

Wild Things at School

Worksheets for Primary School Students



by

Éanna Ní Lamhna

Illustrations by Christine Warner



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Introduction to 4th Class Worksheets

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**Lords and Ladies**  
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**Vetch**  
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**Elder**  
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**Badger**  
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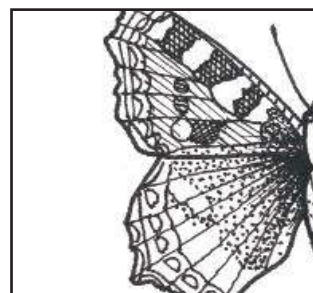
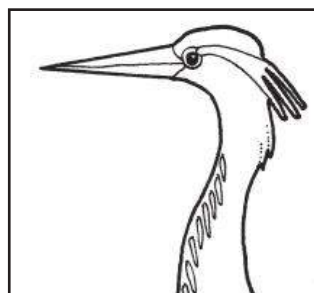
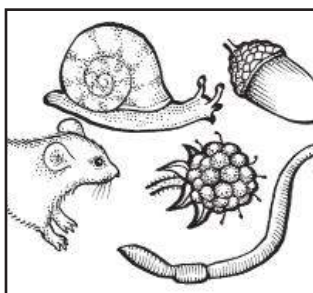
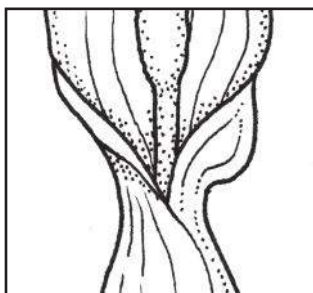
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**Heron**  
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**Butterfly**  
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In the Teachers' Book, the lessons on each topic contain suggestions for practical work to be carried out by the teacher with the pupils. The following worksheets are in addition to this and are designed to be used by the pupils themselves, after each of the eight species in the teachers' handbook has been taught. They should be given to the pupils to work on and instructions about what to do on each one should be given by the teacher. The pupils should be taught the lessons on each topic first and then shown the pictures provided for each species.

There is much emphasis in these worksheets on field work. It is important to bring pupils out to the school grounds on a regular basis to do tasks so that they become familiar with wildlife outdoors. Make sure the item to be seen or collected is around at the time, so pick the time of year accordingly and return any animals collected to the wild. The worksheets need not necessarily be done in the order in which they are given.

There is also emphasis on food chains and how animals live in the wild so that completing the worksheets adds to the children's knowledge. By fourth class, the pupils will have already learned about a considerable number of plants and animals so these worksheets refer to species learned earlier and act as a form of revision. This is particularly evident in the worksheets on plants and trees. The worksheets are designed to be photocopied and handed out to the pupils.



4th Class Teacher Notes

Lords and Ladies 1

Worksheet in three sections

Introduction to plant: Pupils colour in the Lords and Ladies plant in both summer and autumn form. Show the pictures of the plant to the pupils first so that they know what colour it is.

Revision: Four flowers that live in hedges and have already been learned by the pupils are shown here – primrose, bluebell, robin-run-the-hedge and nettle. They should recognise each one.

Working things out: Why should these plants flower in spring? What do plants need to grow? – light. When the leaves come on the trees in the hedge, these small plants do not get enough light to flower. So they have adapted to where they live by flowering early.

Lords and Ladies 2

Fieldtrip (Do this in April or early May – after Easter)

Ability to find plants: The plant has been described to them in class. Now they should be able to find it in a hedge or wooded part of park but do not let them pull them all up.

Genetic ability to smell the particular smell of the stalk of Lords and Ladies: Teacher pulls a plant and crushes the stalk. Choose a plant that is ripe and has insects at the bottom of the flower. Ask each pupil in turn to describe the smell. Note who can and who can't detect the smell. Do the majority smell it or not?

Vetch 1

Worksheet in two sections

Noticing features of the plant: Knowing how the plant grows towards the light, pupils identify the relevant parts of the plant.

Word search: Pupils find all the words that have to do with vetch. Horizontal, diagonal, vertical and backwards are all used to find the words in the word bank.

Vetch 2

Fieldtrip

Revision: The visit to the hedge to look for flowers is not just for vetches, but for all the other hedge plants they have learned. They prove their knowledge by collecting a leaf from each one and sticking it to a page in class with the correct name. They can use several pages to stick down the leaves if necessary. (Sellotape is good for this).

