



Ireland's waterways are packed full of plants and animals who live in and along its waters, hedge rows and towpaths.

The Waterway Wildlife Factfile aims to enable students to become aware of the waterways of Ireland, to understand the meaning of biodiversity and with the help of Waterways Ireland's Eco-dial identify wildlife that can be found along the waterways and in the surrounding areas.



What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth. Our planet functions as a single organism that maintains conditions necessary for its survival.

What do the words species, habitat and ecosystem mean?

Species

A species is an individual plant or animal. They are grouped together in families.

Habitat

A habitat is the natural home of a plant or animal.

Ecosystem

An ecosystem is a collection of habitats.

Ecology

Ecology is the study of how a plant or animal interacts with other species it lives near.



Plants and Animals found along Irelands waterways.



Plants

There are many different plants found along our waterways. With over 60 different species of plants, which live both under and above water and some of which are legally protected!



Insects

Over 120 different species of insects are found along the waterway, most live in the water alone. They are very helpful as they are able to tell us if the water is clean. Insects living in the waterways are also an important food source for fish.



Fish

There are many different species of fish found within our waterways. Whenever we do maintenance activities like dredging, we work with fisheries who come in and electrofish and translocate fish. This then allows us to work and not harm any fish in the process.



Birds

Over 23 species of birds have been recorded along the waterways. Some of which are water based and some nest in the surrounding hedgerows and trees





Mammals

The main mammals found along the waterways include otters, foxes and bats. Many of which are protected.



Aliens

Not real aliens- exotic plants and animals which have been introduced into the country and are not native to Ireland. They can be harmful to Irish plants and animals. They get here on ships and boats, through pet shops, garden centres, dirty boots and fishing rods or by other animals/birds.



Activity 1:



Can you find all 10 Waterways Wildlife phrases hidden within the Wordsearch below?

R	F	J	S	W	P	L	A	N	T	S	Q	W	E	R
J	B	G	F	D	C	Q	G	U	A	S	A	S	D	F
G	I	D	I	E	V	W	I	H	M	C	Z	X	C	V
Y	O	S	S	C	N	Y	N	Y	A	D	E	R	Y	M
U	D	A	H	G	M	H	S	T	M	B	Q	E	T	U
K	I	P	T	J	A	N	E	R	M	F	I	A	S	D
F	V	O	R	M	S	R	C	E	A	B	H	T	J	K
W	E	I	E	S	D	F	T	S	L	J	R	F	A	N
Q	R	U	W	E	F	V	S	F	S	G	J	K	L	T
A	S	T	Q	I	G	E	K	T	F	F	L	K	I	G
S	I	R	A	C	H	B	I	R	D	S	B	V	E	C
D	T	E	S	E	J	W	I	B	W	Z	T	R	N	E
F	Y	W	D	P	K	S	J	H	E	A	I	K	S	S
U	F	Q	F	S	L	X	M	U	R	Q	O	D	R	P
Y	G	P	E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	E	Y	E

- Biodiversity
- Species
- Habitat
- Ecosystem
- Birds
- Plants
- Insects
- Aliens
- Mammals
- Fish

Activity 2:



Circle the different species found in the picture:

Birds Reeds Lilies Tree Fish Bat Insect Frog



Activity 3:

Can you match the species to their habitat?



Canal muddy bottom



Hedge



Canal open water



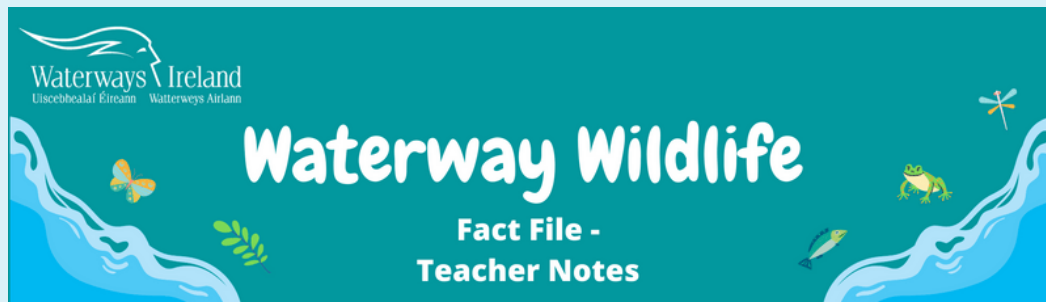
Grassy area



Tree line



Reed fringe



Waterways Wildlife Fact File- Teacher notes

Aim:

To enable students to become aware of the waterways of Ireland, to understand the meaning of biodiversity and identify wildlife which can be found on the waterways and in the surrounding areas.

