

**What's happening  
in the news this week?**



**Let's have a look at this week's poster!**

**6th - 12th March 2023**



**Could you do more to protect  
your local area?**



# Let's look at this week's story



It has been suggested that the number of hazel dormice in the UK has dropped from around 3.5 million to only 750,000 in almost 30 years. Currently, their conservation status is classed as 'vulnerable', but some researchers say people should be more worried for them. A recent report from the University of Exeter urges for hazel dormice to be reclassified as 'endangered' and calls for more conservation action.



Learn more about this week's story [here](#).  
Watch this week's useful video [here](#).  
This week's Virtual Picture News [here](#).



# How does it make me feel?



<b>sad</b>	<b>angry</b>	<b>happy</b>	<b>confused</b>	<b>excited</b>	<b>worried</b>	<b>shocked</b>	<b>afraid</b>
despondent disconsolate dismal doleful downhearted forlorn gloomy melancholic miserable woeful wretched	aggrieved annoyed discontented disgruntled distressed exasperated frustrated indignant offended outraged resentful vexed	beaming buoyant cheery contented delighted enraptured gleeful glowing joyful	addled baffled bemused bewildered disorientated indistinct muddled mystified perplexed puzzled	animated elevated enlivened enthusiastic exhilarated exuberant thrilled	agitated anxious apprehensive concerned disquieted distraught distressed disturbed fretful perturbed troubled uneasy	astonished astounded disconcerted distressed dumbfounded horrified staggered startled stunned surprised	alarmed apprehensive daunted fearful frantic horrified petrified terrified



# This week's story looks at events related to ...





Look at the information below about the decrease in the number of hazel dormice.

## What are hazel dormice?

The hazel dormouse has large black eyes, gingery-brown fur, and a long tail. Hazel dormice like to eat nuts, insects, and berries and they make nests out of grass and leaves. These animals are hard to spot, as they are only found in a few areas of the UK such as southern England and Wales. They are also nocturnal, spend much of their time hibernating - and sometimes snore!



## Why are there fewer hazel dormice today?

It is thought that a lot of the habitat that the hazel dormouse needs to survive and thrive is decreasing. In the past 30 years, there has been a huge loss in woodland across the UK, which often contains many brambles and other shrubs where these small mammals like to live.

## What can be done to help?

The main thing that can be done is to protect their habitat. Being aware of the value of scrubby areas of land will help.

Large patches of brambles are important for dormice, both for eating and nesting in.

**Pictured left:** A hazel dormouse eating brambles.



**Do you think there are any areas where there could be hazel dormice near where you live?**





Look at the resource below, which shares some information about dormice.

## The dormouse

There are 29 different species of dormouse that can be found all around the world. Edible dormice are the largest of dormice and measure 14cm -19cm in body length with a tail measuring between 11cm and 13cm. Hazel dormice are smaller with a body length of 6cm-9cm and a tail of similar length.



An edible dormouse

Dormice eat a variety of food such as hazelnuts, flowers, insects, berries.

Before they go into hibernation, they have to eat as much as possible.



A hibernating  
hazel dormouse

Dormice hibernate, sometimes for six months or more!

They like to hibernate at the base of hedgerows in nests.

Dormice are nocturnal, which means they sleep during the day and are active at night.



A garden dormouse  
climbing a tree

Dormice are very good climbers as they have sharp claws and long toes for gripping and grasping.

Dormice are not part of the same family as regular mice. They have a fluffy tail, whereas regular mice have a scaly one.



**Does anything surprise you? Do you have any questions or anything else you would like to find out about dormice?**





Look at the resource below, which shares some things we can do to help take care of wildlife and their natural habitats.

### Make a log pile or bug hotel

This can make a great home for ground animals such as hedgehogs, toads and centipedes. They can also provide a safe hideaway for creatures such as bumblebees, woodlice, ladybirds and beetles.



A bug hotel



### Dig a pond

A pond provides a habitat for many plants and animals and will often attract frogs and dragonflies. It also supplies drinking water for birds.



### Leave a wild patch

Wild plants and garden weeds, including nettles and thistles, provide food and habitats for wildlife.

