

**Protect and  
celebrate your  
unique landscape**



Restore, rediscover and reclaim

# Romney Marsh

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# Introduction to Romney Marsh



This education pack has been designed to help local teachers and educators use the landscape and heritage of Romney Marsh as a resource for learning. This pack contains activities and resources inspired by the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The aims of these activities are to help young people discover, explore and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of Romney Marsh. The activities can be used as stand-alone tasks, incorporated into existing schemes of work or built into a Fifth Continent Programme of Study with a focus on the local area and environment.

This scheme is a community project led by Kent Wildlife Trust across the Fifth Continent of Romney Marsh. Its focus is reconnecting people with their landscape whilst protecting and celebrating all that makes Romney Marsh evocative and unique.

## The scheme has three key themes:

### **Restore:**

To conserve and restore the natural features that make up the distinctive character of the Marsh.

### **Rediscover:**

To provide opportunities for people to discover, explore and learn about Romney Marsh's landscape and heritage.

### **Reclaim:**

To help people participate in looking after and celebrating the cultural and natural heritage of Romney Marsh.

## How much do we really know about Romney Marsh?

A great introduction to the themes covered in this pack is the Romney Marsh quiz which students can take here:

 [fifthcontinent.org.uk/romney-marsh-quiz/](https://fifthcontinent.org.uk/romney-marsh-quiz/)

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# Teacher's Notes

## Age Range:

The material in this pack is primarily aimed at students in KS2 (8-11 year olds). However, the activities can be adapted for use with KS1 or KS3 students.

## Summary of resources:

The cross-curricular activities are designed to be usable in the classroom or on school grounds with the intention to provide inspiration and a jumping off point for educators to extend learning to other sites across Romney Marsh. By repeating the studies and investigations in different areas across the local area, learners may be able to make insightful comparisons. The activities can be used flexibly, easily adapted to suit varying needs, and modified for individual or group activities.

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## National Curriculum Links

Aspects of the KS2 National Curriculum programmes of study that the activities in this pack can link to:

### Science

- **Plants:** identify environmental requirements and the main structures of flowering plants.
- **Living things/habitats:** classify in local environments, recognise changing environments and the dangers posed to wildlife.
- **Living things/habitats:** describe differences in the life cycles of mammals, amphibians, birds, insects.
- **Living things/habitats:** classify plants based on characteristics using keys.

### Geography

- Identify some key topographical features (coasts, rivers) and land use patterns, and understand how these change over time.
- Use OS maps to build knowledge of the UK.
- Use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present human or physical features in the local area (sketch maps, plans, digital technologies).

### History

- **A local study linked to one of the British areas of study** tracing how several aspects of national history are reflected in the locality (this can go beyond 1066) a study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality.

### English

- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style in a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

### Art/Music

- Pupils should develop artistic techniques, including their control and use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.
- In music, students should appreciate and understand a wide range of high-quality live and recorded music drawn from different traditions.

# Fieldwork and outdoor learning

Spending time in nature is known to improve health and well-being.

Exploring outdoor learning environments can connect children with nature whilst linking to many aspects of the national curriculum.

Some, but not all, of the activities in this pack include an element of outdoor learning and it is hoped that the pack will inspire educators to take the students out to explore Romney Marsh.



## RISK ASSESSMENTS

Staff will no doubt want to carry out their own risk assessments for activities. Each site will have specific considerations. As a starting point, a generic risk assessment for visiting a nature reserve or outdoor space is provided in the appendix. Make sure to consider how the time of year and time of day could affect your risk assessment.

Children can also be involved in risk assessments and learn from the opportunity to identify and evaluate potential risks rather than just being given boundaries and safety rules. This can be included at the start of any session:

- Incorporate a risk assessment into the learning: Ask students to consider risks they might come across on their field trip. What should be their golden rules for staying safe?
- Setting boundaries: When using an outdoor space for any of the activities, discuss with the children how far a safe distance for them to explore is. Get the children to suggest features to act as markers that they agree not to go beyond.
- Respecting the environment: Returning animals to their habitats after studying them. Not picking flowers. Litter picking.

# Overview

## Part A: Restore (Conservation)

- 1 Shingle On The Cusp** takes a closer look at classifying plants and grasses and considers issues with non-native, invasive plants.
- 2 Green Lanes** takes students on a minibeast safari, building pitfall traps or using sweep nets to investigate invertebrates. We focus on the importance of pollinators.
- 3 Blue Lanes** encourages groups to dip a ditch or pond to broaden their understanding of animal habitats, adaptations, lifecycles and classification.
- 4 What Is A Ramsar?** considers the significance of the Romney Marsh as a wildlife refuge, particularly for birds. We focus on migrations as an adaptation to seasonal changes.

## Part B: Rediscover and reclaim (Heritage)

- 1 Where On Earth Am I?** puts Romney Marsh into context geographically and historically using archeology and mapping of landscape features and significant buildings.
- 2 Heritage Trails** leads learners on a journey from the Normans to the present day and encourages them to explore which parts of their local heritage they want to share with the wider community.
- 3 Sensational Stories** dives into the literary history of Romney Marsh and invites students to retell or compose their own stories of the Marsh using various media.
- 4 Art Celebrations** embraces the variety of artistic expressions including music, mosaics and needlework used to celebrate the environment and heritage of the Romney Marsh.

### Colour Key

 Science based

 Geography/history based

 Arts based

# Section A:

## Restore

These activities aim to develop awareness of conservation and encourage participation in conserving or restoring natural features that make up the distinctive character of Romney Marsh.

“**Shingle On The Cusp**”, “**Blue Lanes**” and “**Green Lanes**” are some of the the Fifth Continent Landscape Partnership Scheme projects that have focused on the conservation of natural habitats across the Marsh.

Dungeness is the largest mass of shingle in Europe. This unusual habitat is home to many rare and unique species, including a moth found nowhere else in the world: the Dungeness Pygmy Footman. It is also the site of the reintroduction project of the short-haired bumblebee (*Bombus subterraneus*).

The grazing marsh and its series of ditches are also important habitats that characterise the area and are especially rich in plants and invertebrates. The Blue and Green Lanes projects have focused on ditch restoration and implementing bumblebee-friendly practices across the Marsh.



### THE KEY TO CONSERVATION

The key to conservation is identifying, recording and monitoring species. This enables land managers to make informed, evidence-based decisions on how to restore habitats and modify practices to ensure that species have what they need to survive.

The activities here can help students meet several learning objectives within the science curriculum relating to living things and habitats. Seasonality of the wildlife needs to be taken into account when planning these activities. The best time to study flowers and pollinators will be late spring, summer or early autumn, whereas study of migratory birds is likely to be better in spring or autumn. Putting out bird feeders in the winter and early spring can also be a good way to attract birds in order to observe and survey them.



# Shingle On The Cusp

## Plant investigation



### Aim:

To investigate plants and their habitats across Romney Marsh.