Elder 1

Worksheet

Revision: The five trees they should know by now, together with the new one – elder – are revised here. They should be able to recognise the leaf of each one and associate the seed/ berry/nut with each one.

Elder 2

Fieldtrip

Revision: This fieldtrip is to revise the trees they know. They should be able to recognise all the main trees in a normal Irish hedgerow by now. Collecting a leaf specimen adds to their record in class.

Finding creepy-crawlies: Shaking a branch of each tree in turn gives a haul of creepy-crawlies in the upturned umbrella. Best results are found on warm sunny days in June and September. Holly trees will have fewer creepy-crawlies than oak, hawthorn or elder as the hard spiny leaves are more difficult to eat.

Badger 1

Worksheet in two sections

Names: Badgers live in setts, foxes in dens or in an earth, otters in holts, rats in holes and rabbits in burrows. Tunnels are not homes for any animal.

Accurate Drawing: Show the picture of the badger to the pupils and ask them to make a scientifically accurate one of it.

Badger 2

Worksheet in two sections

Food: This worksheet focuses on what badgers eat and scientific deduction. Frog spawn is only around in Spring so Latrine 2 therefore must have been investigated in Spring. Similarly, blackberries and acorns are autumn fruits. Wheat grows in cultivated fields and leather jacket grubs are pests of wheat roots and are dug up by badgers. Hamburgers and dog food are provided by humans so Latrine 4 must be near town.

Food Chains: Badgers are omnivores and consume a wide variety of food, as can be seen from the first part of the exercise, so there is great scope in drawing up food chains. Badgers are not eaten by anything.

Heron 1

Worksheet in three sections

Introduction to the bird: Show the picture of the bird to the pupils so they can colour in the drawing accurately.

Unscamble the words: An English exercise that improves their wildlife knowledge – the words are FROG, EEL, RAT, MOUSE, FISH and BEETLE.

Foodchain: Pupils now have lots of scope for a foodchain with the heron on the top but make sure they put in what the prey eats too, i.e., HERON – FROG – FLY – PLANT SAP

Heron 2

Worksheet

Revision: Pupils are asked to recognise the six birds they now know from the outline drawings. The answers to all the questions are in the teachers' handbook so it is revision for the teacher too.

Butterfly 1

Worksheet in two sections

Introduction to an insect: Insects have three parts to their bodies – a head, a thorax or middle bit to which the legs and wings are attached and an abdomen. They have 2 eyes, 2 antennae and a long tongue. Pupils should learn these component parts from the first exercise.

Revision: Some of the other creepy-crawlies the pupils have learned are not insects. So, spiders have only 2 parts to their bodies and carry all eight legs on their heads; woodlice have 14 legs; and bumble bees (which are insects) have 4 wings.

Butterfly 2

Fieldtrip

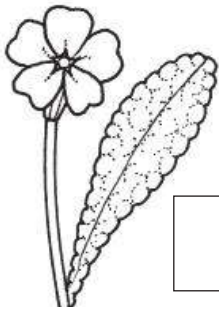
Looking for butterflies: If the school has very few butterfly nets, much can still be learned by observation. Encourage this very important scientific skill.

Caterpillar Game: This game is to illustrate how difficult it is to see green things on green grass. Pupils will easily find the red and white pasta – just as birds would easily find red or white caterpillars. It is much harder to find the green pasta and it takes longer so the pupils at the end of the lines will have fewer pasta pieces because only green ones are left. So being green is good for survival.

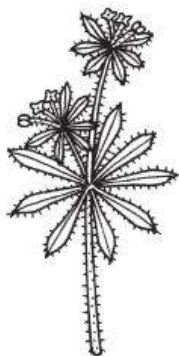
Colour

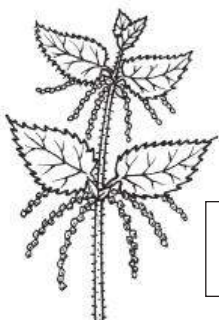
This plant flowers in spring and has red berries in autumn. Colour in both of the drawings.

