

# Wild Things at School

Worksheets for Primary School Students



by

Éanna Ní Lamhna

Illustrations by Christine Warner



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Graphic design *by* Bogfire

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# Introduction to 3rd Class Worksheets

**Robin-run-the-hedge**

**Nettle**

**Hawthorn**

**Frog**

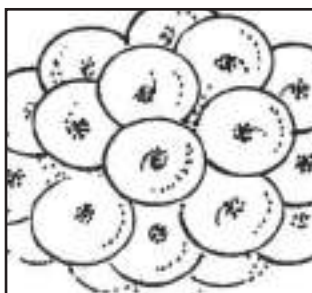
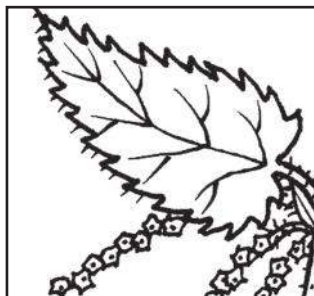
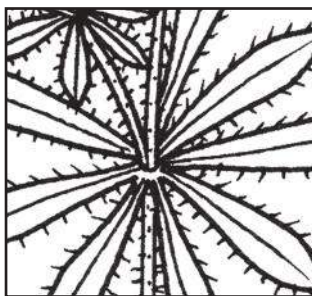
**Swallow**

**Snail**

In the Teachers' Book, the lessons on each topic contain suggestions for practical work to be carried out by the teacher with the pupils. The following worksheets are in addition to this and are designed to be used by the children themselves, after each of the eight species in the teachers' handbook has been taught. They should be given to the pupils to work on and instructions about what to do on each one should be given by the teacher. The pupils should be taught the lessons first on each topic first and then shown the pictures for each species provided.

There is much emphasis in these worksheets on field work. It is important to bring pupils out to the school grounds on a regular basis to do tasks so that they become familiar with wildlife outdoors. Make sure the item to be seen or collected is around at the time, so pick the time of year accordingly. Return any animals collected to the wild. The worksheets need not necessarily be done in the order in which they are given.

There is also emphasis on food chains and how animals live in the wild so that completing the worksheets adds to the children's knowledge. By third class, the pupils will have already learned about a considerable number of plants and animals so these worksheets refer to species learned earlier and so act as a form of revision. The worksheets are designed to be photocopied and handed out to the pupils.



# 3rd Class Teacher Notes

## Robin-run-the-hedge 1

### Worksheet in two sections

**Introduction to plant:** Pupils colour in the robin-run-the-hedge plant and leaves. Show the pictures of the plant to the pupils first so that they know what colour it is. The flowers are tiny so they must look at the drawing very carefully to ascertain that it has 4 petals

**Word Search:** The English, Irish and Latin words for robin-run-the-hedge are hidden in the word search. As well as horizontal and vertical, words are also presented backwards in diagonal, horizontal and vertical fashions. All the words in the word search are given in the word bank.

## Robin-run-the-hedge 2

### Fieldtrip (Do this in late May or June)

This plant grows in hedges so you must bring the pupils there to look for it. They must collect a specimen each and examine it for flowers or seeds. Back in class, they should examine the plant with a magnifying glass or the lid of a bug box so that they can see the hooks on the leaves. Seeds can be planted in pots of compost to see when germination occurs. Is this a continuously growing plant or does it just germinate and grow once a year with the seeds set waiting until the next year to grow again?

## Nettles 1

### Worksheet in two sections

**Introduction to the plant:** Show the class the picture and do a lesson from the book. The flowers are wind pollinated and so have no petals, as they do not need to be seen by insects.

**Cooking Skills:** Consider making nettle soup in class, in early May when the nettles are young. You can make a full green nettle soup using nettles, onions and a stock cube or add potatoes to thicken it up and make it less green.

## Nettles 2

### Fieldtrip to see nettles

Nettles grow in ditches and neglected places so finding them should be easy. If you grasp a nettle firmly, it won't sting – it really does work but only the teacher should try this!

**Hunting for insects:** Teacher – wearing gloves – should run a sweep net through the nettles and then empty the contents into a bucket or dish. They can be gathered up by the pupils using pooters and put into bug jars with magnification lids. Caterpillars, greenflies and spiders all frequent nettles.

## Hawthorn 1

### Worksheet in three sections

**Introduction to the tree:** Show the class the picture and tell them about it, following the account in the book. Pupils then name the parts of the tree and colour in the leaves and haws. There is no word bank at this stage for third class but they should know leaf, flower, thorn, haws or berries.

### Finding out the meaning of the names:

Discuss this with the class so that they can work it out. Hawthorn – it has thorns and the berries are haws. Whitethorn is called that because the flowers are white. The May Bush gets its name because it blooms in May and sceach geal is, of course, bright bush, referring again to the white flowers.

**Making words:** Lots of words can be made from this – check in a dictionary if there are disputes.

## Hawthorn 2

### Fieldtrip

**Time of Fieldtrip:** In September, there will be haws on the tree and lots of creepy-crawlies on the leaves. In May, there will be leaves and flowers. There may also be ivy, moss or lichen on the bark.