### Objectives:

- Identify the environmental requirements of plants in different habitats.
- Identify the main structures of a plant which can help us classify them.
- Classify some native and non-native plants found in local habitats.
- Consider/evaluate the impacts of invasive plants on the local wildlife.

## Activities

Romney Marsh is characterised by its grazing marsh and rare, special shingle habitat on Dungeness. Access to either of these habitats would be ideal but these activities will work if learners can access any reasonable piece of grassland which is not mown too short.

The Fifth Continent Project leaflet, *Gardening by the Sea*, has images of some key native and non-native plants. Examples are provided below but it may be helpful if educators can find specimens growing locally or bring them into school.

ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Zoom in on a habitat</b></p> <p>Introduces the idea of a frame or quadrat to sample an area.</p> <p>Moving from standing to being down on the ground, changing the perspective to help students observe details more closely.</p> <p>Observations will help learners consider differences and make comparisons.</p>	<p><b>Resources: create a cardboard frame 20cmx20cm for each student or group to take out to a grassland/shingle habitat.</b></p> <p>Students should stand holding the frame at chin height, look down through it at the patch of grass and describe what they see. How many different plants? Any animals? What is the most unusual or attractive thing in the frame? Students could make a sketch of the view.</p> <p>Now repeat the exercise kneeling down. Is the view different? What else can they see? Sketch the view.</p> <p>Repeat once more lying on their stomachs with the frame lying on the ground. What details can they see? At which stage could they see the most plants?</p> <p>If possible, try this activity in different locations or habitats. Compare an area of shingle vegetation, a field on the grazing marsh and a school field or garden. Why do certain plants grow in one area but not others?</p> <p><b>Creative follow up: Make a painting from the sketches, use them to create a setting for a story.</b></p>

# Shingle On The Cusp

## Plant investigation



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Parts of a plant</b></p> <p>Learners can identify the main structures of plants and, by getting them to observe closely, they can develop the skills to classify plants in more detail and learn about the differences between grasses and other wildflowers.</p>	<p><b>Resources: magnifying glasses or hand lenses, specimen plants.</b></p> <p>Learners can select a plant to observe outside (following on from the “zoom in” activity) or they can have a selection of specimens provided in the classroom.</p> <p>Use the activity sheet (see appendix) to make a drawing of their plant, label the main structures (flower, leaf or leaf blade, node, roots) and decide if the plant they are looking at is a grass (monocot) or a wildflower (dicot). This leads learners on to features that can help classify plants.</p> <p><b>Follow up:</b> This activity links well with the activities below which look at native and non-native plants and use keys for classifying plants. It also links to the Green Lanes Minibeast Investigation that focusses on some of the important pollinators on the Marsh.</p>
<p><b>Native or non-native?</b></p> <p>By studying plants in the local area and learning to identify and classify them, students will have opportunities to consolidate and share their knowledge with the wider community. This activity also provides opportunities to consider the impacts of environmental changes (eg. humans introducing non-native garden plants).</p>  <p><i>Marshmallow</i></p>	<p><b>Resources: wildflower guide, specimens or images of local plants, <a href="#">gardening by the sea leaflet</a>.</b></p> <p>Introduce the key terms native, non-native and invasive.</p> <p>What do learners understand these to mean? In a scientific context, these terms describe living things that do or do not naturally live in an area. Often humans have introduced them (for example, the species has escaped from a home garden). If a species is invasive then it spreads vigorously and outcompetes native plants. This often has a negative impact on the native wildlife.</p> <p>Look at the plant structures (petals, leaves) and identify features of some native and non-native plants found across Romney Marsh. Alternatively, bringing in specimens or visiting a site with some of these plants can make for a richer learning experience.</p> <p><b>Native plants on Romney Marsh:</b> Vipers bugloss, wild carrot, Nottingham catchfly, red hemp nettle, sea holly, yellow horned poppy, sea kale, wood sage, cats ear, lichens, prostrate broom, sea campion, black horehound.</p> <p><b>Non-native and invasive plants on the Marsh:</b> red valerian, buddleja, Russian vine, yuccas, silver ragwort, cotoneaster, snow-in-summer.</p> <p><b>Follow up:</b> Share the <a href="#">Fifth Continent Gardening by the Sea leaflet</a> with students and families. Encourage students to create a native shingle garden within the school grounds.</p>

# Shingle On The Cusp

## Plant investigation



### ACTIVITIES

**Use or make a key to classify plants.**

Another way to understand how an identification key works is to have a go at creating one. This is a great exercise in observation and problem solving. It is also a good team activity where students can share ideas about how to describe characteristics.



### DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES

**Resources: Hand lenses, magnifying glasses, plant specimens, guide to wildflowers or grasses such as those produced by the Field Studies Council.**

Students can use hand lenses/magnifiers to look at some of the plants used in earlier activities (zooming in or native/non-native). They can try using a simple key or ID guide to identify the plants by looking at the features. Then, as a group activity, they can try creating their own plant key.

- 1 Students should collect between five and eight specimens of plants and label them with letters i.e. A-G.
- 2 Then the students can create a table of differences by finding features which distinguish them from one another e.g colour, hairy leaves, more or less than 10cm long. Choose features that can be answered yes or no (i.e. hairy leaves – yes/no).
- 3 Create a dichotomous key by selecting one feature to divide the specimens into two groups. Write the feature at the top of a piece of paper (see activity sheet).

**Follow up: students can try out each other's keys or use them with another class or year group. This activity can also be carried out with minibeasts.**

# Green Lanes

## Minibeast investigations



### Aim:

To investigate minibeasts and their habitats across Romney Marsh.

### Objectives:

- Use sampling and survey techniques to investigate animals and their habitats.
- Identify and classify some invertebrates.
- Consider the impacts of environmental changes on wildlife.

## Activities

Romney Marsh is home to five of the six rarest UK bumblebee species but populations may be fragmented.

The Green Lanes project is working to improve habitat connectivity by establishing new wildflower corridors and teaching people about these important species.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Minibeast sampling

Exploring the school grounds or further afield to find out what minibeasts are living there is an exciting and engaging activity. It is great for students to have opportunities to try different sampling techniques and understand that they can contribute to wider recording and monitoring efforts.

### DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES

**Resources: pooter, sweep net, white sheet, old yoghurt pots, trowel, flat stone, insect/minibeast field guides. See the appendix for ideas on how to make your own sweep net from household items.**

Depending on the area available, students can try different sampling techniques:

- **Sweep netting:** Ideal for catching minibeasts in areas of long grass. Avoid patches of brambles that can snag and try not sweep up stinging insects or butterflies whose wings may be damaged. Instructions for making your own sweep net are in the appendix.
- **Pooters:** These work by sucking up small minibeasts into a pot so they can be looked at closely.
- **Beating a tree:** Spread a white sheet under a bush, shrub or small tree and shake it gently. The minibeasts in the tree will fall out onto the sheet and be easy to see or suck up with a pooter.
- **Pitfall trap:** Students can build their own pitfall traps by digging a hole and inserting an old yogurt pot so that the rim is flush with the ground. Place some bait in the pot (a bit of meat or fruit) then balance a large flat stone on top of some smaller stones so animals can crawl under but the pot is protected from birds and rain.