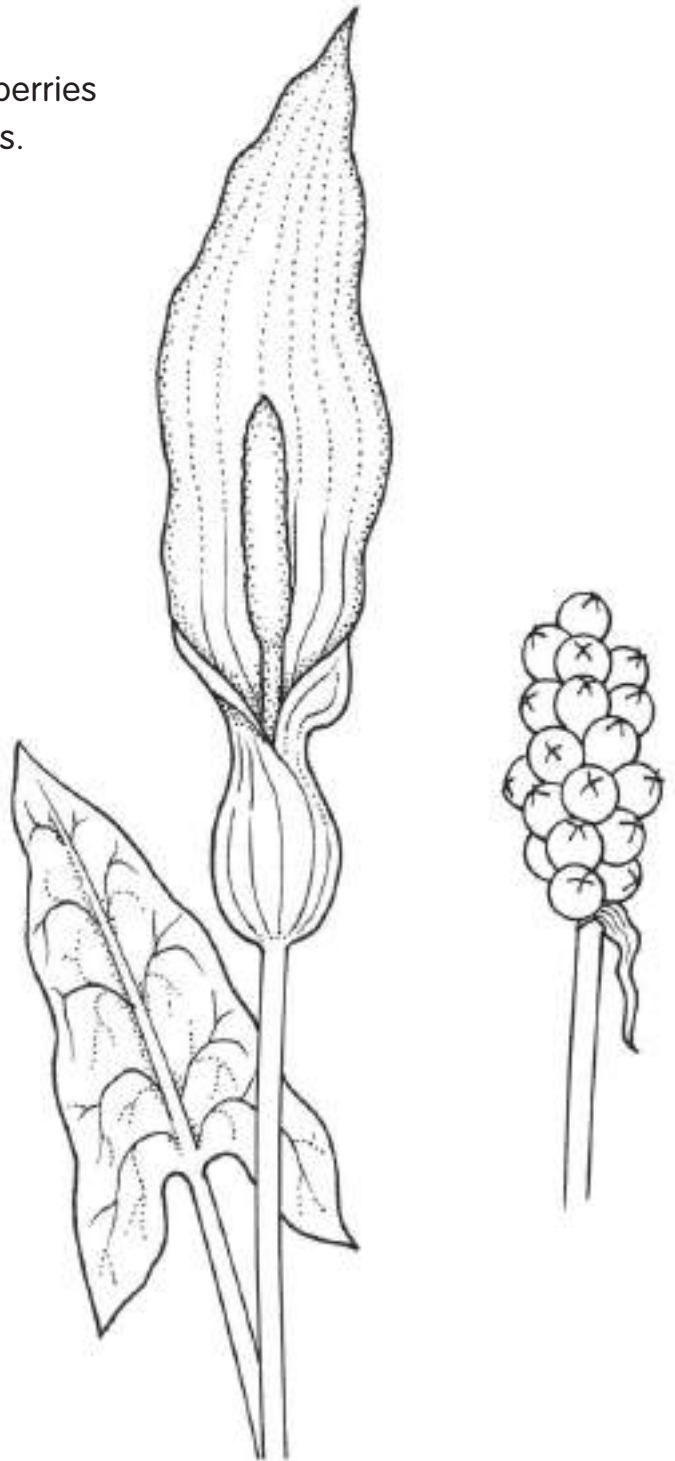
In Spring, Lords and Ladies grow in hedges and woodlands. They usually flower in April or early May. The following flowers also grow in hedges and flower at the same time. Can you say what each one is?





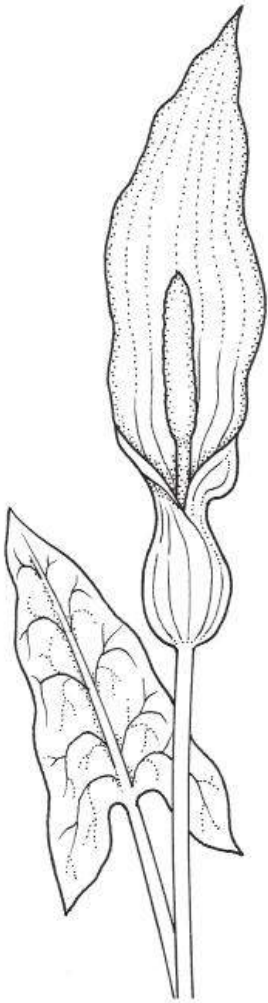






Why do all these flowers appear in Spring before the leaves come on the trees?

Fieldtrip



In April, the fieldtrip will be to find the flowering plant.

This plant attracts flies because the stalk sticking up smells like rotten meat to flies. However, only some people can detect this smell.

Crush the flower stalk between your fingers and smell it.