**Finding wildlife:** Quiet observation may yield bird and flying insect sightings. They must watch for at least 5 minutes counted on a watch. Shake the branches into an open umbrella and observe the greenflies, ladybirds, spiders, caterpillars and shield bugs which drop in. Green things will be herbivores; ladybirds and spiders are carnivores; and birds such as robins, thrushes and blackbirds are omnivores.

## Frog 1

### Worksheet in two sections

**Learning:** Frogs are amphibians, which means that they can breathe on land through their lungs and in the water through their skin. Frogs do not have gills. They hibernate for the winter.

**Food Chains:** Frogs are carnivores and eat flies and in turn are eaten by herons.

## Frog 2

### Practical Work

It is well worth collecting frog spawn and observing the life cycle in class. It will take several weeks to fill out this sheet – a large version of it could be posted on the classroom wall and filled in as the results become apparent. It is not illegal for teachers to collect frog spawn for educational purposes in class. The National Parks and Wildlife Service automatically issues a licence each year to schools for this purpose so there is no need to apply.

An empty fish tank is good for keeping the frog spawn in and they should be fed with the daphnia-type of fish food, not the flakes. The tank must be cleaned weekly once the tadpoles are swimming around. Put some of the tank water into a bucket. Scoop up the tadpoles with a net and put into the bucket, then empty and clean the tank. If you use detergent be sure and rinse it very well as any soap residue will kill the tadpoles. Use rain water, ideally, to replenish the tank then scoop the tadpoles back in from the bucket. If you only have tap water, you should leave it stand for two days in a bucket or bowl so that the chlorine which is added to tap water can evaporate off. When the frogs have all their four legs, let them off in the school field, or if the holidays come before this stage, they must go back to the pond as they are yet not independent of water.

## Swallow 1

### Worksheet in two sections

**Crossword skills:** Following a lesson on the swallow, pupils should be able to fill in this crossword. Note that swallows always nest inside a building – it is house martins that nest outside under the eaves.

**Observation skills:** Recording the first swallow seen is a sign that Spring is here. This usually happens after St Patrick's Day. The nearest swallow's nest will be inside a barn – pupils may report that swallows nest in their barn every year.

## Swallow 2

### Worksheet in two sections

**Learning about food chains:** Swallows are aerial carnivores. They never come to land and eat worms. They only feed on flying insects, so have to return to Africa in winter as they cannot eat berries or ground-dwelling creepy-crawlies.

**Dangers to Swallows:** A class discussion here about a swallow's life and the problems faced, such as bad weather and not enough insects; no access to sheds as farmers repair old buildings; dangers on the journey to Africa e.g. adverse winds, running out of fat reserves, being hunted by hobbies (birds of prey in warmer countries that chase swallows).

## Snail 1

### Worksheet in three sections

**Parts of the snail:** Pupils can fill these in following class lesson

**Fieldtrip:** School grounds after Easter will be a good habitat for snails. They like to hide during the day so look behind and below sheltered places.

**Creating snail traps:** Putting out shelter for snails will make them easier to find. Give each class group of four pupils a piece of carpet, an old mat, a piece of lino etc., to place it where it might provide shelter.