# Green Lanes

## Minibeast investigations



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
	<p>Study and classify the minibeasts found using visible characteristics. This can be as simple as counting the legs or checking whether it has a shell or wings. Which animals were found where and why? How are they adapted to their habitat?</p> <p><b>Follow up: Monitor and record minibeasts at different times of year, even over several years.</b></p> <p>Recording in your school is citizen science and can contribute towards Eco-award schemes such as the Wilder Kent Awards. Use the Biological records iRecord app or go to:</p> <p> <a href="http://fifthcontinent.org.uk/projects/restore/monitoring-of-the-marsh/wildlife-recording/">fifthcontinent.org.uk/projects/restore/monitoring-of-the-marsh/wildlife-recording/</a></p>
<p><b>Benefits of Bumblebees</b></p> <p>Understanding the importance of pollinators links to the issues of sustainability and environmental changes in Romney Marsh.</p> <p>The Marsh is home to five of the six rarest UK bumblebee species. Dungeness was the last place the short-haired bumblebee (<i>Bombus subterraneus</i>) was seen before it was declared extinct in 2000.</p> 	<p><b>Resources: Wildlife Watch spotter guides or other ID guides for bumblebees, butterflies, moths.</b></p> <p><b>What is a pollinator and why are they important?</b> A pollinator is an animal (often an insect) that transfers pollen from male to female parts of plants to create seeds. This is important for producing new plants and especially important for growing crops for food.</p> <p>Consider and discuss the change and decline in bumblebees in the last 100 years due to changes in agriculture and mowing regimes. Discuss <i>B. subterraneus</i> going extinct from Romney Marsh. There is lots of helpful background information on the Bumblebee Conservation Trust website:</p> <p> <a href="http://bumblebeeconservation.org/bumblebee-species-guide/">bumblebeeconservation.org/bumblebee-species-guide/</a></p> <p>Carry out a pollinator survey of your school grounds, garden or local area. Record the bumblebees and butterflies you can see. Link to plant activities: What types of plants are they near?</p> <p><b>Follow up: Monitoring and recording on the iRecord app or join a Bee Walk organized by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust (see useful organisations page for website details).</b></p>

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# Green Lanes

Minibeast investigations



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Protect our pollinators</b></p> <p>Learners can continue the work of the Fifth Continent Landscape Partnership Scheme in helping to restore habitat for bumble bees and other pollinators. Dungeness is the location of the short-haired bumblebee reintroduction project.</p>	<p><b>Resources: powdered clay, peat free compost, packets of native wildflower seeds, mixing bowls.</b></p> <p>Make seed bombs to create a wildflower meadow on some bare soil in the school grounds or students can take them home to their gardens.</p> <p>Use an area of the school grounds to plant a “nectar bar” for our pollinators. Ideal plants for pollinators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laburnum</li> <li>• Irises</li> <li>• Ornamental daisies</li> <li>• Wall flowers</li> <li>• Lavender</li> <li>• Alliums</li> </ul> <p><b>Follow up: Create a bee wall in your school grounds. Follow the progress of the reintroduction of <i>Bombus subterraneus</i> at Dungeness.</b></p>



# Blue Lanes

## Pond and ditch investigations



### Aim:

To investigate freshwater habitats across Romney Marsh.

### Objectives:

- Use sampling and survey techniques to investigate freshwater habitats.
- Identify and classify some invertebrates.
- Describe the life-cycle of an invertebrate.
- Consider the impacts of environmental changes on wildlife.

## Activities

Blue Lanes is a Fifth Continent Landscape Partnership Scheme project that worked with landowners and managers across the Marsh to help manage the ditches for wildlife. The ditches are an integral part of the grazing marsh habitat and hold fascinating wildlife. Ponds and ditches are still waters that often have very similar animals. By dipping in a pond, you can get a good idea of

what might be found in local ditches. Alternatively, collect a small sample from a local ditch (with landowner permission) or make a visit to the Kent Wildlife Trust Romney Marsh Visitor Centre for a pond dipping session.



[kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/romney-marsh-visitor-centre-and-nature-reserve](https://kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/romney-marsh-visitor-centre-and-nature-reserve)

ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Ditch dipping – using and making keys.</b></p> <p>This activity provides an opportunity to look at another habitat and potentially compare it with terrestrial habitats (Green Lanes). Water habitats often hold an intense fascination for children and can be very engaging.</p> 	<p><b>Resources: pond nets, buckets, wide shallow trays (ideally white or with a mini-whiteboard at the bottom to provide contrast to spot the animals), petri dishes or small beakers, white plastic spoons (can be washed and reused), freshwater ID guides (eg. from Kent Wildlife Trust or The Forest Stewardship Council).</b></p> <p>Educators will need to risk assess any water body proposed for taking samples from. If the school has a pond, this is ideal.</p> <p>Other water bodies should be carefully risk assessed as ditches can sometimes have steep sides, however if a suitable location cannot be identified then having an adult collect a sample and bring it to the students to study in trays is often a good option.</p> <p>Use white trays with a small amount of the sample in. Encourage students to let the water become still and then watch for movements. Reusable white plastic spoons are ideal for scooping out minibeasts and putting them in small pots (white paint pots are good) to look at more closely with magnifiers.</p>

# Blue Lanes

## Pond and ditch investigations



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
	<p>Students can observe closely and classify organisms based on characteristics such as number of legs, tails, shell etc.</p> <p>How do they move? Do they walk, swim or slither?</p> <p>How do they breathe? Do they have gills? Do they have to come up for air?</p> <p>With the contained sample, there is plenty of time for observation and questioning. This can lead onto ideas of food chains and/or water quality and pollution.</p> <p>How many of each type of animal are there? Why might there be more of some than others? What might they eat? Identify a herbivore or a predator.</p>
<p><b>Life cycles of freshwater animals</b></p> <p>Freshwater animals provide a wealth of opportunities for looking at life cycles. Some will be very familiar such as those of frogs and other amphibians but the life cycles of dragonflies and beetles might be more surprising.</p>	<p><b>Resources: freshwater ID guides, dipping equipment as above.</b></p> <p>Many animals found in ponds and ditches will be flies in the juvenile stage of their life cycle (dragon flies, damsel flies, caddis flies etc). These are nymphs or larva. The adults lay the eggs in or near water and the juvenile hatches, lives and feeds in the water until it is time to turn into an adult. Larvae, like caterpillars and butterflies, go through a metamorphosis and change significantly before the adult can emerge. Caddis flies and crane flies do this. Nymphs do not change much, they just crawl out and shed their skin before flying away. This is the case with dragonflies, damselflies and beetles. The skin (exuviae) of recently hatched adult dragonflies can sometimes be found attached to tall water plants in the summer and are often mistaken for a dead dragonfly nymph.</p> <p>Romney Marsh has significant populations of amphibians, especially the rare great crested newt. It is against the law to disturb these. If you think you have found one please notify the Kent Wildlife Trust or the Biological Records Centre. In springtime it's great to monitor the development of amphibians. Frog or toad spawn (eggs) can be laid in water any time from February depending on the temperatures. Development to an adult can take about 12-14 weeks. Visit the water body each week and record the stage of the spawn, tadpole through to frog or toad.</p>