The Waterways Wildlife Fact File consists of a Biodiversity Fact File, which covers key definitions within biodiversity followed by examples of plants, insects, fish, birds and mammals which can be found along Irish Waterways.

The Fact File concludes with three different activities including a Waterways Wildlife word search, spot and circle activity and a habitat match up activity.

Curriculum links

Geography

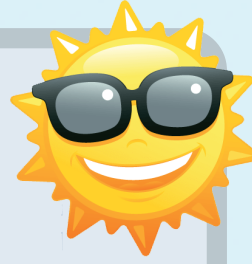
Strand: Natural Environments

Strand Unit: The Local Natural Environment

The child shall be enabled to:

- Investigate and become familiar with some natural features in the local environment.





KS2

Place:

Pupils should be enabled to explore:

- How place influences the nature of life

Science

Strand: Living things

Strand unit: Plant and animal life

The child shall be enabled to:

- Observe, identify and examine the animals and plants that live in local habitats and environments

KS2

Interdependence:

Pupils should be enabled to explore:

- How living things rely on each other within the natural world

All the answers for the activities can be found below. This resource can be used as a follow up to our Nature Navvies Programme available at:
<https://bit.ly/2FMXglb>

Feedback

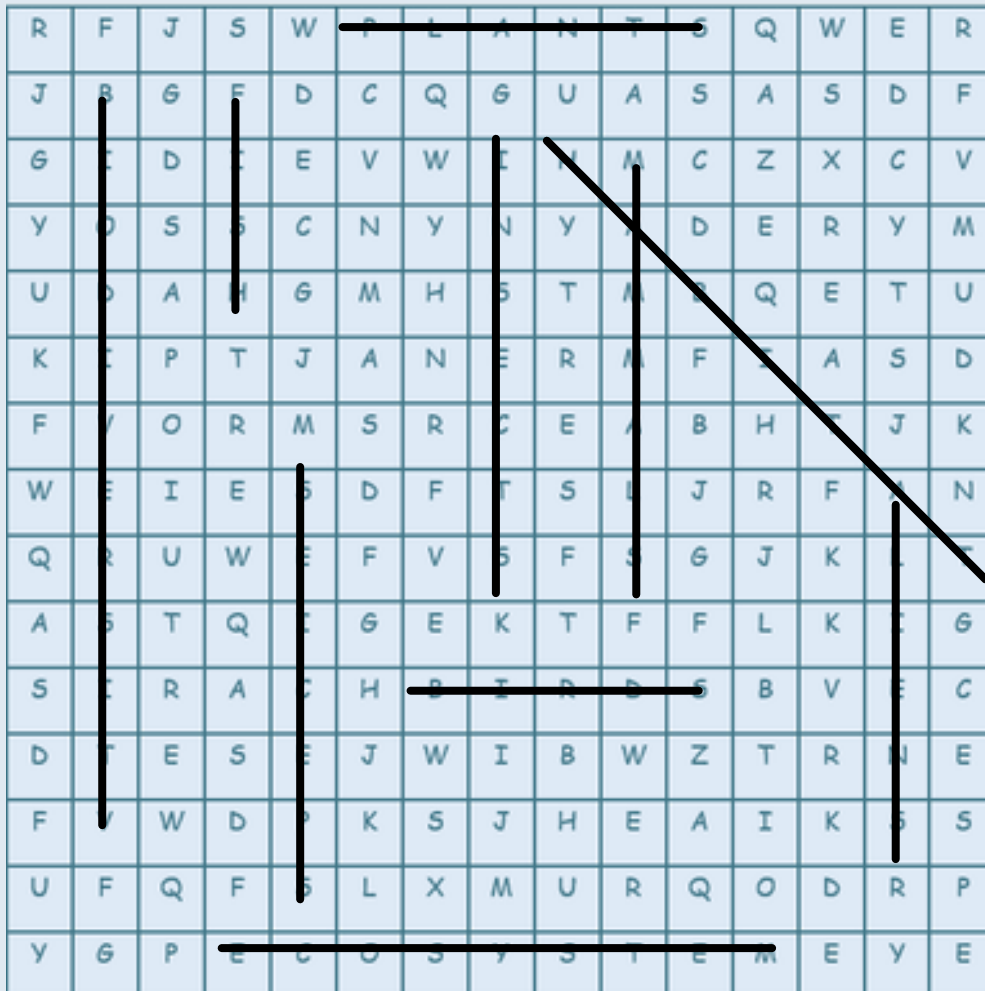
We hope you enjoy using this resource and welcome your feedback. Please email comments to learning@waterwaysireland.org



