



# Countrycare Kids!

Welcome to this edition of Countrycare Kids! Here's what you can expect from the Winter 2021-2022 issue...

- 🌿 Some great puzzles
- 🌿 Reptiles Vs Amphibians
- 🌿 Fascinating facts about...Fungi!
- 🌿 Learning about the English Oak Tree

P.S How many little hedgehogs can you find hidden in this edition?  
Here's one to get you started...



## Winter is here



Winter can be the hardest season of all for wildlife, everything is in short supply: food, warmth and light. However, nature has adapted a few solutions to make the season more tolerable.

🐿 **Hibernation** is one of these mechanisms. During hibernation animals only use a tiny amount of energy, their heart may only beat a few times per minute, and they may only take a few breaths per hour. It allows the creatures to live in this dormant state for many months slowly diminishing their energy reserves from all the food they would have eaten in Autumn.



🐿 **Squirrels** are an example of a mammal that don't hibernate, so how do they survive winter?

1. Store food underground for winter;
2. Prepare for the cold by eating...a lot!
3. Create a warm, dry place to live, this is a nest called a **Drey**. A Drey is a ball shaped nest up to 30cm wide, they use all sorts of insulating and structural material that will keep them warm and dry.





# Reptile VS Amphibian



Did you know that Reptiles and Amphibians are actually two different groups of animals? Lets explore this a little further!

**Similarities...** Both reptiles and amphibians are vertebrates, this means they have a backbone (like we do). They are also both ectothermic; this means that they cannot generate their own heat so they rely on the environmental conditions to warm themselves up.

**Differences...**

## Reptiles

- Reptiles have scaly skin which can help them to survive in hot and dry places.
- Reptiles who lay eggs have brittle eggs similar to those of birds. They hatch into tiny versions of the adult.
- Reptiles breath with lungs, inhaling and exhaling like we do.

## Amphibians

- Amphibians have porous, delicate skin, therefore must have water in the habitat.
- Their eggs are transparent and jelly-like. The young that hatch will need to go through metamorphosis (change) into adults as they grow up
- They breathe either through their skin, with the use of gills or lungs.

Lizard



Slow Worm



Newt



Snake



Toad



Frog



Can you match these animals to their correct group? Link each picture to either the reptile or amphibian box.

# Fascinating facts about... Fungi!



Can you find the words in **BOLD** on this page in the word search?

🍄 Fungi are a **KINGDOM** of their own but are closer related to animals than plants.

🍄 Of the 50,000 known **FUNGI** species, only approximately 350 species are eaten.



🍄 There are at least 15,000 **SPECIES** of fungi in the UK.



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

🍄 **MUSHROOMS** are a common form of fungus.

🍄 A very special fungus is able to breakdown **PLASTIC** in just weeks.



🍄 Fungi are the source of lots of medicines called Antibiotics – one example is **PENICILLIN**.

🍄 Fungi get their energy (food) by decomposing organic matter or eating off their hosts – **PARASITIC**.

🍄 Some mushrooms can **GLOW** in the dark- it is called Bioluminescence. This helps them to reproduce as animals are attracted towards them and then spread their spores.

# Learning the Leaves: English Oak Tree

The English Oak tree is very special, most importantly because it supports more life than any other UK native tree. An Oak can grow up to 40m tall, and live for hundreds of years, for example: an Oak must be over 150 years old before it can be used for wood. The leaves, as you can see from the background and these images, are lobed. This means they have smooth edges with bubble shapes around the perimeter. The leaves grow in clusters with almost no stem. The flowers of Oak trees are green or yellow and produce fruit which are called Acorns!

Can you rearrange these anagrams to deduce the hidden words? All the words have been used in the passage above.



INTAEV = \_\_\_\_\_  
 LLEYWO = \_\_\_\_\_  
 BDOLE = \_\_\_\_\_  
 ONCARS = \_\_\_\_\_



We hope you have enjoyed the Winter 2021-2022 Edition of Countrycare Kids, check back in with us in a few months for the Spring edition and we can see what has changed in nature.

Have a look at our website ([eppingforestdc.gov.uk/Countrycare](http://eppingforestdc.gov.uk/Countrycare)), visit some of our great nature reserves and enjoy this Winter.

Until next time,

The Countrycare Team 😊

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

- Answers: There are 7 little hedgehogs in this edition.
- Reptiles VS Amphibians  
 Reptiles = Slow worm, lizard and snake.  
 Amphibians = Newt, toad and frog.
- Anagrams:
1. Native
  2. Yellow
  3. Lobed
  4. Acorns