Can you smell rotten meat from the stalk? Yes No

How many pupils in your class? _____

Of that number, how many can smell the rotten meat smell?

Flies can smell it and they go down into the flower looking for food that they think is there. Open the flower and look for flies.

Date when you opened the flower: _____

Flies present absent



In September, these plants have a stalk topped with red berries.

Birds eat the berries and new plants grow from the seeds of the berries which are in their droppings.

THESE BERRIES ARE POISONOUS TO HUMANS.

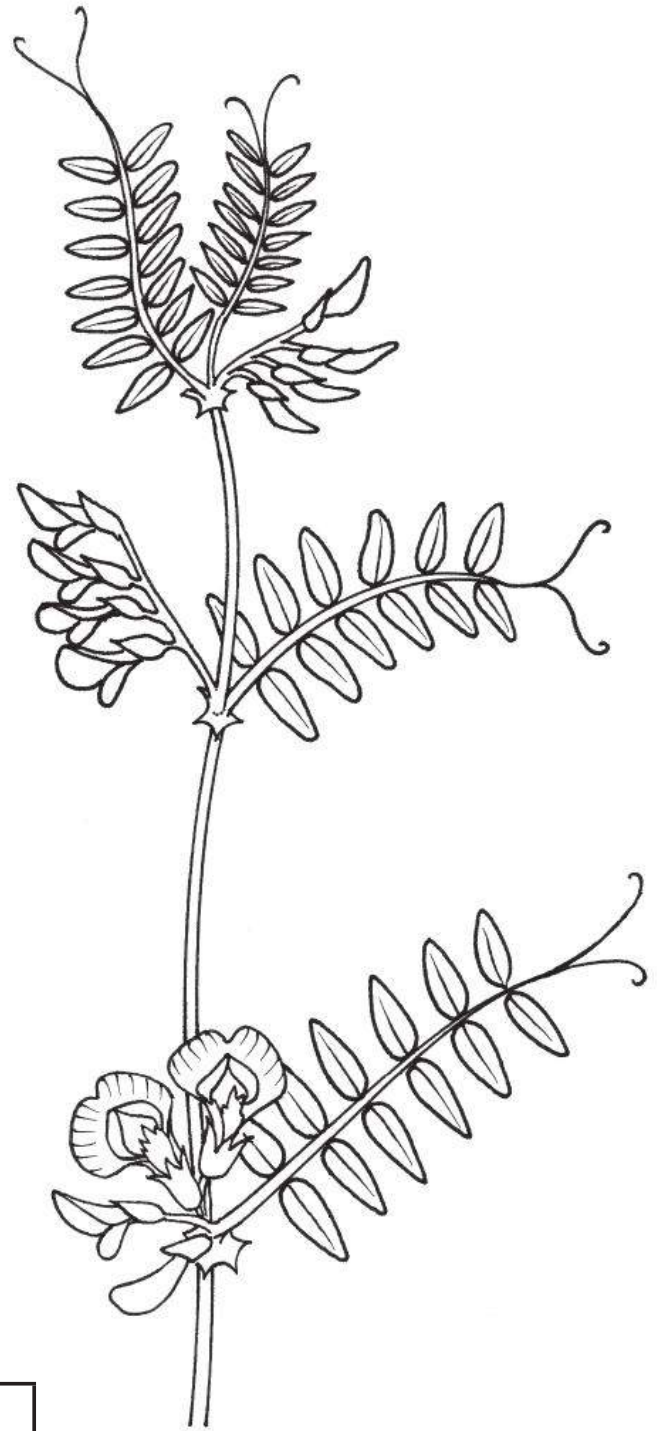
We saw berries of Lords and Ladies on our fieldtrip on:

_____ (date)

Colour and mark the parts

Vetches grow in hedges. There is not enough light at the bottom of the hedge for them to grow properly so they climb up towards the light using their tendrils at the end of the leaves to cling on to other plants.

Examine the drawing. Mark in the flowers, the leaves and the tendrils. Colour in the plant using the correct colours.



Vetches are members of the pea family. Find all the following words in the word search below. They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal or backwards in any of these directions.

W	E	G	D	E	H	L
P	E	A	L	R	I	B
O	U	Q	V	R	O	X
D	R	R	D	B	P	T
T	N	N	P	A	L	F
L	E	A	F	L	E	T
T	O	H	C	T	E	V

WORD BANK

VETCH	POD
PEA	PURPLE
TENDRIL	HEDGE
LEAFLET	

Fieldtrip

Fieldtrip in May/June to look for hedge flowers.

