



## Canal Wildlife

### Introduction

This lesson introduces the variety of wildlife that lives in, around and above the canal. It introduces the concept of habitat, and looks at the ways in which careless pollution can threaten such wildlife.

NB you will need to visit a canal habitat for this lesson, preferably with a nearby grassy area.

### Learning Objectives

- To understand the meaning of the word habitat in an ecological context.
- To discover the variety of species that may be found living in or near canals.
- To learn about different types of pollution, and learn about the dangers they may cause.

### National Curriculum

#### Science

- The pupils will identify and name a variety of common animals including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals
- The pupils will identify and name a variety of plants and animals in their habitats, including micro-habitats

#### Maths

- The pupils will interpret and construct simple pictograms, tally charts, block diagrams and simple tables
- The pupils will ask and answer simple questions by counting the number of objects in each category and sorting the categories by quantity
- The pupils will ask and answer questions about totalling and comparing categorical data

### Differentiation

- All children will learn that a variety of different animals live in & near the canal, and how to write a tally chart.
- Most children will be able to classify these into classes e.g. birds, mammals, insects etc without help.
- Some children will understand the concept of habitat and the dangers of pollution.

### Resources

1. Binoculars (if available)
2. Tally sheets
3. Recording sheet
4. Clipboards & pencils
5. Squares of coloured paper for making a simple block graph
6. Art materials for making mural
7. Identification charts



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### Key Vocabulary

Canal

Bird

Mammal

Habitat

Pollution

### Teaching Activities

#### 1. Introduction

Introduce the children to the canal and what it is (man-made waterway), and explain that they are going to look for wildlife. Discuss the basic rules of wildlife watching: being observant and quiet; and using binoculars (if available). Recap/teach the differences between mammals, birds and insects, with examples. Introduce the word habitat and explain that there are several different habitats around a canal: grass, water, trees etc (depending on location).

#### 2. Give each group a clipboard, tally sheet, and an identification chart relating to their habitat and spread them around the area. Set a time limit on their observation (however long you think they will remain engaged!) and tell them to record what they see by writing or drawing. Tally marks beside the words or picture should be used for multiple sightings. Remind them to look on the bank, on the water, and in the sky. Also get them to note down what litter (if any) they see around.

#### 3. Back at school, discuss the findings, and make a class list of what has been seen. Use this data to construct a simple block graph of what was sighted, with one square of paper for each animal sighted. Look at the different animals in the different locations. Can the children say why they were there?

#### 4. Get children to work in groups to make a mural of a canal scene. A board or wall could be covered with green paper, with a blue band running across the middle. Label the different habitats clearly. Allocate different tasks to different groups based on the location of their observations, to build a picture. If possible, attach some clean and safe items of litter to the picture.

#### 5. Plenary

Recap the animals found and their habitats. Look at how people can both hurt and help wildlife by the canal by dropping litter, or clearing it up. (Extension) Could the children draw posters warning of litter danger, or rules for how to behave by the canal?