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- Mammals
- Fish

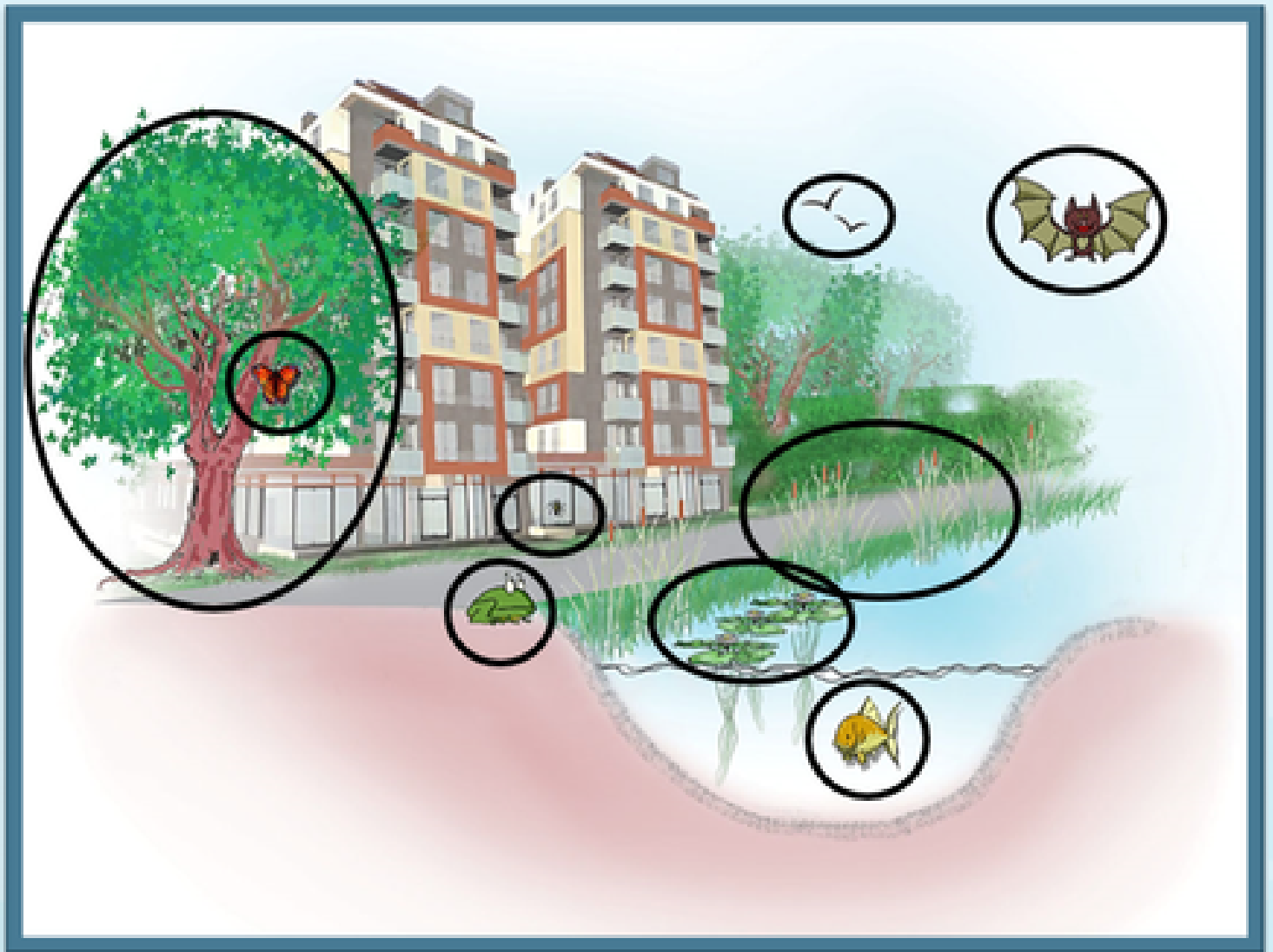


Activity 2:

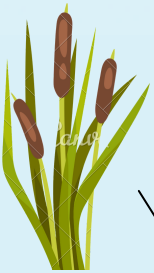


Circle the different species found in the picture:

Birds Reeds Lilies Tree Fish Bat Insect Frog



Activity 3:



Canal muddy bottom

Hedge

Canal open water

Grassy area

Tree line

Reed fringe