Go wild with the...

BIG HABITAT HUNT

School Survey Pack
It’s not just you and the staff that spend time in your school. Who else do you think you share it with?

Well, you might share it with thousands of creeping, jumping, flying, crawling small mammals, birds and insects! They could just come into your grounds for short visits or perhaps they live there.

The place where an animal normally lives and grows is called a habitat. But they don’t like to live just anywhere, an animal is only found where the right habitat is.

Would you like to live in a pile of dead wood?.. or in some long grass?.. or in a pond?.. or in a patch of stinging nettles?

Well that’s exactly the right habitat for lots of wildlife!

Today your class and classes in many primary schools in Avon are going to take part in having a really good look at your school grounds. Lots of creatures are very hard to find and most like to be left in peace. So you won’t just be looking for wildlife but you will be looking for places where they might want to live and where they could find food. We are also interested in what you think about your school grounds and the wildlife in it.

As our cities gets bigger and busier it might be that your school grounds are the most important place for wildlife in your area.

Do you think your school grounds are buzzing and humming and jumping with life?

Let’s find out in the...

BIG HABITAT HUNT
1. Have a think about being outside in your school grounds, maybe playing football or sitting and talking or not really doing anything. Have you ever seen any wildlife, birds, insects or anything else?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

What did you see?

2. Did you ever notice the different plants or trees growing around you?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

3. How many different types of plants and trees do you think are growing in your school?

Take a guess and enter the number __________

4. Now everyone look out the window. How many different types of living things, plant or animal, can you see? Which group can write down the most?

Now are you ready?.. really ready to go have a good look at your school grounds? You are going to be asked to look up, look down, look under, count, listen, smell, hunt, peep and write down all your findings. You can write a little or write a lot it’s up to you.

So let’s begin the Big Bristol Habitat Hunt!
IS GRASS JUST GRASS?

If you’ve got a patch of grass you’ve probably spent time sitting on it or running about on it but have you ever really looked at it? Maybe it’s not just boring old grass...

1. Do you have a playing field?
   - Yes ◯ go to question 2
   - No ◯ go to question 3

2. Is it bigger than your playground?
   - Yes ◯
   - No ◯

3. Do you have other any patches of grass?
   - Yes ◯ go to question 4
   - No ◯ if you have no grass at ALL then go to the next section

4. Is all your grass very short and tidy or can you find any long patches?
   - All short and tidy ◯ go to question 7
   - There is at least one long patch ◯ go to question 5
   - There are lots of patches of long grass ◯ go to question 5

5. How long is the longest grass?
   - As high as your shoes ◯
   - As high as your knees ◯
   - Higher than your knees ◯

6. Sit quietly by a patch of long grass. Now carefully part the grass with your hands so you can see near to the ground. Have a look around and count to 30. What did you see?
7. Now go to any patch of grass. Is it only grass or can you find any of the following?

- Daisy
- Buttercup
- Plantain
- Clover (purple or white)
- Dandelion

If you found the plants above, try finding these which are much rarer:

- Yarrow (feathery leaves and white flowers)
- Ox-eye daisy (like a normal daisy but a lot bigger)
- Birds-foot trefoil (pretty yellow flowers)
1. Have a walk around the inside edge of your school grounds. How would you describe it?
   - It is mostly fences made of metal or wood ☐ go to question 2
   - It is mostly walls made of brick or stone ☐ go to question 3
   - It is mostly hedges ☐ go to question 4

2. Let’s have a look at your fences.
   - Are there any plants climbing up them? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   - Are there flowers or long grass at the bottom? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   ▶ If you find ANY hedges go to question 4, but if there are NO hedges go to the next section

3. Sometimes walls can be full of life. Choose a section of your wall to go and inspect. How many different types of plant can you see?
   - Enter the number here
   ▶ If you find ANY hedges go to question 4, but if there are NO hedges go to the next section

4. Have a good look at your hedges. How tall are they?
   - Smaller than you ☐ Taller than you ☐
   - Taller than the tallest teacher in your school ☐ All different sizes ☐

5. What do they look like?
   - Are they tidy ☐ Untidy ☐

6. If you were the same size as a mouse do you think you could run around inside your hedge without being seen?
   - Yes ☐ No ☐
7. Do you think that all the hedge is only one species of plant? One way to find out is to look at the leaves. Are the leaves all the same?

