



Learning through Landscapes

Cultural Activities



Name that species!

Imagine you have discovered a new species of plant or animal!

What does it look like?

Where does it live?

How is it adapted to its environment?

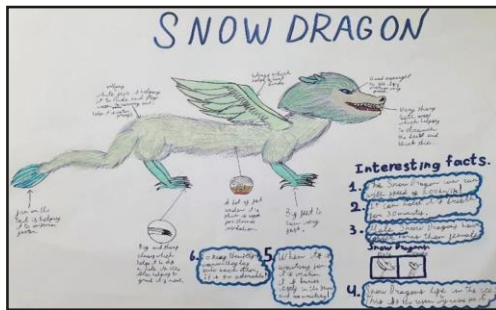
Now you have imagined your new animal or plant, can you make up a name for it?

Animals and plants usually have scientific names, which are in Latin, and common names, which most people will use in day to day life.

Which common name would fit your invented animal?

It might be based on a characteristic of the animal (like flies) or what they eat (like an anteater) or the colour they are (like a blue tit).

Think about what are the most unique characteristics of your plant or animal. What name fits your newly discovered species best?



Funders and partner organisations

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



If you have already completed the activity “Name that species!” then you can use your imaginary species for these activities. Alternatively, you can make up a completely new animal or plant or pick a local plant or animal to where you live.

Fun with folk tales

Make up a folk tale about your chosen plant or animal. Folk tales are stories which are often passed on by word of mouth, through storytelling.

An example of a European folk tale is that of Little Red Riding Hood. What story can you create about your chosen animal or plant? Remember that folk tales are often only passed by word of mouth, so it should be short and memorable.

Perfect poetry

Write a poem about your chosen plant or animal. Your poem doesn't have to be long. Check this example below written by Tony Almond to explain how scientists used to think that bumblebees shouldn't be able to fly because they were too large. He wrote it for his daughter to inspire her to do what she thought she could do, even if others said it was impossible.

The 'rules' of mathematics say that bumblebees can't fly
Their wings are just not big enough to launch them to the sky
Their bodies are too large in relation to their power
So the rule makers concluded that the bumblebee's a liar

But bumblebees cannot do maths and thinking it looked fun
One of them just tried it, and found it could be done.
She went back to her sisters and showed what she could do
And so convincing was her tale the others tried it too.

The rule makers were very cross and showed them all the sums
That proved they couldn't do it, 'til the bees felt rather numb
So having thought about it carefully and considered all the facts
The bees decided they could fly, and the rule makers were prats!

Or you could also make a calligram, which is a shape poem in which the shapes made by the words make the meaning of the poem –see example on the right. Or you could try a poem telling a story, with verses, which are separate sections of the poem, like verses in a song.



Let's get arty!

Make a piece of art either using or of the animal or plant you have chosen. If you have chosen a plant, you could use it to create some art. For example, you could make a hapa-zome which is a Japanese form of art using rocks or mallets to transfer natural plant dye onto cotton or kitchen roll. For this you would need to collect leaves, berries and flowers and then place it on the cotton or kitchen roll, and then fold in half, or cover with a second piece of cotton or kitchen roll. Use a rock or mallet to hammer all over the top layer of material until the dye can be seen seeping through. Remove the top layer and the plant matter, to see the imprint on the fabric. Or you could create an image of your animal or plant using natural materials—take a picture of it for a memory! If you are a keen artist, you could draw your plant or animal.



Dance it out

Create a dance based on the movement of your animal, think about how it flies, runs, slithers, crawls or swims.

If you have chosen a plant, think about how it might move in the wind, or when it grows.



Species Songs!

Create a song based on your animal or plant, this can be completely from scratch, or you could change the words of an existing song! Think about where the animal or plant lives, how it moves, what it eats, what it might think, what other animals and plants it might come across!



Some ideas to improve biodiversity on your school ground

Make a plan for attracting more wildlife in your schools grounds. Here are some ideas of what you can do with your students.



plant a Wildlife Garden



Making your school garden or home balcony greener will benefit both you and the creatures that can find a home there. Regular access to green space is proven to be beneficial to health and wellbeing and even a few plants can make a big difference.

If you are planting, try to pick native species which will encourage local insects to move in. Bees and butterflies enjoy nectar from flowers, birds will eat the fruit and seeds, and bugs will come and live in the soil and among the leaves.

Maybe you will also find the space to plant a tree. As it grows over the years, a tree will provide cooling shade for you and shelter for the birds.

You can also try growing plants from seeds. Collect seeds in the autumn, and watch for the first signs of life. Plant in a small pot indoors and let it grow until it is about 20cm tall, before moving it outside.



Funders and partner organisations

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



The National Lottery Heritage Fund





**building homes
for nature**



If you marvel at migration and enjoy spotting birds, then you can also do your bit to enjoy birds closer to home by creating a bird friendly outdoor space.

Set up a bird table in your garden, yard or balcony and put out food for the birds. Birds love seeds, nuts and bread. It may take them a little while to find the new restaurant in town, so don't be put off if they don't visit straight away.

Birds need regular access to fresh water for drinking and bathing. A small dish set out and refreshed regularly will be appreciated by the thirsty birds, particularly in the hot summer months.

Birds also need places where they can start a family. If you have a suitable place, you could set up a nestbox for sparrows, robins or swifts.



Funders and partner organisations

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



The National Lottery Heritage Fund



Bugs are fascinating creatures, and getting to see them up close is a great learning experience for children. Explore the school garden, favourite park and the countryside, looking in rubble walls and under stones and logs to see what you can find.

You can also encourage bugs to live in the school garden by building them a hotel!

1. Find a space for your bug hotel, ideally in semi-shade, near a bush or under a tree.
2. Pile up three to four old wooden pallets to make the structure of your bug hotel.
3. Fill the gaps with all of your natural materials (grass, bark, dry leaves, sticks), earthenware plant pots, old rugs and bricks.
4. Wait for the residents to move in and then you can search for bugs in your own garden.

If your space is limited, you can still make a mini hotel using an old wooden box or a pile of sticks or stones.



Funders and partner organisations

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



The National Lottery Heritage Fund