# Blue Lanes

Pond and ditch investigations



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Medicinal leeches</b></p> <p>The blood sucking aspect of these creatures can be rather gruesome yet fascinating to students. They make an ideal case study of a significant local species with historical and conservation importance.</p> 	<p>The medicinal leech is the only British leech capable of sucking blood from humans. They have been used in medicine for hundreds of years to improve blood flow and remove toxins.</p> <p>Students could research the history of this species and their use in medicine... there are some fascinating facts!</p> <p>Medicinal leeches can now be found at 85 locations on Romney Marsh - the largest population in the UK and internationally important.</p> <p>The Freshwater Habitats Trust is running conservation projects for this species and has lots of information on their website:</p> <p> <a href="https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Medicinal-Leech-ID-presentation.pdf">freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Medicinal-Leech-ID-presentation.pdf</a></p>

# What Is A Ramsar?



## Aim:

To learn about the importance of Romney Marsh for birds.

## Objectives:

- Identify and classify some birds.
- Recognise the international importance of Romney Marsh as a habitat.
- Consider the impacts of environmental changes on wildlife.

## Activities

2021 was the 50 year anniversary of the Ramsar convention. This is an international treaty between countries who agreed to use their wetlands wisely.

We now call this careful use of wetlands “sustainable development”. Romney Marsh is designated as a UK Ramsar site.

ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>What Is A Ramsar?</b></p> <p>Finding out about how internationally important Romney Marsh is for wildlife can give students a different perspective on their local area. It also introduces them to the history of ecosystem conservation and sustainable development.</p>	<p>There are many different conservation designations like SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest). Dungeness is a SSSI but the whole of Romney Marsh and Dungeness is also designated as a Ramsar site but what does this mean?</p> <p>Listen on BBC Sounds to hear the story of how people started trying to save wetlands 50 years ago in the Iranian town of Ramsar on the Caspian Sea: <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct1x31">bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct1x31</a></p> <p>Romney Marsh is designated as a Ramsar wetland for several reasons. It has important populations of rare species like the great crested newt and medicinal leech. It regularly supports <b>20,000</b> or more water birds. Key species are the mute swan and shoveler.</p> <p>Students may find it interesting to look up other countries around the world and find out about their Ramsar sites.</p> <p><a href="https://www.ramsar.org/country-profiles">ramsar.org/country-profiles</a></p>



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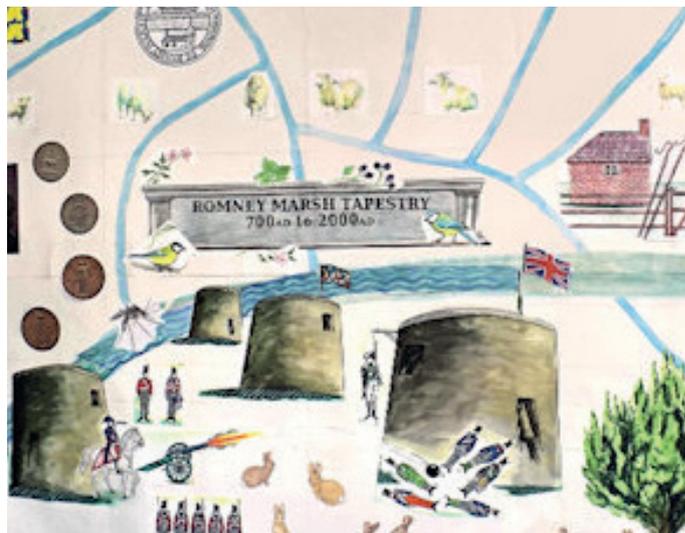
# Section B:

## Rediscover and reclaim

Activities to enable discovery and exploration of the cultural and natural heritage of Romney Marsh and to empower participation in looking after, celebrating and sharing it with others.

**“Sentinels on the Marsh”, “The Hunt for Romney Port”, “Marsh Mosaics” and “The Marsh on Screen Film Project”** are some of the Fifth Continent Landscape Scheme projects that incorporate aspects of the archaeology, oral history, visual arts, film making and storytelling across Romney Marsh.

Scattered across the Marsh are a number of historic churches that have been described as “sentinels” looking out over the landscape. Many of the Fifth Continent’s “Rediscover” projects aim to help local people gain a better understanding of these churches and their role in shaping the community and landscape of the Marsh. They have acted as a focal point for many aspects of the scheme, providing evocative community spaces which now display the Marsh Mosaics created by the community as one part of the project. They also provided the performance space for music composed as part of the scheme.



### THE GREAT TAPESTRY

The Great Tapestry of Romney Marsh is an IMOS Foundation project supported with some funding from the Scheme to create a 5m long tapestry depicting the history of the Marsh from 700AD to 2000AD, just like the famous Bayeux tapestry which is now approaching the 1000 year anniversary of its creation. The Bayeux tapestry has strong links to Romney Marsh because it displays the events leading up to the Norman invasion of the south coast and the Battle of Hastings in 1066. It is believed to have been stitched by the needlewomen of south east England. The Romney Marsh tapestry takes the recording of local history into the new millennium and is being embroidered with Romney wool.

The activities here can help students meet several learning objectives within the humanities and arts curriculum, including mapping features and learning about local history and geography in the local area. Features local to your school can be taken into account when planning activities. Many of the digital resources and links in this pack provide a jumping off point for students to develop their own observations and ideas.



# Where On Earth Am I?



## Aim:

To learn about the history of Romney Marsh and how it has changed over time.

## Objectives:

- Compare old and new maps to find similarities and differences over time.
- Investigate what archaeology is and what we can learn from it.
- Consider the significant human and physical features of the landscape.