No ☐ → if there are different types go to question 8

Yes ☐ → please draw a quick picture of one of the leaves here

go to the next section

8. Take the hedge challenge. Choose a spot to start then take ten LARGE steps. This is your end spot. Between these two spots, how may different types of leaves can you find growing inside the hedge?

Enter the number here

Look really carefully at the leaves. Can you match any of them to these pictures?

☐ Hawthorn  ☐ Beech  ☐ Dogwood

☐ Hazel  ☐ Field maple  ☐ Holly
1. How many trees do you have on your school grounds?
   - 0-15
   - 16-40
   - Too many to count!

2. Do you have a group of trees (5 or more) that are all close together making a little wood?
   - Yes  go to question 3
   - No  go to question 7

3. Is your wood a school nature reserve?
   - Yes
   - No

4. Now head over to your wood. Is it big enough so your group could hide in it?
   - Yes
   - No

   Do you think your whole class could hide in it?
   - Yes
   - No
   - How many are in your class?

   Everyone stand still for a moment. Can you hear any birds singing?

5. Have a walk around....

   Is there any long grass under the trees?
   - Yes
   - No

   Are there any piles of leaves?
   - Yes
   - No

   Are there any piles of dead wood?
   - Yes
   - No

6. Is your wood made up of all the same tree or different types of tree? Have a hunt around.

   How many different shaped leaves can you find?

7. Now find the biggest tree in your school. Can you fit your arms around the trunk?
   - Yes  ...it is probably under 50 years old
   - No  ...it is probably over 50 years old!

   If you can’t, how many students does it take to fit their arms around the trunk? For each student add another 50 years on to the estimated age of the tree.
Flowers are nice to look at and add a bit of colour but they are also a source of food for many insects, and lots of insects means lots of food for bigger animals.

1. In your group have a quick talk. What’s your opinion on flowers?
   - Love them
   - They are okay
   - Don’t really care
   - Anything else?

2. Where flowers and plants grow together in the ground it’s called a bed, or a raised bed if it’s higher than the ground. Roughly how many flower beds does your school have?
   - 0
   - 1-5
   - 6-10
   - 11-20
   - Too many to count!

3. Not all plants have flowers at the same time. This is good for us as we can see them all year round and very important for the bees and insects so that they have food when they need it.

   Ivy climbs up walls, trees and fences and across the ground. It might not look exciting to you but it is a great plant to have around as it is one of the last plants to flower to give the bees some food ready for the winter. Birds like to make their nests in ivy and also eat the black winter berries, and if it’s growing up a tree it may even provide cover for a bat family.
   - Could you find any? Yes No

Nettle is another plant that is brilliant for wildlife. You might know it because it stings you when you touch it! But actually it is one of the United Kingdom’s most important wildlife plants. More than 40 different types of insect live on it. Many butterflies rely on it to lay their eggs on and bees love it! Did you know nettle can also make tea, soup, rope, clothes and loads of other things?
   - Could you find any? Yes No
4. Flowers don’t only grow in beds. They can be grown anywhere from teapots to old car tyres. Does your school have any of these?

Plants and flowers climbing up a wall or fence
Little plants or flowers living in a wall
Plants and flowers in window boxes
Flowers in hanging baskets
Plants and flowers in pots or containers
...anywhere else?

5. Choose a flower bed. Sit or stand quietly by the bed with your eyes closed. How many sounds can you count? What living things can you hear?

6. Can you see any insects within or flying around the flower bed?

0-5  6-15  Too many to count

7. Are there any plants which they seem to like best?

No  Yes  please describe one of those plants: size, colour, smell?