## Snail 2

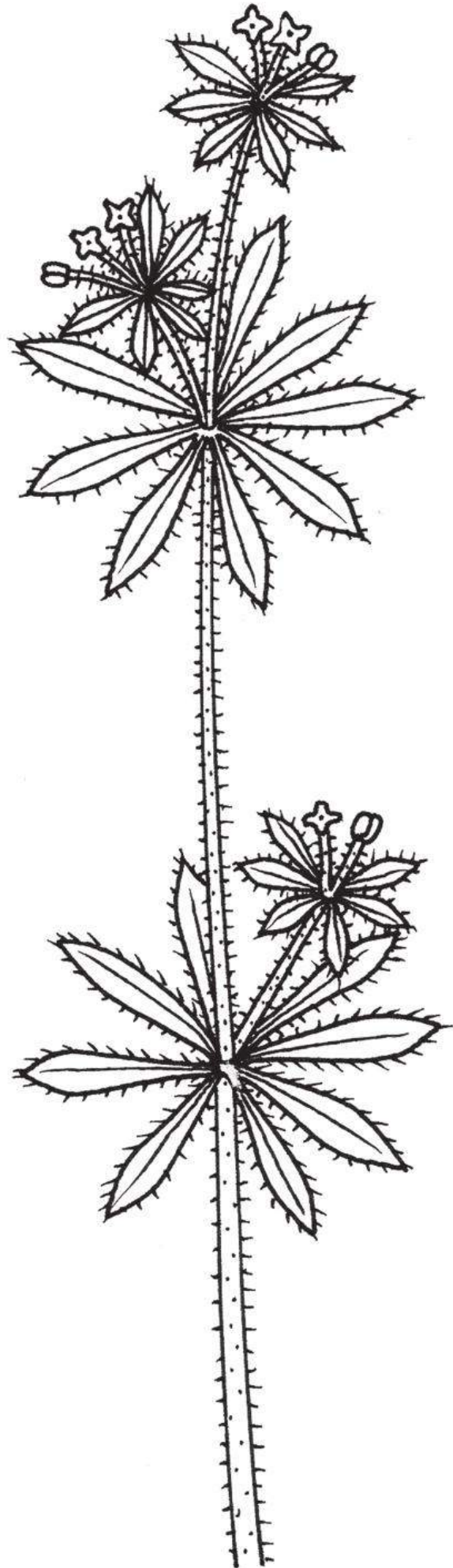
### Snail experiment

This is to see how many snails are in the school grounds. The lower the percentage of marked snails found the second time, the more snails are in the area. Let's suppose you mark 40 snails the first time and then the second time you find 40 snails and only four of them are marked. Four is 10% of 40. So the first group you marked was only 10% of the whole population which in this case is 400 snails. But you needn't trouble 3rd class with such higher maths!

## Colour in the drawing and name:

1. the leaves
2. the flowers (look carefully)

The flowers have \_\_\_\_\_ petals.



## Wordsearch

The words in the word search are all different words for this plant in English, Irish and Latin. Look for them across, down, diagonally, and backwards.

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

### WORD BANK

ROBIN RUN THE HEDGE	STICKY BACK
GARBHLUS	CLEAVERS
GOOSE GRASS	GALIUM

## Fieldtrip

Go with your teacher to look for robin-run-the-hedge.

We found robin-run-the-hedge \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The leaves of this plant are all covered in sticky hooks.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your plant have flowers? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your plant have seeds? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Bring a plant and seeds back to class.

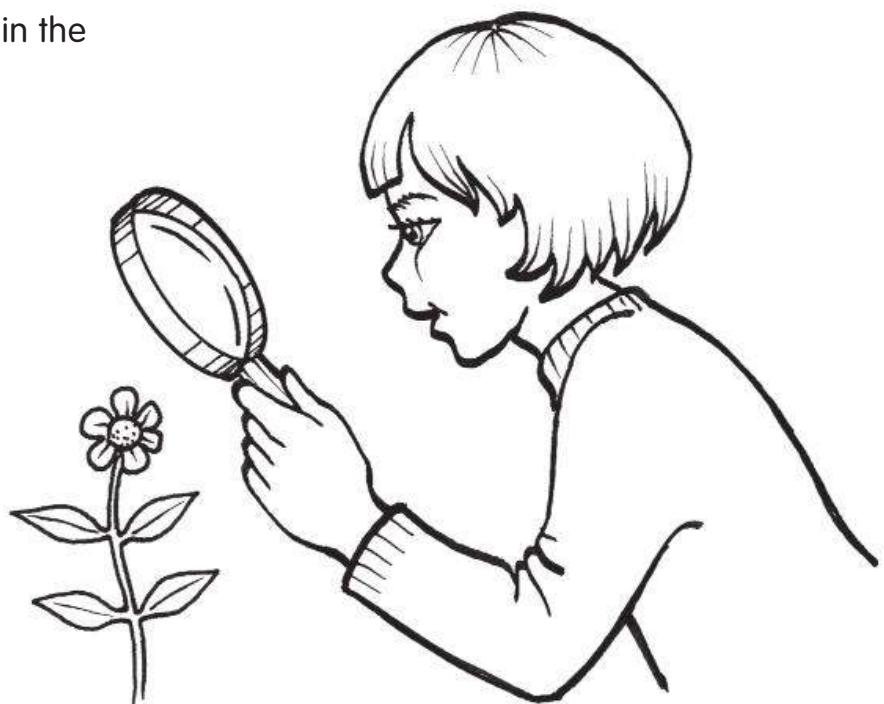
Examine your plants and seeds with a magnifying glass

We saw \_\_\_\_\_

through the magnifying glass.

Collect the seeds and plant them in a  
yoghurt pot of soil. Place in the  
window and keep moist.

How long does it take  
for the seeds to grow?



# Nettles are plants that grow in neglected places.

**Name:**

1. the leaves

2. the stem

3. the flowers

Why do nettle flowers have no petals?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Nettles were used for food by people long ago.**