### Don't litter



Litter can harm wildlife. They may become entangled in it or even eat it. As well as ensuring you don't litter, you could organise a litter-pick.



### Put out bird feeders and bird baths

As birds have fewer places to find food, putting some out can help. Birdfeeders can be hung anywhere, even if you don't have a garden. Birds can also use bird baths for drinking and bathing.

### Raise awareness

Telling others about the problems faced by natural habitats ensures people understand and may even encourage them to take action and help.



### Hedges

Many birds nest in hedges. Between March and August, avoid cutting hedges as there are often baby birds in them.



Bird feeder

**Can you think of any other ways? Is there anything you already do?**





**Could you do more to protect  
your local area?**

# Reflection



In both cities and the countryside, alongside people – there are other creatures, both great and small, who find homes in almost any place! It's important to be aware of local habitats and ensure the homes of wildlife are protected.







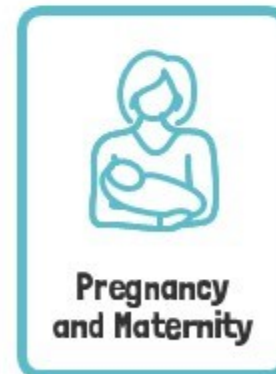
## Democracy

We all have a voice and our opinions should be heard. If we want to help care for and protect natural habitats, we can use our voice and take action.

# Protected Characteristics



For some people, caring for and protecting natural environments form part of their beliefs. It will affect their life choices or how they live their life.







# UN Rights of a Child



We have the right to give our opinions freely about any issues that affect us such as issues in our local area. Adults should listen to us and take us seriously.



# Useful vocabulary



## Conservation status

Indicates whether a group of organisms/species still exists and how likely it is to become extinct in the near future.

Currently, their **conservation status** is classed as 'vulnerable'.

## Habitats

The natural homes or environments of an animal, plant, or other organism.

It's important to be aware of local **habitats** and ensure the homes of wildlife are protected.

## Reclassified

Assigned or divided something into a different category or group than it was previously.

A recent report from the University of Exeter urges for hazel dormice to be **reclassified** as 'endangered'.

## Reintroduced

Put a species of plant or animal back into its former habitat.

Talk about the importance of such checks and why you think the dormice are being **reintroduced**.

## Thrive

To grow or develop well.

It is thought that a lot of the habitat that the hazel dormouse needs to survive and **thrive** is decreasing.

## Urges

Strongly advises or tries to persuade someone to do something.

A recent report from the University of Exeter **urges** for hazel dormice to be reclassified as 'endangered'.

**Can you use them in your writing this week?**



# Picture News



## Could you do more to protect your local area?

It has been suggested that the number of hazel dormice in the UK has dropped from around 3.5 million to only 750,000 in almost 30 years. Currently, their conservation status is classed as 'vulnerable', but some researchers say people should be more worried for them. A recent report from the University of Exeter urges for hazel dormice to be reclassified as 'endangered' and calls for more conservation action.



- Look at this week's poster image. What animal do you think it is on the poster? Why do you think it might be in the news?
- Explain that the hazel dormouse is in the news as its numbers are much lower than around 30 years ago. Do you have any ideas for why this could be the case?
- Watch this week's useful video, which shows sleepy dormice getting full health checks at London Zoo, before their reintroduction to the wild. Talk about the importance of such checks and why you think the dormice are being reintroduced.
- Read the information found on the assembly resource about the decrease in the number of dormice. Do you think there are any areas where there could be dormice near to where you live?
- Consider the area around where you live. Are there any natural habitats? How would you describe them? Do you know what animals and insects live close by? Talk about what they need to survive.
- Can you think of a contrasting area to you? E.g., if you are in a city, perhaps the countryside and vice versa. Do you know what animals live there? What do they need to thrive?

### Reflection

In both cities and the countryside, alongside people – there are other creatures, both great and small, who find homes in almost any place! It's important to be aware of local habitats and ensure the homes of wildlife are protected.

