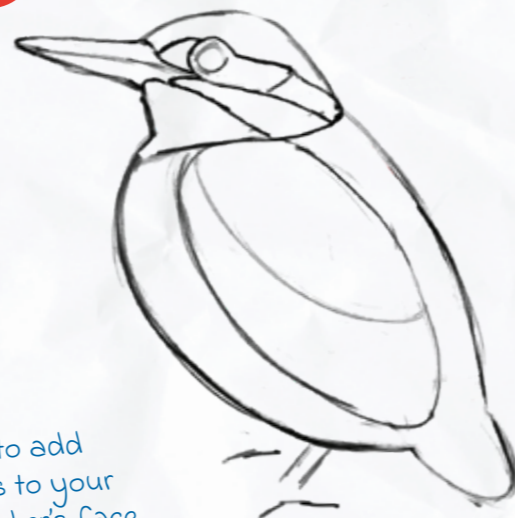
Add the eye and bill. Drawing a line under the eye can help get the bill in the right place.

03



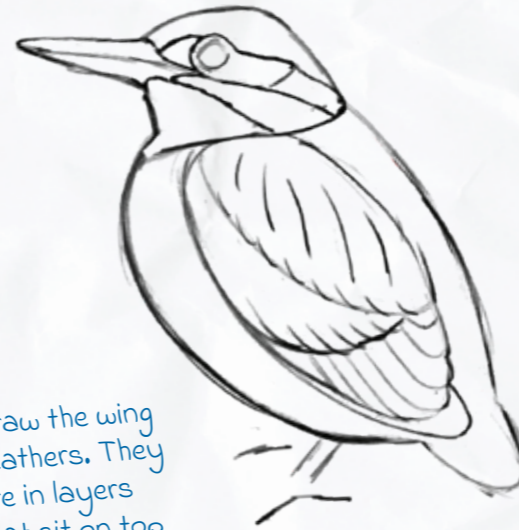
Add the tail and feet. Use a rubber to get rid of the shape lines you don't need. Add a line for the shoulder feathers (scapulars).

04



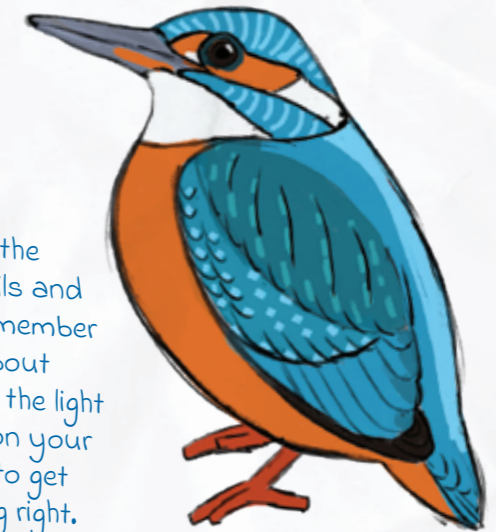
Start to add details to your kingfisher's face.

05



Draw the wing feathers. They are in layers that sit on top of each other.