Why do you think insects like it?
WET WONDERS

1. What is growing around your pond? Is it mostly...
   short grass ☐   trees ☐
   overgrown with tall plants and long grass ☐
   concrete or paving slabs ☐

2. Can you see any fish? Yes ☐  No ☐

3. Can you see any insects on the surface? Yes ☐  No ☐

4. In your school pond have you ever seen any...
   frogspawn ☐  tadpoles ☐  frogs ☐

5. Can you see any plants that are floating on the water? Yes ☐  No ☐

6. Can you see any plants that are growing totally underwater? Yes ☐  No ☐

   How many different types of plants can you see growing around the edge?
   Enter amount

7. Sometimes hedgehogs can be very clumsy, and they have very short legs. If a hedgehog fell
   in your pond is there a place for them to climb out? Yes ☐  No ☐

8. How big is your pond? Measure all the way round the edge with a measuring tape or a
   metre length of string. If you can’t go all the way round measure some and guess the rest.
   Enter the circumference here  m

9. What else do you notice about your pond?
Does your school have any of these? Ask your teacher if you are not sure what they are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A vegetable patch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A herb garden</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird feeder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bird table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bird bath</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird nest boxes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bat boxes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A compost heap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A wormery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A stream or river</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does your school have anything else you think wildlife might like?
1. Which lessons do you have outside?

2. What are the best things about these lessons?

3. What are the worst things about these lessons?

4. When you are playing outside at lunchtime or break what sort of things do you normally do?
5. Which is your favourite place in the school grounds and why do you like it?


6. Is there any part in your school grounds that you don’t like and why not?


7. What did you think about the Big Bristol Habitat Hunt?
   
   Brilliant □   Ok □   Boring □
   
   Anything else you would like to say about it?


8. Do you think your school grounds could be made better for you to play and learn? Do you have any idea of what you could do so lots of different wildlife would come and live in your school. Write all your ideas here or on another piece of paper if you’ve got loads to say.


THANK YOU HABITAT HUNTERS!
GREEN SPACES
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

1. Take a good look at the map. Can you find your school? Are your school grounds the biggest patch of green?
   Yes ☐ ...think how important they are for local wildlife! ☐ No

2. Can you see any other large patches of green? What do you think they are?

3. Have you been to any of them?
   Yes ☐ No ☐

4. What did you do there?
5. Please describe what else you can see on the map. For example, are there lots of buildings? Can you see a river, lake, forest or graveyard?

6. Now imagine that you are a hedgehog. You can walk up to two miles a night looking for food but your legs are very short and your top speed is only six miles per hour, which is slower than a running child. Busy roads and car parks are very dangerous, and high walls are impossible. Animals like hedgehogs need ‘wildlife corridors’ so they can get from one green space to another as well as find food and safe places to shelter.

Now look at your map. Do you think there are any routes that a hedgehog or other wildlife could move around safely? What are the obstacles or problems?

THANK YOU HABITAT HUNTERS!

This information will help create a wildlife map of all the schools in Bristol and their surroundings.
You might have a garden at home. Gardens can be great places for wildlife as they have lots of different habitats. Many creatures come to our gardens without us even noticing, especially as some only come out at night.

1. Do you have a garden?  Yes  No

2. Write down some of the wildlife you have seen in your garden. If you haven’t seen any go and have a good look now. There are lots of things we can do to encourage wildlife into our gardens.

3. Please tick the following if you have them in your garden.

- garden pond
- compost heap
- flowers
- vegetable patch
- long grass
- brick wall
- bird feeders
- trees
- pile of dead wood or logs
- grass
- hedge
ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

1. Do you walk to school?  Yes  [ ] Great! This is the best way to see habitats around you.
   No  [ ] If you travel by bike, car, bus, train or scooter you can still have a good look around.

2. What can you see on your way to school? It’s best to check in the morning and in the afternoon. Please tick all the things you noticed.

   [ ] a river or stream  [ ] a pond  [ ] a lake
   [ ] a hedge  [ ] a big tree  [ ] a bush
   [ ] group of trees (more than 5)  [ ] a woodland  [ ] a park
   [ ] plants growing in pots  [ ] flowers that smell nice  [ ] fields
   [ ] a busy main road  [ ] a quiet country lane  [ ] birds
   [ ] wild rabbits  [ ] butterflies or moths  [ ] foxes
   [ ] ladybirds  [ ] spiders  [ ] woodlice
   [ ] dragonflies  [ ] beetles  [ ] frogs
   [ ] houses with no front gardens  [ ] front gardens but no grass
   [ ] gardens with grass and flowers  [ ] big gardens with grass and trees

If you know the names of birds, insects or other wildlife that you have seen, or anything exciting please tell us about it here.

THANK YOU
HABITAT HUNTERS!