# Picture News



## KS1 focus

### What do we know about dormice?



- This week's poster image shows a hazel dormouse. Can you describe it? Think about its eyes, ears, nose, fur and whiskers. Do you think it has a tail? What size do you think it is?
- Have you ever heard of a dormouse before? Have you ever seen one? Share anything you might know about them.
- Look at resource 1, which shares some more information about dormice. Does anything surprise you? Do you have any questions or anything else you would like to find out?
- Look at the three dormice species pictured on resource 1. What similarities/differences are there? Can you describe their markings? Is there anything you particularly like about each?
- Spotting a dormouse in the wild is very rare so it is unlikely you will have seen one. The hazel dormouse is mainly found in southern England and Wales and spends most of its time asleep or high up in trees. Would seeing a hazel dormouse in the wild be something you would enjoy? Why?
- The dormouse population is declining and they are in danger. One of the reasons for this is there are fewer ancient woodlands and hedgerows. Why might this affect the dormouse population? How does this make you feel? Is there anything you can do to help?

### Reflection

Learning about dormice can help us understand more about what they need to survive and some of the reasons why their population is declining. Raising awareness can make a difference.

# Picture News



## KS2 focus

### What are some practical things we can do to take care of natural habitats?



- Write 'natural habitat' on the board. What do you think a natural habitat is? Can you name any natural habitats?
- A natural habitat is a place where a plant or animal normally lives. Natural habitats found in the UK include hedgerows, ponds, woodlands, meadows, marshes, sand dunes, moorland. Can you think of any others? Are there any natural habitats in your local area?
- Many natural habitats have been destroyed. Discuss why this might be e.g., more houses built, hedgerows trimmed or removed, for infrastructure.
- Look at resource 2, which shares some things we can do to help take care of wildlife and their natural habitats. Can you think of any other ways? Is there anything you already do?
- Think about your school grounds. What wild animals or plants have you seen? Do you have any natural habitats? Do you feed birds? Is there anything more you could do?
- Resource 2 mentions raising awareness as one of the things we can do to take care of natural habitats. How important do you think this is? Do you think it is more or less important than building a log pile or feeding birds? Why?

### Reflection

Natural habitats provide homes for a variety of plants and animals. Protecting and taking care of these natural habitats will, in turn, protect and care for the wildlife living there.





## KS2 follow-up ideas

### Option 1

Look at an aerial photograph or map of your school grounds (you could use an online map such as Google maps).

- Locate any areas that you already use to encourage wildlife.
- Can you see any other spaces that could be utilised as natural habitats?

Create a plan of your school grounds, which includes any potential ideas and developments you would include to encourage wildlife. You could explore further by researching the materials you would need, how much it would cost and how to implement your plans. Share your plans with others as you may even be able to make them happen!

### Option 2

The hazel dormouse is classified as 'vulnerable' on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation and Nature) Red List of threatened species. Any animals classified as vulnerable, endangered or critically endangered are considered to be threatened with extinction.

- Can you find any other animals in your local area that are threatened with extinction?
- What is their classification?
- Were you aware they are threatened with extinction or does this surprise you?
- Can you find out what you can do to help?
- Can you find any other animals in the UK that may need our help?

Create a poster or leaflet about one animal to inform others of the problems it faces and ways we can help.



## KS1 follow-up ideas

### Option 1

Explore some of the wildlife found in your school grounds and if possible, your local area. Think about the following:

- Can you see or hear any birds? How many different species of bird can you see? Do you know the names of any?
- What plants can you find? Are any flowering?
- Are there any wild, grassy areas? What can you find there?
- Can you find any insects?
- Is there any water such as a pond, stream or river nearby? What might live there?
- What other animals might live in your school grounds? A hedgehog, a toad, a woodlouse?
- Do you think the wildlife you find will be different in the summer, autumn, winter, spring? Why?

### Option 2

Choose a wild animal that can be found in your local area. Create a fact file about it. You could include:

- Name
- Food
- Habitat
- Size
- A picture

Share your fact file with others. Being aware and knowing more about animals living in our local area can help us improve our care and protection of them.



## This week's useful websites

### This week's news story

<http://bit.ly/3INoHDt>

### This week's useful video

Re-introducing Dormice  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1SCV2eZ0Gw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1SCV2eZ0Gw)

### This week's Virtual Picture News

[www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)

### This week's vocabulary

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To grow or develop well. It is thought that a lot of the habitat that the hazel dormouse needs to survive and **thrive** is decreasing.