## Activities

ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Where in the world am I?</b></p> <p>Looking at maps is vital to orient and embed a sense of place in young people. Comparing old and new maps links history and geography. Learners develop their map skills as well as considering the changes in the landscape through time.</p>	<p><b>Resources: globe, Google Earth, OS maps, digital links.</b></p> <p>Start with a globe or world map and ask learners, “Where in the world am I?”</p> <p>Identify some continents. Refer back to the Ingoldsby Legends (The leech of Folkestone) quote in the introduction to explain the project name: “Fifth Continent”.</p> <p>Use recent OS maps and Google Earth to look at Romney Marsh as it is today. What are the main human and physical features that are noticeable? Learners might notice the sea, rivers and ditches, towns, villages and churches, railways and roads.</p> <p>Ask learners how the maps might compare with old maps. What might be the same/different?</p> <p>A digital article from Kent Archeological Society shows several maps dating back to the early 1600s which can illustrate similarities and changes in settlements and roads.</p> <p><a href="http://kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Pub/ArchCant/Vol.030%20-%201914/030-12.pdf">kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Pub/ArchCant/Vol.030%20-%201914/030-12.pdf</a></p> <p>Romney Marsh Net website has images which illustrate the changes in the River Rother and the coastline over time.</p> <p><a href="http://theromneymarsh.net/beginning">theromneymarsh.net/beginning</a></p> <p><b>Follow up: Take a walk around the local area and map key features such as main roads, railway, coastline, rivers, ditches, and significant public buildings such as churches, schools and public houses.</b></p>



# Where On Earth Am I?



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Archeological Investigations</b></p> <p>Learning about what archaeology is and how it provides us with historical evidence can be made even more exciting by creating a real dig and linking archaeology and history to local places.</p>	<p><b>Resources: old artefacts/fossils, soil/earth trowels, brushes, paintbrushes, sieves.</b></p> <p>Introduce or recap what archaeology is. Discuss with learners what can be learnt from archaeology and the value of evidence found in archaeological digs.</p> <p><a href="http://bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/pshe-ks1-ks2-proud-to-be-an-archaeologist/zmqg92p">bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/pshe-ks1-ks2-proud-to-be-an-archaeologist/zmqg92p</a></p> <p>The Brenzett archeological dig puts this into a local context and shows how volunteers have been involved in discovering the Old Vicarage at Brenzett.</p> <p><a href="http://fifthcontinent.org.uk/project-film-footage-record/">fifthcontinent.org.uk/project-film-footage-record/</a></p> <p>By “planting” artefacts in an area of soil outside or even in a large tray in the classroom, learners can take part in their own archaeological dig. Learners can explore the processes of carefully uncovering the layers, sieving, cleaning and sorting the “finds”.</p> <p><b>Follow up: Contact local historical societies and museums in order to visit and look at real life artefacts.</b></p>

# Where On Earth Am I?



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Sentinels on the Marsh</b></p> <p>The medieval churches of Romney Marsh stand as sentinels, raised above the flat landscape. Learners could visit and find out about a local church from historical, religious and social perspectives.</p>	<p><b>Resources: any information on the church local to your school.</b></p> <p><a href="http://fifthcontinent.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-Marsh-Mosaics-Art-Trail-2021-web-compressed-2.pdf">fifthcontinent.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-Marsh-Mosaics-Art-Trail-2021-web-compressed-2.pdf</a></p> <p>The Marsh Mosaics trail leaflet provides information about ten of the medieval churches across the Marsh (see Art celebration section for more on this) and a visit to one of more of the churches can link together learning objectives from both sections.</p> <p>In “Where On Earth Am I?”, we considered significant buildings and landmarks on maps. Churches can be found on old and recent maps. How has the Marsh changed while these sentinels stood constant for hundreds of years? For example, construction of St Nicholas Church at New Romney began in 1086 by Bishop Odo, brother-in-law to William the Conqueror, and once stood near the port, but the great storm of 1287 changed the coastline of Romney Marsh and now it is inland. If walls could talk, what stories might they tell of what they have seen?</p> <p>If possible, take a field trip to a local church. What can you find out about the history of the church? Are there any interesting facts associated with it? For example, several churches have stories of smuggling tunnels linked to them and the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin in the village of St Mary in the Marsh has the grave of E. Nesbit, the famous author of the Railway Children.</p> <p><b>Follow up: Students can consider and discuss the importance of Romney Marsh churches as places of worship and focal points for local communities.</b></p>

# Heritage Trails



## Aim:

To investigate the local heritage of Romney Marsh and its impact on people.

## Objectives:

- Consider significant local features, both human and physical.
- Understand and appreciate people's ideas about Romney Marsh.

## Activities

ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Settlers</b></p> <p>By investigating the demographics and oral history of Romney Marsh, learners can explore the cultural heritage of it and understand what the area has to offer people.</p> <p>This activity also offers an opportunity for intergenerational community links.</p>	<p><b>Resources: digital interviews, local maps.</b></p> <p><b>What is a settler? What brings people to the Marsh?</b> Who were the people that came to live on the Marsh over time and why?</p> <p>Since 1066, when the Normans invaded from France, people have arrived and settled on Romney Marsh. Diseases like the plague and malaria caused the population to decrease in the middle ages, resulting in lost villages: <a href="http://theromneymarsh.net/lostvillages">theromneymarsh.net/lostvillages</a></p> <p>The Marsh then became ever more important for sheep farming and agriculture.</p> <p>In the present day, Romney Marsh is a popular tourist destination, well known for the caravan and holiday parks along the coast. Many people including E. Nesbit, the author, and Derek Jarman, the film director, have visited Romney Marsh and loved it so much that they made it home. Listen to interviews of people who have come to Romney Marsh and their reasons why: <a href="https://youtube.com/watch?v=1XRTgvrzZQg&amp;t=39s">youtube.com/watch?v=1XRTgvrzZQg&amp;t=39s</a></p> <p>Discover the cultural heritage of your area by creating a questionnaire for family and friends. Ask them about how long they have lived on Romney Marsh, their memories and what they feel is special about this area.</p>

# Heritage Trails



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
	<p>What might make Romney Marsh even better? Should we build beach huts at Littlestone? Have a debate:</p> <p><a href="http://kentonline.co.uk/romney-marsh/news/plans-revealed-for-major-beachside-visitor-destination-257660/">kentonline.co.uk/romney-marsh/news/plans-revealed-for-major-beachside-visitor-destination-257660/</a></p> <p>Follow up: Make contact with a community group such as CARM (Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh), a charity that supports older people in rural communities. Use the questionnaires to support a reminiscences project that helps older people recall their memories of a place.</p>
<p><b>Tales from the trail</b></p> <p>By exploring the idea of heritage trails, students can learn about aspects of their local environment and cultural heritage and appreciate what this means to themselves and others around them.</p>	<p><b>Resources: local maps, camera/digital recording device.</b></p> <p><b>What is a heritage trail?</b> A heritage trail is a route relating to cultural heritage (traditions, arts, music, beliefs and customs) that follows a guide or signage through public spaces. Look at examples of UK heritage trails: <a href="http://telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/united-kingdom/articles/UKs-best-heritage-trails/">telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/united-kingdom/articles/UKs-best-heritage-trails/</a></p> <p><b>Heritage Tales</b> Local people took part in the Fifth Continent film challenge by sending in their tales of the Marsh: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XRTgvrzZQg&amp;t=39s">youtube.com/watch?v=1XRTgvrzZQg&amp;t=39s</a></p> <p><b>Create your own Heritage Tale or Heritage Trail</b> What story do you want to tell of your local area? What are the most interesting things that you would want to show someone visiting your town, village or Romney Marsh as a whole? Learners could do this by creating a virtual video guide of an area or a map guide of their trail for people to follow.</p> <p>Follow up: Try out your heritage trail on peers and see what they think.</p>

# Sensational Stories



## Aim:

To appreciate the rich local literary heritage and write creatively for a range of audiences.