In your hedge, you should find flowers that you already know. Collect a leaf and flower from each one and stick it in the space beside the name:

VETCH

BLUEBELL

LORDS AND LADIES

ROBIN-RUN-THE-HEDGE

PRIMROSE

NETTLE

Identify

The elder tree is very common in hedges. It can be identified by its leaf which has only 5 leaflets. Look at the following leaves. You have learned them all already. Name each one.

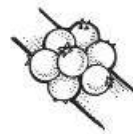


New trees from seeds – these can also be nuts or inside berries. Name the following and say what tree grows from them.



name _____

tree _____



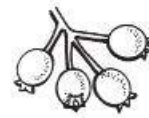
name _____

tree _____



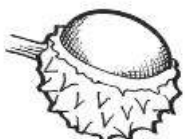
name _____

tree _____



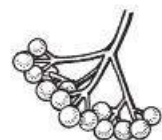
name _____

tree _____



name _____

tree _____



name _____

tree _____

_____ are berries.

_____ are nuts.

_____ are wind-blown seeds.

DID YOU KNOW?

Birds eat berries and the hard seeds in the middle come out in their droppings and grow into new trees.

Fieldtrip to a hedge

This fieldtrip is to the nearest hedge to study the trees in the hedge.

Each group will need an umbrella, a pooter and a few jars.

At your hedge, find the trees you know and collect a leaf from each one. Bring them back to class and stick on to this page and name each one.



We found _____ had the most creepy-crawlies.

Were the same creepy-crawlies on every tree?

_____ were on every tree.

_____ was only on _____ tree.

Wordsearch

Badgers make their homes under the ground in a hole which has a special name. The word bank has lots of words for holes under the ground. Find them all and highlight the word that means a badger's home.

B	A	S	Y	R	W
H	O	L	E	O	E
O	E	A	R	T	H
L	I	R	K	N	T
T	U	N	N	E	L
B	A	D	G	D	P

WORD BANK

HOLE DEN
 BURROW HOLT
 EARTH SETT
 TUNNEL

Look at the picture of a badger. Draw an accurate badger picture here.

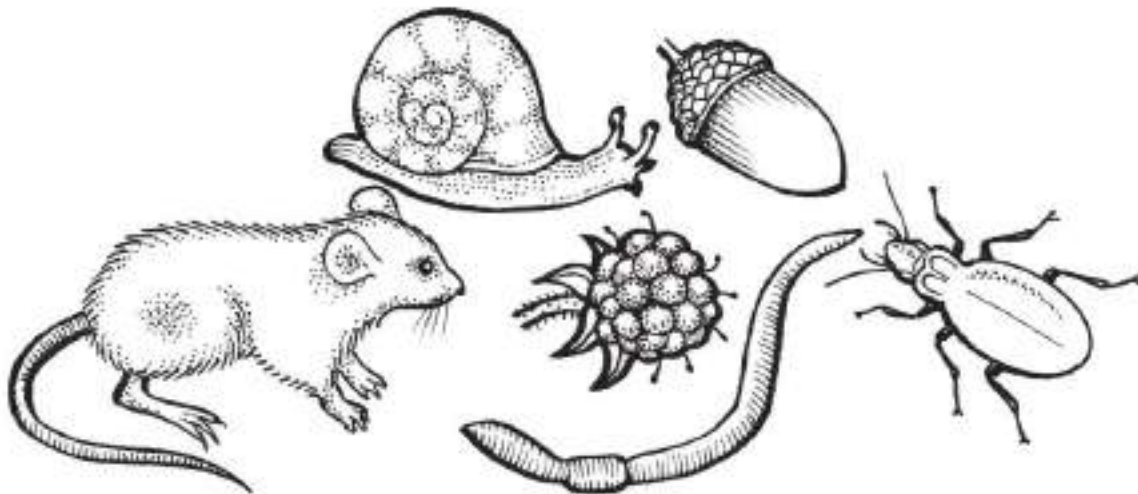
How do we know what badgers eat?

DID YOU KNOW?

Scientists examine badger droppings to see what food the badger was eating. This is easy to do because badgers in a sett all use a special place near the sett as a toilet. This place is called a badger's latrine.