## **FIND OUT:**

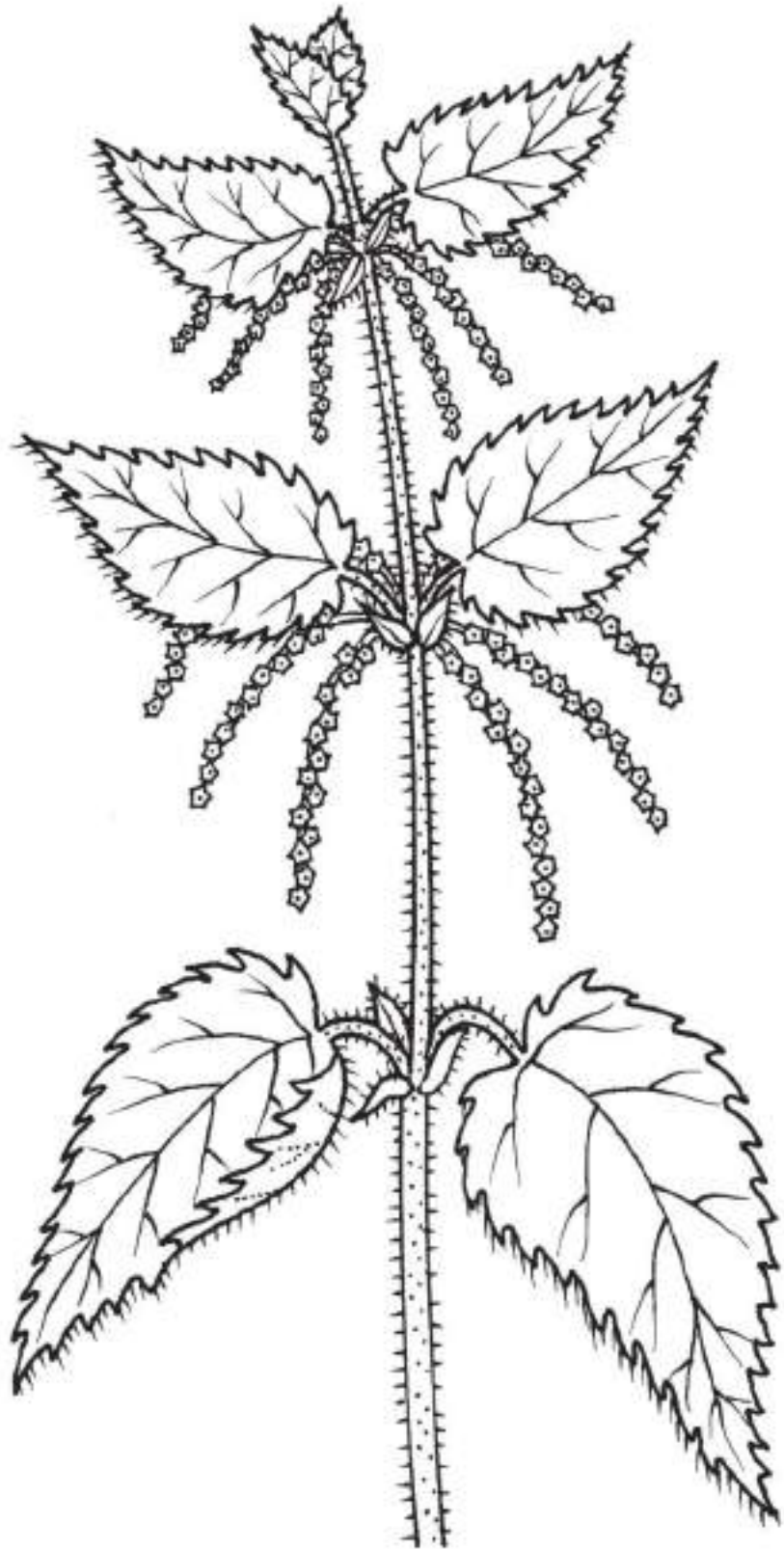
How were they used for food?

\_\_\_\_\_ was made from nettles.

## **Lots of wildlife eat nettles:**

\_\_\_\_\_ eat nettles.

\_\_\_\_\_ eat nettles.





## Fieldtrip

Nettles grow in groups and clumps.

They have stings on the leaves so **BE CAREFUL**.

We found nettles \_\_\_\_\_

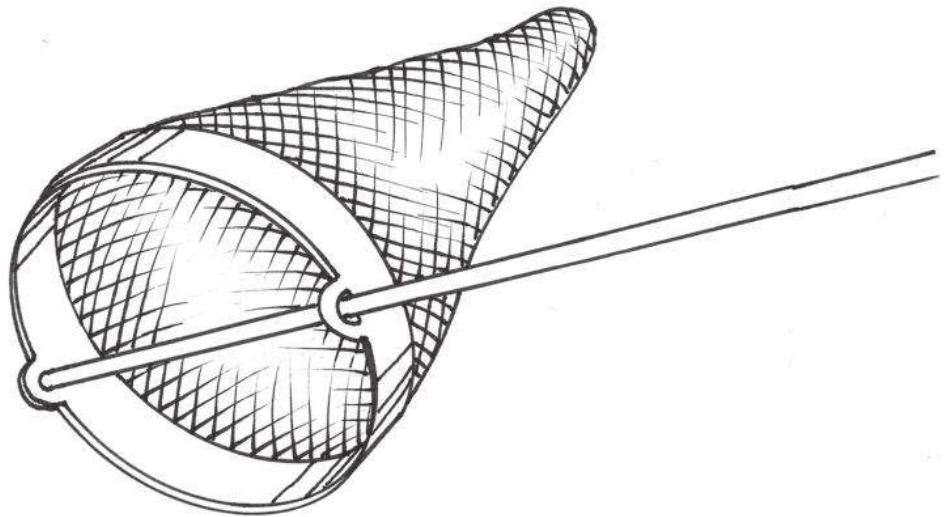
Did you see any creatures on the nettles when you just looked at them? \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher will sweep the nettles with a sweep net to catch creatures on the leaves.