## Objectives:

- Learn about famous authors who wrote about Romney Marsh.
- Be able to write creatively and adapt language to reflect an atmosphere or evoke the landscape.
- Create or retell stories in other mediums such as cartoons and animations.

## Activities

ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Sensational Stories</b></p> <p>By listening to, or reading excerpts of, the stories and poems of smuggling on Romney Marsh, students can appreciate the literature of the Marsh and use it to inspire pieces of creative writing (poems or stories) set in the local area.</p>	<p><b>Resources: digital links to films and poems related to smuggling on Romney Marsh</b></p> <p>The Dr Syn stories written by Russell Thorndike were written about 100 years ago about the smuggling on Romney Marsh in the 18th and 19th centuries. These stories and the main character are celebrated in Dymchurch.</p> <p>Walt Disney studios made “The Scarecrow”, one of the Dr Syn books, into a film in 1963. It tells a Robin Hood style tale of how the scarecrow smuggles in order to provide for the poor. The church at Old Romney was used in the film: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sOHSwbrZzs">youtube.com/watch?v=7sOHSwbrZzs</a></p> <p>Rudyard Kipling also wrote a poem about smuggling on the Marsh called “A Smugglers Song”: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7RYaJjH8AU">youtube.com/watch?v=g7RYaJjH8AU</a></p> <p>Read, listen to, or watch extracts of these together and then write your own smuggling story. Use spooky and evocative language like Kipling and Thorndike to describe the landscape at night and create tension as the smugglers creep across the Marsh.</p>

# Sensational Stories



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Animation Rocks</b></p> <p>Creating scenes of characters out of pebbles is great fun and learners can experiment with sharing different messages about the Fifth Continent through this medium.</p>	<p><b>Resources:</b> bags of river pebbles can be purchased from DIY stores or garden centers.</p> <p>Watch the clip of Animation Rocks for inspiration: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zveLblkgOVO&amp;t=41s">youtube.com/watch?v=zveLblkgOVO&amp;t=41s</a></p> <p>Make pebble rock characters (using shingle stones and adding googly eyes) and experiment with stop animation films.</p> <p>Use your characters to give a message about conserving the wildlife in the local area or to tell/retell a story about life on Romney Marsh.</p>

# Art Celebrations



## Aim:

To celebrate the landscape, history and culture of the Marsh using a variety of creative mediums.

## Objectives:

- Learn about and experiment with different media in art (mosaics and embroidery).
- Use music as a focus for mindfulness or inspiration for creative imagery and dance.

## Activities

These art projects with the Fifth Continent Scheme have created a lasting legacy that capture the spirit of Romney Marsh.

They provide inspiration to students to create their own legacies for their local area.

ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>Marsh Mosaics</b></p> <p>Mosaics are an ancient art form. Students can explore and appreciate this medium on a field trip to visit and view the Marsh Mosaics in the medieval churches across the Marsh. Then students can design and create their own mosaics.</p>	<p>Digital link to the Marsh Mosaics trail leaflet:  <a href="https://fifthcontinent.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-Marsh-Mosaics-Art-Trail-2021-web-compressed-2.pdf">fifthcontinent.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-Marsh-Mosaics-Art-Trail-2021-web-compressed-2.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Resources for creating mosaics: MDF board, acrylic tiles, mosaic tile grout. Most craft shops produce easy mosaic starter kits.</b></p> <p>An alternative to using acrylic tiles is simply to cut up coloured card or paper into “tiles” and overlay them on another piece of white card to create a mosaic image.</p> <p>By using the interpretation information in the guide or visiting the mosaics, learners can consider all the aspects of Romney Marsh’s heritage that have been included in the images. The leaflet also includes a quiz to test their powers of observation.</p> <p>Students can then design and create their own mosaic images. What images most represent your local area’s history and landscape?</p>

# Art Celebrations



ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION AND RESOURCES
<p><b>The Great Tapestry of Romney Marsh</b></p> <p>The tapestry is the ultimate legacy document. The Bayeux tapestry is almost 1000 years old. Will the Great Tapestry of Romney Marsh survive as a piece of history and tell the story for the future? Learners can consider what images would represent the Marsh for future generations.</p>	<p><b>Resources: cross-stitch materials and embroidery threads.</b></p> <p>Cross-stitch activities are often used in school as they are a great way for pupils to improve fine motor skills.</p> <p>Put a medieval twist on this by explaining the links between Romney Marsh and Bayeux Tapestry then show students the Great Tapestry of Romney Marsh. What scenes would they want to design and include in the Great Tapestry to represent the Romney over the last 1000 years?</p> <p>Simple designs could be converted into their own cross-stitch embroidery pieces:</p> <p><a href="https://imosfoundation.org/tapestry-of-romney-marsh/#single/0">imosfoundation.org/tapestry-of-romney-marsh/#single/0</a></p>
<p><b>Music on the Marsh</b></p> <p>This activity uses a piece of choral music composed for the project as a starting point to inspire students to imagine and create their own artistic interpretations.</p>	<p><b>Resources: cross-stitch materials and embroidery threads.</b></p> <p>A mindfulness activity using music as the focal point. Students can find a space, close their eyes and listen to the piece composed by Jack Durnell for the project.</p> <p>After listening, ask the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does it make you feel?</li> <li>• What pictures does it conjure up in your mind?</li> </ul> <p>Students can then draw/paint pictures of the images that the music inspires in them. Alternatively, students can listen again but, this time, move and create dances to interpret the music. These activities can take place outside, giving learners a greater opportunity to relate the music to nature and the landscape around them.</p> <p><a href="https://youtube.com/watch?v=KYtpzoT1Ito">youtube.com/watch?v=KYtpzoT1Ito</a></p> <p><b>Follow up: share the lyrics with students, describing the landscape, birds and plants of the Marsh. Did they recognise any of the sounds of birds soaring in the sky in the music?</b></p>

# Useful organisations and links

## Fifth Continent Landscape Partnership Scheme

 [fifthcontinent.org.uk/](http://fifthcontinent.org.uk/)

## Bumblebee Conservation

 [bumblebeeconservation.org/white-tailed-bumblebees/short-haired-bumblebee/](http://bumblebeeconservation.org/white-tailed-bumblebees/short-haired-bumblebee/)

## Field Studies Council Publications

For Kent an ideal guide would be Grassland plants 2 (for chalk and limestone soils)

 [field-studies-council.org/product-category/publications/?fwp\\_keyword\\_search=plants&fwp\\_publication\\_level=for-everyone](http://field-studies-council.org/product-category/publications/?fwp_keyword_search=plants&fwp_publication_level=for-everyone)

## Kent Wildlife Trust (Romney Marsh Visitor Centre)

 [kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/romney-marsh-visitor-centre-and-nature-reserve](http://kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/romney-marsh-visitor-centre-and-nature-reserve)

## Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre

 [kmbrc.org.uk/](http://kmbrc.org.uk/)