Animal scientists called Zoologists examined droppings from 4 different latrines at different times of the year and this is what they found:

Latrine 1	Latrine 2	Latrine 3	Latrine 4
Earthworm hairs	Hedgehog spines	Blackberry seeds	Rabbit fur
Wheat grains	Rat bones	Snail shells	Earthworm hairs
Skins of leatherjackets	Jelly from frog spawn	Acorn shells	Mouse bones
Fungi	Slug remains	Beetle backs	Tinned dog food & hamburger



Examine these results carefully and answer the following questions:

Which latrine was examined in Autumn? _____

Which latrine was near a town? _____

Which latrine was examined in Spring? _____

Which one was near a ploughed field with a growing crop? _____

Which food was found more than once? _____

In your copies, draw up three different food chains for badgers.

Colour

A heron is a large wading bird that spends lots of time beside rivers, ponds and lakes. Colour in the picture with the correct colours. Look at pictures of herons to be sure.



Hérons are carnivores. Here is a list of food they eat – the letters have been mixed up. Can you write the correct word in each case?

GRFO _____

SHIF _____

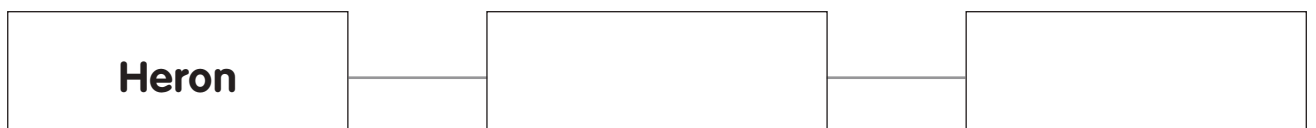
SUMOE _____

ART _____

ELE _____

BTLEEE _____

Make a heron food chain



Bird Revision



These are the birds you have learned about so far.

Name each bird.

Which two live on or near water?

Only two are omnivores. Which two?

Two are herbivores (only eat plant food) – which two?

Only two of them never build a nest in a tree – which two?

Which one has a male and female with different colours? _____

Which one migrates for the winter? _____

Which one is called Máire Fhada in Irish? _____

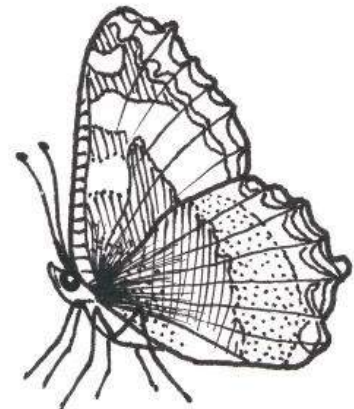
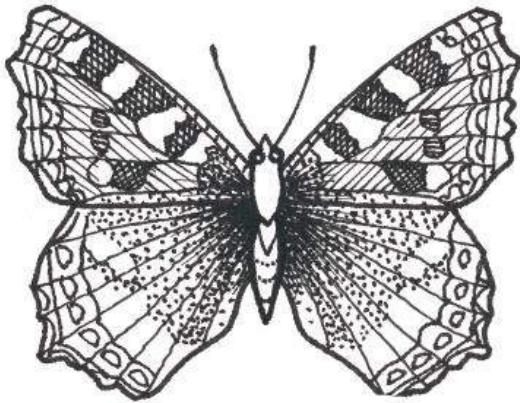
Why do you think this is so? _____

Which is your favourite? _____

Why? _____

Fill in the blanks

A butterfly is an insect and has a typical insect's body. Look at the two drawings of the butterfly below and answer the following questions. The words for the answers are in the word bank.



Name 3 things on a butterfly's head

How many legs does a butterfly have? _____

How many wings has it? _____

The butterfly's body is in _____ parts.

Name each part of the body _____

WORD BANK

HEAD	THREE	SIX	FOUR	THORAX
ABDOMEN	ANTENNAE	EYES	TONGUE	

REVISION

How many legs has a spider?

How many parts in a spider's body?

All a spider's legs are on its

How many legs has a woodlouse?

How many wings has a bumble bee?

Fieldtrip

Butterflies fly best on calm, dry days with sunshine and no wind. Pick a day like this in May, June or September to look for butterflies. You will need nets and a jar.

Butterflies visit flowers.

We saw _____ butterflies visiting flowers.

What flowers were they visiting? _____

Butterflies fly in the air.

We saw _____ butterflies in the air.

We caught _____.

WHY ARE CATERPILLARS GREEN? GAME to play outdoors.