Empty the net into a bucket or tray.

We found \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ on our nettles.



What is supposed to be good for curing the sting of a nettle?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why is this? \_\_\_\_\_

Does it work? \_\_\_\_\_

Name the parts of the hawthorn drawn here and colour them in.



The following are all names for this tree. Can you explain why?

It is called a hawthorn tree because \_\_\_\_\_

It is called a whitethorn tree because \_\_\_\_\_

It is called a May bush because \_\_\_\_\_

It is called a sceach geal in Irish because \_\_\_\_\_

How many words can you make from the letters HAWTHORN?

(You should get at least four two-letter words, ten three-letter words, ten four-letter words and four five-letter words).

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## Fieldtrip

This is a fieldtrip to find a hawthorn tree.

The teacher will need: an umbrella and Pooter jars with lids.

Date of fieldtrip \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a summer fieldtrip or an autumn fieldtrip? \_\_\_\_\_



**Look carefully at the hawthorn tree.**

My hawthorn tree has \_\_\_\_\_ . The

bark of the tree has \_\_\_\_\_ growing on it.

**WORD BANK:** leaves, flowers, thorns, buds, haws

### Wildlife visiting my tree



We watched quietly for five minutes and we saw

\_\_\_\_\_ visiting our hawthorn tree.

They came to our tree to look for

\_\_\_\_\_

Our teacher shook the leaves  
into the umbrella.



We found \_\_\_\_\_ in the umbrella.

Which of these creatures in the umbrella are

Herbivores? \_\_\_\_\_

Carnivores? \_\_\_\_\_

Omnivores? \_\_\_\_\_

**Frogs are:**

**Birds**

**Fish**

**Amphibians**

Frogs can breathe in air and in water

True

False

Frogs hibernate in the winter

True

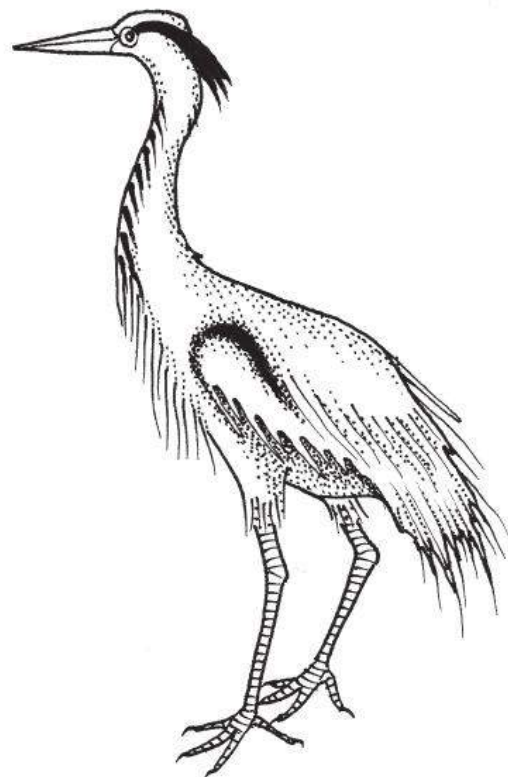
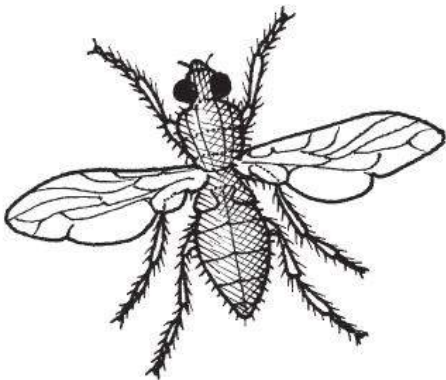
False

Frogs breathe in air through their \_\_\_\_\_.

Frogs breathe in water through their \_\_\_\_\_.

**Choose the correct words from the word bank. WORD BANK: gills, skin, lungs**

**Name the items in the frog's food chain.**



**Frog**

## Lifecycle of a frog

In February, frogs wake from hibernation.  
They go to the nearest pond to lay frog spawn.

### TO DO:

1. Go out and find some frog spawn. Where did you see the frog spawn?

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Date on which you found the frog spawn \_\_\_\_\_

2. Bring back frog spawn to the school pond or to a fish tank in class.

Watch the tadpoles hatch out.