Natural England is the government body responsible for the citation of Dungeness as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Email: [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk)

 [designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/2000533.pdf](http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/2000533.pdf)

## Romney Marsh Countryside Project

 [rmcp.co.uk/information-about-the-romney-marsh-countryside-partnership/](http://rmcp.co.uk/information-about-the-romney-marsh-countryside-partnership/)

## RSPB Dungeness

 [rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/dungeness/](http://rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/dungeness/)

## Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust

 [romneymarshchurches.org.uk/](http://romneymarshchurches.org.uk/)

This Education Pack has been produced by Kent Wildlife Trust on behalf of partner organisations involved in the scheme which is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

# Appendix

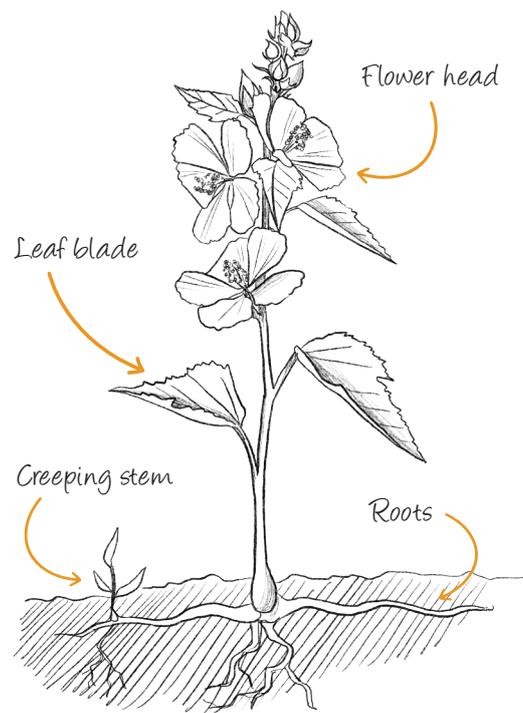
## Generic Risk Assessment for Outdoor Learning.

HAZARD	RESULTING INJURY/ILLNESS	ACTIONS TO REDUCE THE RISK
Sun	Sunburn, heatstroke, heat exhaustion, dehydration	Hat, sun cream, long sleeves, resting in the shade, drinking water.
Uneven ground	Slips, trips and falls	Sensible route. Sturdy footwear.
Insect sting	Swelling, allergic reaction	Care around insects, medical treatment if necessary.
Nettle sting	Swelling and irritation	Care when walking. Long sleeves and trousers.
Crossing roads	Road traffic accident	Stay with adult, look both ways, cross quickly and safely.
Getting lost	Dehydration, hypothermia, tiredness	Stay with your adult or in your group. Carry a map and phone to call for help if lost.
Water (ponds, ditches, lakes, sea)	Drowning	Stay away from the edge of water unless supervised.
Mud	Slipping and falling, getting stuck	Avoid large areas of mud.
Poisonous plants	Feeling sick, allergic reaction	Do not pick and eat nuts, berries or mushrooms.
Cold weather	Hypothermia	Dress warmly and sensibly for the time of year. Wear waterproof and windproof clothes.
Dogs	Bites or being knocked down	Do not reach out to stroke a dog. Face the dog with hands across your body. Do not make eye contact. If knocked down, place arms over face and lie still.

# Plant Investigation

## Activity Sheet

Make a drawing of your plant here:



Label the main parts of a plant on your plant drawing:

- Flower
- Leaf or leaf blade
- Stem
- Roots

### Did you know?

**Grasses** are wind-pollinated plants so they do not have bright coloured or scented flowers to attract insects.

**Wildflowers** often have bright coloured and scented flowers to attract insect pollinators.

Do you think your plant is a **grass** or a **wildflower**?

I think my plant is a:



# Making an Identification Key

## Activity Sheet

In science we often use a key to identify what a plant or animal is.

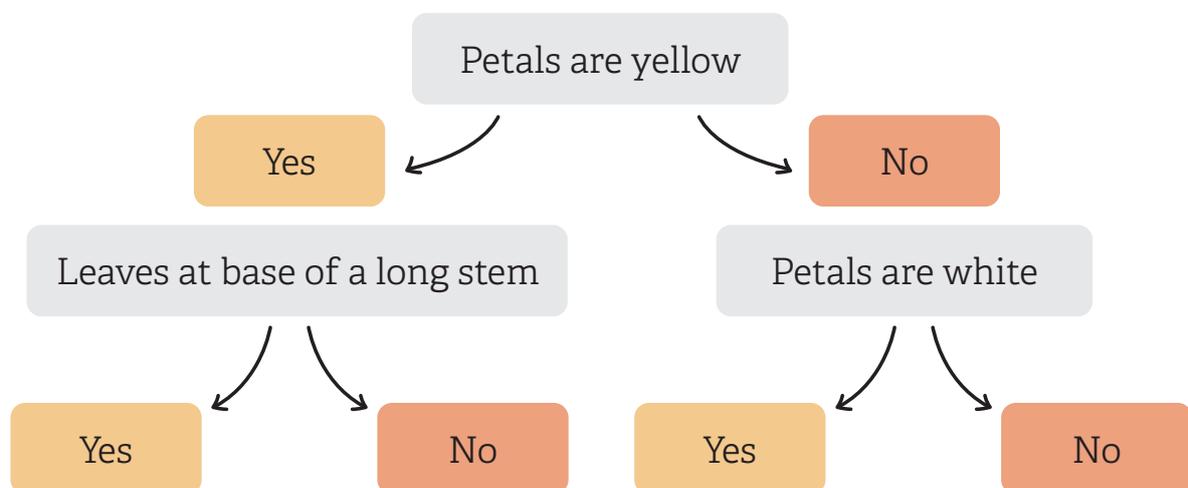
To do this we look for features or characteristics to distinguish or separate out one thing from another.

We often ask a question with a **yes/no** answer to separate things.

**Try this with some specimens of natural objects and then with flowers or plants that you have collected.**

Specimen	Petals are yellow	Petals are purple	Petals are white
<b>A</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N</b>

**Then build a spider key**

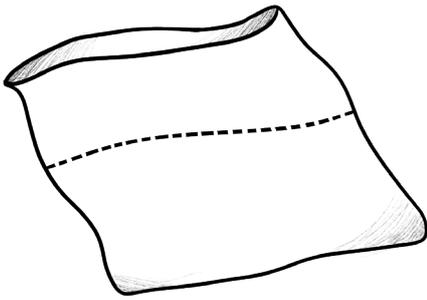


and so on until you identify your species!