You will need 3 bags of pasta shapes – 1 red, 1 green and 1 white.

Divide the class into 2 teams.

Scatter all the 3 bags of pasta over a grassy place. The class are the birds and the pasta pieces are the caterpillars.

It is easy to see and catch white and red pasta on the green grass.

At 'go', one pupil from each team rushes to collect as many pieces of pasta while the rest of the class counts to 10. They keep what they have collected. The next two do the same for a count of 10 and so on each until all have had a turn. Each pupil counts how many of each colour they collected.

player	WHITE PASTA		GREEN PASTA		RED PASTA	
	Team 1	Team 2	Team 1	Team 2	Team 1	Team 2
1st						
2nd						
3rd						
4th, etc						
TOTAL						

Who collected the most and the least? Why? Were all the green pieces found?
What can we conclude about caterpillars and camouflage after this?

Acknowledgements

The *Wild Things at School* series has been developed to help engage primary school children and teachers with nature. The original publication, *Wild Things at School*, a book for primary school teachers has been positively received by teachers all over Ireland and has proved to be a valuable teaching resource. This new publication of *Wild Things Worksheets* is designed to accompany the teacher's book providing material for use in the classroom. Exercises are divided into class groups, from the simplest counting for junior infants to stimulating debates and field studies for the older children.

The exercises have been created and developed by wildlife expert Éanna Ní Lamhna, who has many years experience visiting schools all over Ireland. Christine Warner's beautiful illustrations were specially commissioned to enhance the learning experience on every page. Photographs of all the wild things are included on a DVD along with the worksheets and original teacher's book. The worksheets are available in Irish and are also on the DVD.

This publication is funded by the Heritage Council Heritage Plan fund, Monaghan County Council Heritage Office and Meath County Council Heritage Office.

The publication design is by Connie Scanlon and James Fraher at Bogfire. Proof reading was undertaken by Graham Smith of Wordsmith. Irish translation of the worksheets is by Máire Mhic Thaidhg. Pronsias Ó Donnghaile proofread the Irish version. Photographs are mainly from Eric Dempsey and Shirley Clerkin.

I hope that the production of these worksheets will assist teachers to deliver the *Wild Things* programme. Enormous thanks goes to those who have been involved with this project, particularly Eanna and Christine whose creative partnership has resulted in a fantastic teaching resource. It has been a labour of love for us all; a love for nature that we genuinely wish to pass on to its future custodians.

We wish you luck with the *Wild Things* programme.

Shirley Clerkin
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Monaghan County Council
heritage@monaghancoco.ie



About the Author



Éanna Ní Lamhna

Éanna Ní Lamhna is best known for her environmental expertise as a broadcaster on the radio programme *Mooney Goes Wild*. Her Co. Louth accent gives her one of the most instantly recognisable voices on radio. Her ability to bring her subject to life is legendary and her no-nonsense approach to romantic views about wildlife is well known.

She is first and foremost a botanist with degrees in both botany and ecology from University College Dublin. Her interest in the environment has expanded with her work over the years, to include birds, mammals and in particular creepy-crawlies whose doings hold a particular fascination for her. Her ability to awaken enthusiasm for these creatures in her listeners is exemplified by the remark made to her lately, “Whenever I see a spider I always think of you and put it outside instead of stamping on it.”

She began work in 1974 in the Biological Records Centre — in its first incarnation in An Foras Forbartha. She quickly realised that if she was to receive any biological records from the Irish public she would first have to go and teach them about Irish wildlife. So began a career of teachers’ courses, radio programmes, lecturing at third level, field trips with Secondary School pupils and most significantly of all, visits to Primary Schools to teach the pupils and indeed the teachers there, about the wildlife around them.

Her publications include *Talking Wild*, *Wild and Wonderful*, *Straight Talking Wild* and *Wild Dublin*. She has just completed a five-year term of office as President of An Taisce and is currently the Vice-President of the Tree Council of Ireland.

About the Illustrator



Christine Warner

Christine Warner is an illustrator and calligrapher working mostly in the field of education. She provides full colour illustrations, line diagrams and cartoons for textbooks, workbooks and posters. She has worked for many educational publishers and also for Dúchas, Forfás and Trócaire.

While she illustrates material on a wide variety of subjects, she specialises in science, having science degrees from University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin. She particularly enjoys producing wildlife illustrations and cartoons. She has been an environmental activist for many years. Christine may be contacted via email at cwarner1@gmail.com

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