Our tadpoles hatched on \_\_\_\_\_

3. Feed the tadpoles with fish food and clean out the water every week.

### DO NOT USE TAP WATER.

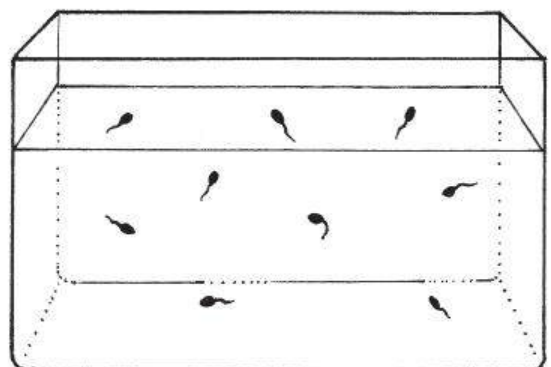
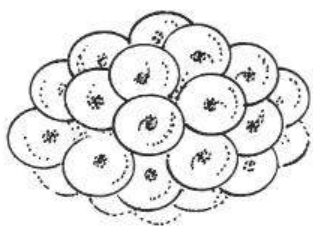
4. Tadpoles grow one pair of legs at a time.

Our tadpoles grew their \_\_\_\_\_ legs first on \_\_\_\_\_

5. Our tadpoles grew their second pair of legs on \_\_\_\_\_

6. We released our tadpoles/frogs before the summer holidays on

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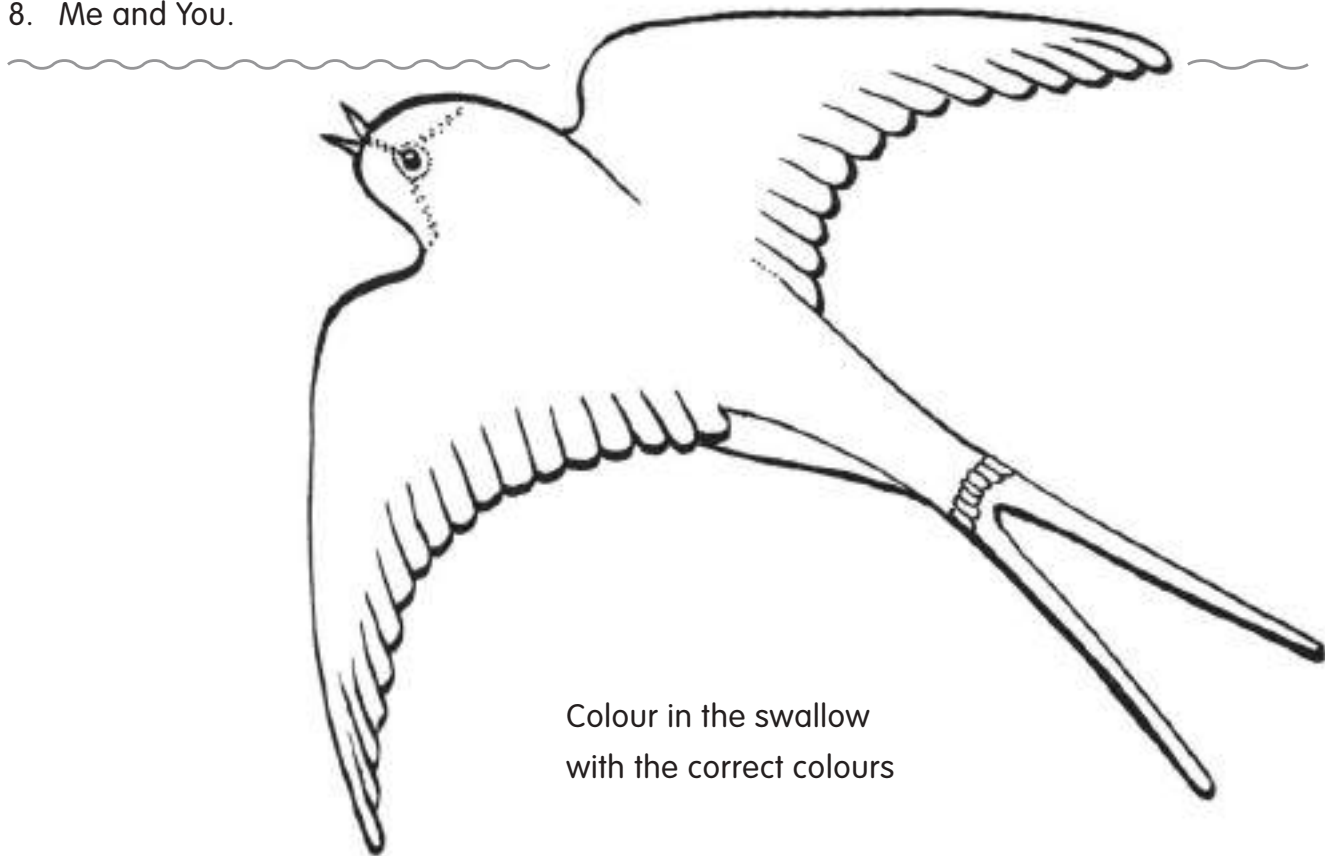
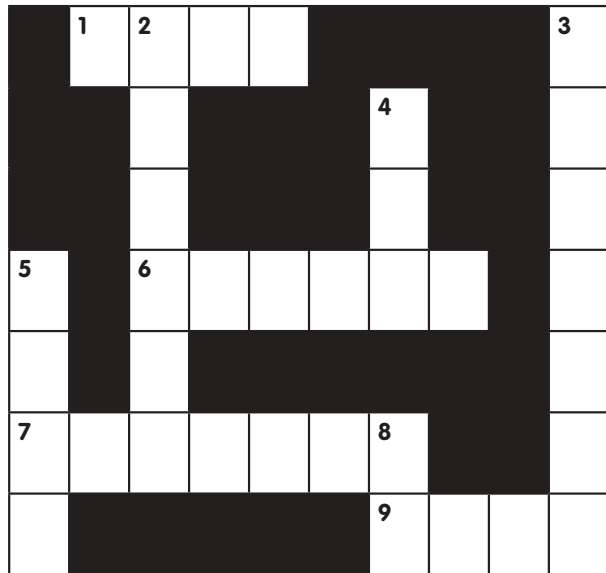
# Crossword