#### Urges

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## The King co-writes a children's book

An introductory guide to what climate is, how and why it is changing and what that means for all life on Earth.

Written by experts, with an afterword from HRH The Prince Charles, former Prince of Wales.



Publishes

9 March

Pictured: 'Climate Change' - a Ladybird Book Source: Ladybird Books Twitter page

King Charles III has co-written a children's book about climate change. The book explains what climate change is, how it works, discusses environmental threats to the planet, and hopes to encourage young people to take action. The book, published by Ladybird Books, is co-written by Tony Juniper, Chair of Natural England, and climate scientist Dr Emily Shuckburgh and has an afterword written by HRH The

Prince of Wales, before he became King. The aim of the book is to make the topic accessible for 7-11 year-olds. Tony Juniper, tweeted 'I do hope this little book that Dr Emily Shuckburgh & I worked on with the Former Prince of Wales (now King Charles III) will help young people gain an even more confident voice in shaping a sustainable future.'

## Tiger twins

Two incredibly rare Sumatran tiger cubs have been born at Chester Zoo! The zoo recently announced that the yet to be named tiger cubs were born to first-time parents, Kasarna and Dash, on 7<sup>th</sup> January. It was also revealed that keepers have been recording the precious cubs' progress using hidden cameras. The zoo has shared footage from these recordings on their social media accounts to keep the public informed. The Sumatran tiger is critically endangered; there are thought to be only 350 living in the wild. The smallest subspecies of tiger is named after its native Indonesian island. The Sumatran tiger is able to camouflage itself in its tropical rainforest habitat as its stripes are closer together and its fur is a darker

orange than other types of tiger. 'We've been closely monitoring Kasarna on our CCTV cameras as she gets to grips with motherhood and her first litter of cubs. It's a real privilege and incredibly special to watch. She's a great mum and is being very attentive to her new babies, keeping them snuggled up in the den and feeding them every few hours. It won't be long until they gain enough confidence to start venturing outside for the very first time as a family, which is really exciting!', Dave Hall, Carnivore Team Manager, said on the zoo's website. Experts think that the cubs will venture outside their den in early April and then the zoo will be able to find out their sexes, discover more about them and give them names.

**Do you know any interesting tiger trivia?**



Pictured: Sumatran tiger, Kasarna and her cubs Source: Chester Zoo Twitter page

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

[www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)





# Mush-room for improvement



Pictured: People having a surfing lesson. Source: Canva

Steve Davies, from Porthcawl on the south coast of Wales, has designed a new kind of surfboard, grown using mushrooms! He hopes that the environmentally positive surfboard will help make surfing kinder to the environment by cutting down on the number of non biodegradable plastic surfboards produced every year – currently it's around 400,000! The former Cardiff Metropolitan University design student thought up the idea during his final year, with his aim to make the sport more sustainable. He is experimenting now by growing mushrooms and using their mycelium roots to form a polystyrene-like material for the base of the surfboard.

The boards would then need to be coated in organic sealants like bees wax and linseed oil. 'It sounds a little bit crazy, but it's a way to get away from polystyrene, polyurethane and resin boards that can sit in landfill and not decompose for hundreds to thousands of years,' Mr Davies said. 'In the right conditions, we will grow a mycelium board in around 21 days. The dream would be to make it the new norm. Connecting with nature would be the new design rules and a lot of things like that would be really cool. We're using the sea, we should give back to the sea and it should be a circular model.'

Last week's topic:

**Should everyone have access to a mode of transport?**

Only if you can pay for it and fund it, otherwise - who will pay for it?  
**Philip**




Yes, I think everyone should have a way to get around.  
**Harry**

I think it's important to have alternatives to cars as it's better for the environment. Renting bikes is a great idea!  
**Julie**

Yes - because it's fun and a good way to get around! It's not fair if just adults have transport if children don't!  
**Emily**

**Let us know what you think about this week's news?**

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# TAKEHOME



Could you do more to protect your local area?



## In the news this week

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### Things to talk about at home ...

- Describe your local area to someone older. Ask them to share details about their local area from when they were younger. Was it different?
- Talk about different places e.g., the countryside, cities. How can people who live in each take greater care of local habitats?

Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

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