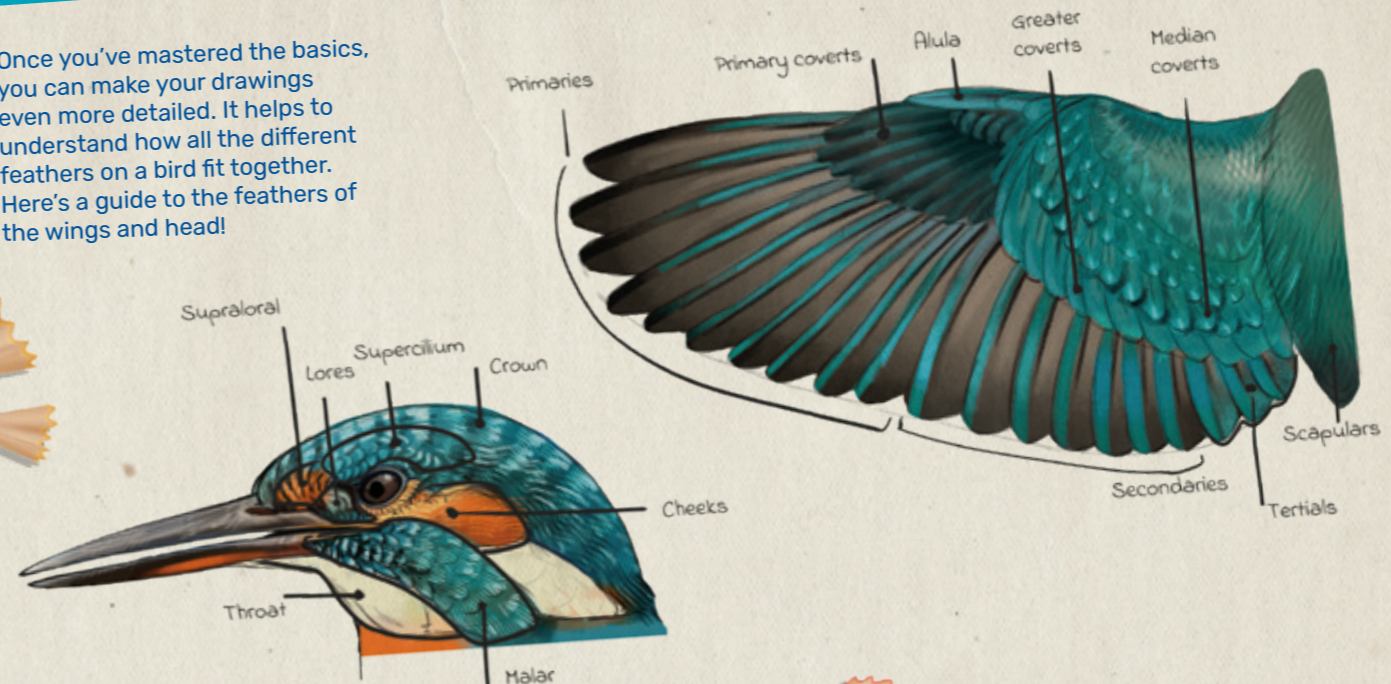
06



Now add the final details and colour! Remember to think about which way the light is shining on your kingfisher to get the shading right.

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL!

Once you've mastered the basics, you can make your drawings even more detailed. It helps to understand how all the different feathers on a bird fit together. Here's a guide to the feathers of the wings and head!



POLECAT

by Hannah Rudd



Polecat © David Kjaer / naturepl.com

A MASKED MAMMAL

The polecat is a ferret-sized mammal with small ears, a short fluffy tail and a fur coat made up of two different colours, dark brown on top and yellow underneath. Related to the badger, the otter and other members of the mustelid family, the polecat is known for the black mask which covers its pale face and gives it a bandit-like look. Short legs and a long slim body help the polecat squeeze into rabbit burrows where it hunts for rabbits at night. Rabbits are their main food, but polecats also eat rodents like rats and voles, as well as worms, frogs and birds.

LOCATION, LOCATION

In the past polecats were hunted almost to extinction. Fortunately, the species has made a great recovery over the last hundred years and can now be found across lowland England and Wales. They live in lots of different places, from riverbanks to woodlands and hedgerows. They make dens out of rabbit warrens, badger setts or between tree roots by using dried grasses and leaves to line the ground. When it gets

👍

ESSENTIAL FACTS

Scientific name
<i>Mustela putorius</i>
Size
0.5-1.9kg and are 32-45cm long
Amazing fact
Polecats have powerful scent glands hidden under their tails, which they use to produce a nasty smell if frightened or hurt.



© Elliot Smith

cold, polecats often move into farmyards and make winter dens under old buildings and in hay bales. If you're lucky, you might even spot one in your garden nestled under the shed, decking, or compost heap.

BLIND AND HAIRLESS

Polecats have one litter of 5-10 babies each year between May and June. When they are first born polecats are blind, hairless and reliant on their mother for food, so they stay together for 2-3 months until the young polecats can live alone.