## Across

1. A swallow often builds its nest inside one of these.
6. Swallows ALWAYS build their nests \_\_\_\_\_ a building.
7. They arrive back from Africa in March.
9. Swallows lay five of these.

## Down

2. Swallows go here to spend the winter.
3. They feed only on these.
4. They gather this in their beaks to build a nest.
5. A swallow's home, made from mud.
8. Me and You.



Colour in the swallow with the correct colours

When did you see the first swallow this year? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is the nearest swallow's nest? \_\_\_\_\_

What colour is a swallow's face? \_\_\_\_\_

## FIND OUT:

What is the Irish word for a swallow? \_\_\_\_\_

### Name the creatures

Swallows are carnivores and only feed on flying insects. Name all the following creatures and draw a line between the swallow and those it feeds on.


















#### WORD BANK

BUTTERFLY    EARTHWORM    SWALLOW    MOSQUITO  
 SPIDER    WOODLOUSE    DRAGONFLY    INDOOR LONG-LEGGED SPIDER

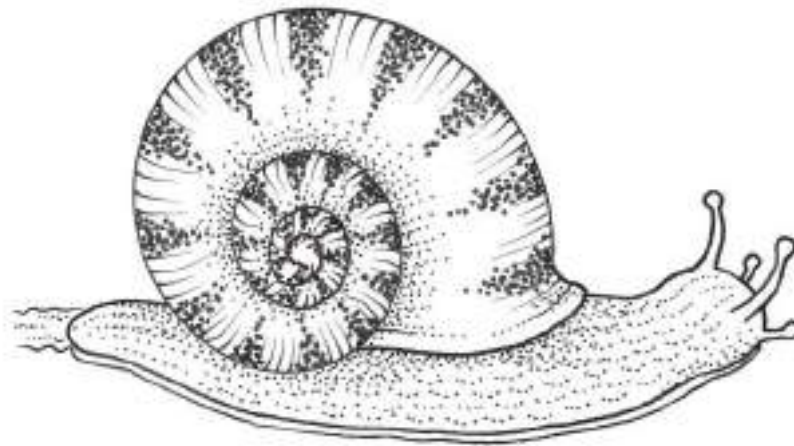
Fill in the two food chains below.



What are the dangers faced by swallows during their lives?

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## Name the parts of the snail



### WORD BANK

EYES

FOOT

MUCUS

SHELL

ORGANS OF SMELL

## Fieldtrip to see where snails live

Weather on day of fieldtrip \_\_\_\_\_

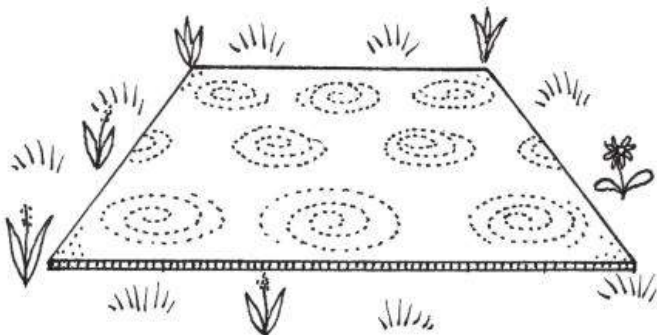
Where did you find the most snails? \_\_\_\_\_

Were they all garden snails? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe any others you found \_\_\_\_\_

## Making shelters for snails

You will need lots of snails for the experiment on worksheet 2 so you need to make places for snails to hide in.



You will need – an old mat, or a piece of carpet, or a piece of linoleum, or a large plastic sack – one for each group of 4 children in class, if possible.

### TO DO:

Place them on the ground near the hedge or wall where they will not be disturbed, walked on or taken away. Leave them there for at least a week. Then you can move on to worksheet 2 for snails.