# How to make a sweep net

## Activity Sheet

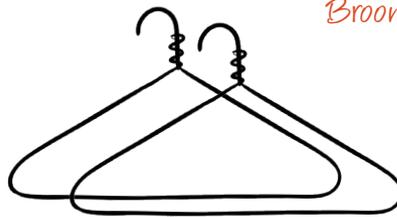
### You will need:



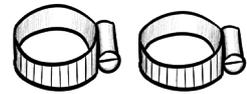
Pillow case



Broom handle or cane



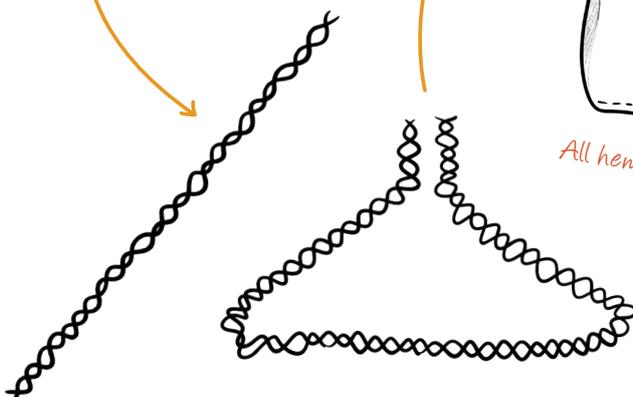
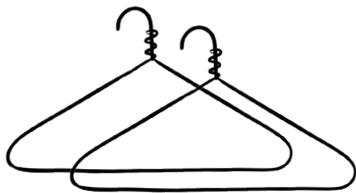
2x Coat hangers



2x Jubilee clips

### Directions

- 1 Open up hangers and twist them round each other.



- 2 Bend back into the coat hanger shape.

- 3 Cut pillow case in half (sew up bottom of spare half to make a second bag) turn edges over metal hanger and staple or sew into place.



All hems outside



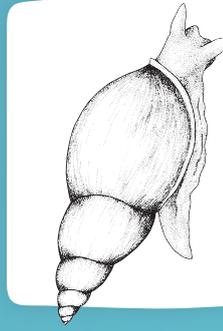
Attach with jubilee clips

- 4 Attach to broom handle by jubilee clips or embed hangers into the wood.

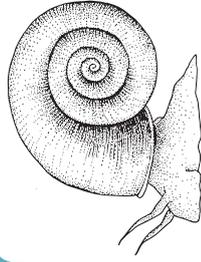
# Freshwater Minibeast Field Guide



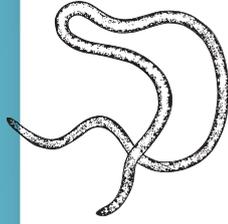
**These creatures have no legs**



**Pond Snail**



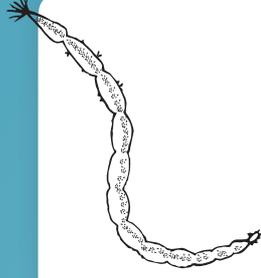
**Ramshorn Snail**



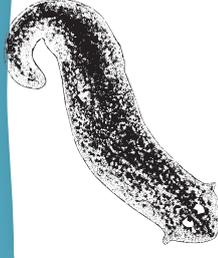
**True Worm**



**Leech**



**Biting Midge Larva**

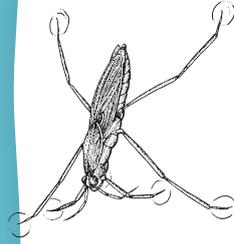


**Flatworm**

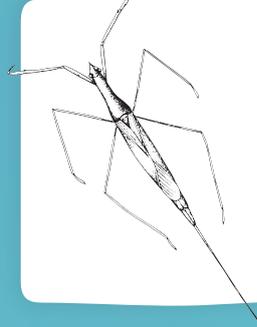
**These creatures have six legs**



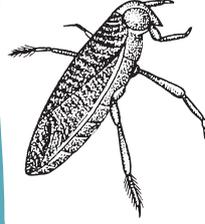
**Water Measurer**



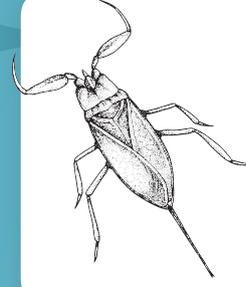
**Pond Skater**



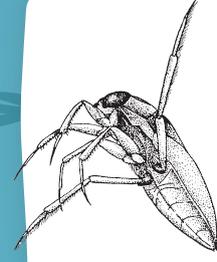
**Water Stick Insect**



**Lesser Water Boatman**

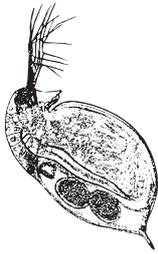


**Water Scorpion**

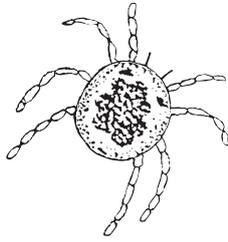


**Greater Water Boatman**

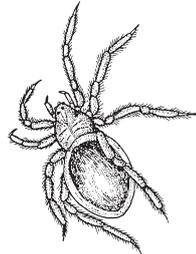
**These creatures have six legs +**



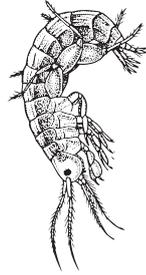
**Water Flea**



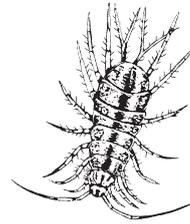
**Water Mite**



**Water Spider**

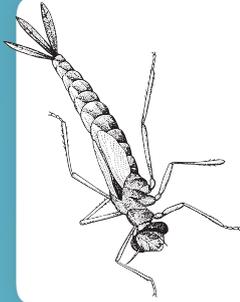


**Water Shrimp**

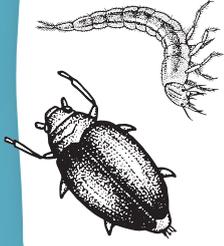


**Water Louse**

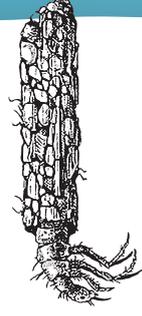
**These creatures have six legs**



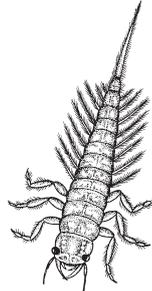
**Damselfly Nymph**



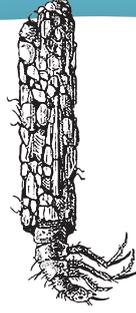
**Water Beetle  
and Larva**



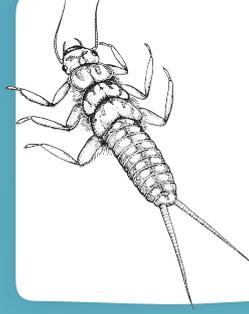
**Caddisfly Larvae**



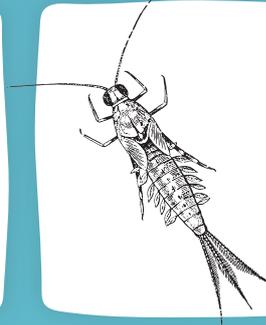
**Alderfly Larva**



**Caddisfly Larvae**



**Stonefly Nymph**



**Mayfly Nymph**