BAD REPUTATION

When Queen Elizabeth I was on the throne in the 16th century, polecats had a bad reputation as bloodthirsty animals and were known as vermin. The word polecat was even used as an insult! Fortunately, most people are more welcoming of polecats now, and there have even been reintroduction projects to help them make a comeback.

HOW DO DOLPHINS SLEEP?

by Emma Lowe



Bottlenose dolphin © John MacPherson/2020VISION

Dolphins are marine mammals and spend their entire lives in the sea. They need air to survive but living underwater makes this difficult, especially when it comes to sleeping!

JUST KEEP BREATHING

Almost all living things need oxygen to stay alive. Fish can take oxygen from the water through their gills, but mammals use their lungs to get oxygen from the air. On land, mammals are unconscious breathers, taking in air without thinking about it. At sea marine mammals use a different tactic. Dolphins are conscious breathers choosing when to surface to breathe. A dolphin will choose to come up for air four times per minute and can hold their breath for up to eight minutes when hunting.

HALF A SLEEP

If dolphins must come to the surface to breath so often, how do they sleep? Dolphins have adapted one cool way to allow them to sleep, which is by only having half of their brain asleep at a time. Dolphins can let half of their brain fall asleep whilst the awake side of the brain will control breathing and keep an eye out for predators! After a couple of hours, the sides of the brain will switch allowing the other side of the brain to get some rest too.

Dolphins give birth to their young tail first. This helps the calf swim straight for the surface to breathe after being born.

WHALE OF A TIME

Whales are also marine mammals and face the same difficulties when breathing. Some species of whales, like dolphins, can have half their brain asleep whilst the other half is in control of swimming and breathing. Whereas other species can store so much air in their lungs that the whale can go to sleep in between breaths! These whales will rest at the surface of the water, not swimming, and sleep for up to 30 minutes without taking a breath. Sperm whales have been found sleeping vertically, with their head towards the surface and their tail pointing straight down.

A sperm whale only needs to sleep for 7% of the day, that's less than two hours!



Common dolphin © Chris Gomersall/2020VISION



Resting sperm whales © Wild Wonders of Europe / Lundgren / naturepl.com

COMPETITIONS



WIN



CALL THE PUFFINS!



M Meet Muffin the puffin and her friends, who must work together to help all the birds on the island of Egg. This adorably illustrated book is perfect for young readers to enjoy a story about friendship, teamwork, optimism and of course puffins! It's written by Cath Howe, illustrated by Ella Okstad, and published by Welbeck Flame.

We've got **SIX** copies to give away!

Buy online at: wtru.st/muffin-puffin

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN:

Just answer this question – can you see puffins in the UK?



WIN CORVID STICKERS!

D id you enjoy the 'draw a kingfisher' guide on page 20? Then you'll love this set of glossy corvid stickers from Crow Artist! It includes a gorgeous sticker of each of the eight members of the crow family you can see in the UK.

We've got **TEN** sticker sets to give away!

Buy online at: crowartist.co.uk



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN:

Tell us which member of the crow family is your favourite and why!



WIN MAKE YOUR OWN SEED BALLS KIT!

S eedballs are an easy way to plant wildflowers and attract more life to your garden. With this kit, you can make your own seedballs. It's messy and super fun! There's enough in the pack to make up to 60 seedballs, with flowers chosen to be perfect for bees and butterflies.

We've got **FOUR** sets to give away.

Buy online at: seedball.co.uk

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN:

Just answer this question. Which of these plants do orange-tip caterpillars love to eat?

- a) Cuckooflower
- b) Hogweed
- c) Dog rose

Clue – the answer is in the magazine!



SEEDBALL
A SIMPLER WAY TO GROW FROM SEED



If you're sending multiple entries, please try to put them in one email to save energy!



COMPETITION RULES

Send your competition entries to us: **By email** watchcomps@wildlifetrusts.org **By post** Wildlife Watch, The Kiln, Mather Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 1WT
Don't forget to include your name, age and a way of contacting you about your entry! **DEADLINE: 31 May 2023**

Competition entries may be used on our website and social media channels.