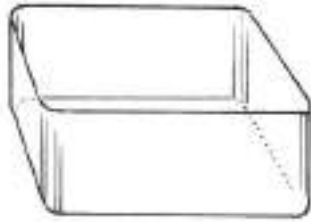


## Experiment

Ecological experiment to study how many snails are in the school grounds

### Week 1: The class works in groups of 4 children

For each group you will need:



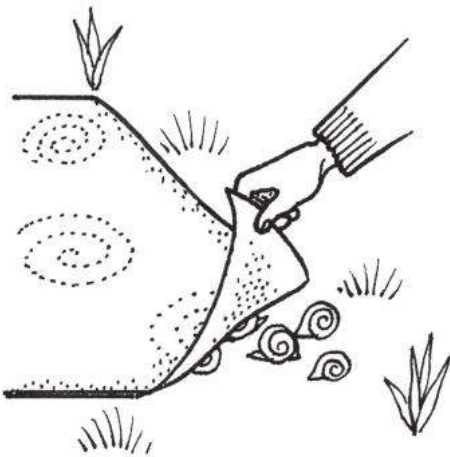
A large plastic box



A bottle of coloured  
nail varnish

### TO DO:

Each group gathers as many snails as possible remembering where they got them. There should be lots under the carpet traps.



Count the snails. Number collected \_\_\_\_\_

Mark each snail with a small dab of nail varnish on top of the shell.

Release all the snails back where you found them and put the carpet traps back on the ground.

**Week 2:** Go out again in your groups and collect all the snails you can find.

Put them into the plastic box and count them.

Total number of snails found: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of snails with nail varnish marks: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of snails with no nail varnish marks: \_\_\_\_\_

This is the number of new snails in the school grounds this week

Did you find all the snails you marked with nail varnish last week? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think some are missing? \_\_\_\_\_

# Acknowledgements

The *Wild Things at School* series has been developed to help engage primary school children and teachers with nature. The original publication, *Wild Things at School*, a book for primary school teachers has been positively received by teachers all over Ireland and has proved to be a valuable teaching resource. This new publication of *Wild Things Worksheets* is designed to accompany the teacher's book providing material for use in the classroom. Exercises are divided into class groups, from the simplest counting for junior infants to stimulating debates and field studies for the older children.

The exercises have been created and developed by wildlife expert Éanna Ní Lamhna, who has many years experience visiting schools all over Ireland. Christine Warner's beautiful illustrations were specially commissioned to enhance the learning experience on every page. Photographs of all the wild things are included on a DVD along with the worksheets and original teacher's book. The worksheets are available in Irish and are also on the DVD.

This publication is funded by the Heritage Council Heritage Plan fund, Monaghan County Council Heritage Office and Meath County Council Heritage Office.

The publication design is by Connie Scanlon and James Fraher at Bogfire. Proof reading was undertaken by Graham Smith of Wordsmith. Irish translation of the worksheets is by Máire Mhic Thaidhg. Pronsias Ó Donnghaile proofread the Irish version. Photographs are mainly from Eric Dempsey and Shirley Clerkin.

I hope that the production of these worksheets will assist teachers to deliver the *Wild Things* programme. Enormous thanks goes to those who have been involved with this project, particularly Eanna and Christine whose creative partnership has resulted in a fantastic teaching resource. It has been a labour of love for us all; a love for nature that we genuinely wish to pass on to its future custodians.

We wish you luck with the *Wild Things* programme.

Shirley Clerkin  
Heritage Officer  
Monaghan County Council  
heritage@monaghancoco.ie



## About the Author



### Éanna Ní Lamhna

Éanna Ní Lamhna is best known for her environmental expertise as a broadcaster on the radio programme *Mooney Goes Wild*. Her Co. Louth accent gives her one of the most instantly recognisable voices on radio. Her ability to bring her subject to life is legendary and her no-nonsense approach to romantic views about wildlife is well known.

She is first and foremost a botanist with degrees in both botany and ecology from University College Dublin. Her interest in the environment has expanded with her work over the years, to include birds, mammals and in particular creepy-crawlies whose doings hold a particular fascination for her. Her ability to awaken enthusiasm for these creatures in her listeners is exemplified by the remark made to her lately, "Whenever I see a spider I always think of you and put it outside instead of stamping on it."

She began work in 1974 in the Biological Records Centre — in its first incarnation in An Foras Forbartha. She quickly realised that if she was to receive any biological records from the Irish public she would first have to go and teach them about Irish wildlife. So began a career of teachers' courses, radio programmes, lecturing at third level, field trips with Secondary School pupils and most significantly of all, visits to Primary Schools to teach the pupils and indeed the teachers there, about the wildlife around them.

Her publications include *Talking Wild*, *Wild and Wonderful*, *Straight Talking Wild* and *Wild Dublin*. She has just completed a five-year term of office as President of An Taisce and is currently the Vice-President of the Tree Council of Ireland.

## About the Illustrator



### Christine Warner

Christine Warner is an illustrator and calligrapher working mostly in the field of education. She provides full colour illustrations, line diagrams and cartoons for textbooks, workbooks and posters. She has worked for many educational publishers and also for Dúchas, Forfás and Trócaire.

While she illustrates material on a wide variety of subjects, she specialises in science, having science degrees from University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin. She particularly enjoys producing wildlife illustrations and cartoons. She has been an environmental activist for many years. Christine may be contacted via email at [cwarner1@gmail.com](mailto:cwarner1@gmail.com)

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