

Session Three

Last session we got to know more about Trees and to connect with a tree of our own. This week we are going to look in more depth at:

Wildlife

Location: Garden, Playing Field or Park

What you need:

- Print the booklet OR use some scrap paper and copy out our activities
- ID sheets (use these online if you can't print them)
- Camera or colouring pencils

Aims:

- Be able to identify some mammals and birds, their habitats and their food
- Get to know some bugs and insects, and where/how they live

What we will cover:

- Big Beasties
- Flying Beasties
- Wee Beasties
- Habitats

Ranger Work:

- Big Beasties Manx Map
- Animal Tracking
- Hedgehog Shelter
- Flying Beastie Spot the Difference
- Bird ID Sheet
- Make a Bat Box
- Wee Beastie ID Sheet & Locator
- Wee Beastie Word Search

Big Beasties

The Isle of Man is unique - many of the mammals present in our neighboring Islands are not present here but the ones that we do have flourish in our woodlands, uplands, valleys and on the northern plain. We have two Big Beasties thriving in the wild here, which are not native to the British Isles.

Can you find out where our Big Beasties might live on the Isle of Man? Maybe you have seen them yourself! Research the animals and link them to a place on the map where you might find them.

Mountain/Blue
Hare

Stoat

Wallaby

Hedgehog



Polecat

European
Mountain Goat

Brown Hare

Rabbit

Some of these animals are easy to spot when you are out and about but others are more elusive. That doesn't mean we can't see signs of them. Even if we can't see the animal itself, we will still be able to spot evidence that is close by, if we look close enough.

Track an animal:

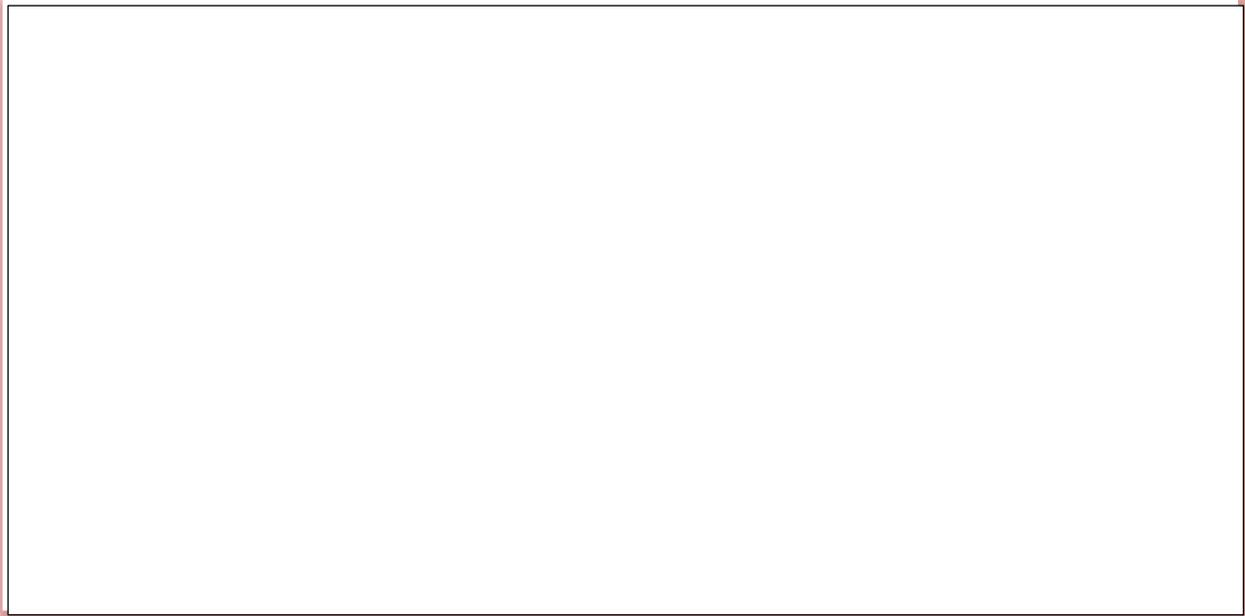
Can you track one of our Manx Beasties? What would you look for?

Think about the animal's footprints, where it might feed, where it sleeps, what its scat (poo) looks like. Does it leave any other signs of its passing, like fur or broken twigs?



Become a wild life detective! What can you find evidence of in your garden or park?

Take pictures, write lists or draw what you see in the box:



One Big Beastie you may have found signs of is a hedgehog. These spiny animals are difficult to spot as they hunt for their prey from dusk, though the night, and catch up on their sleep during the day.



They have been known to feed on the eggs of ground nesting birds, such as the Nightjar. They also feed on slugs, worms, and crunchy beetles, making them the gardener's friend. Sadly, over the past years their numbers have been dropping as we (humans) have destroyed their habitats by building new houses and roads. Many

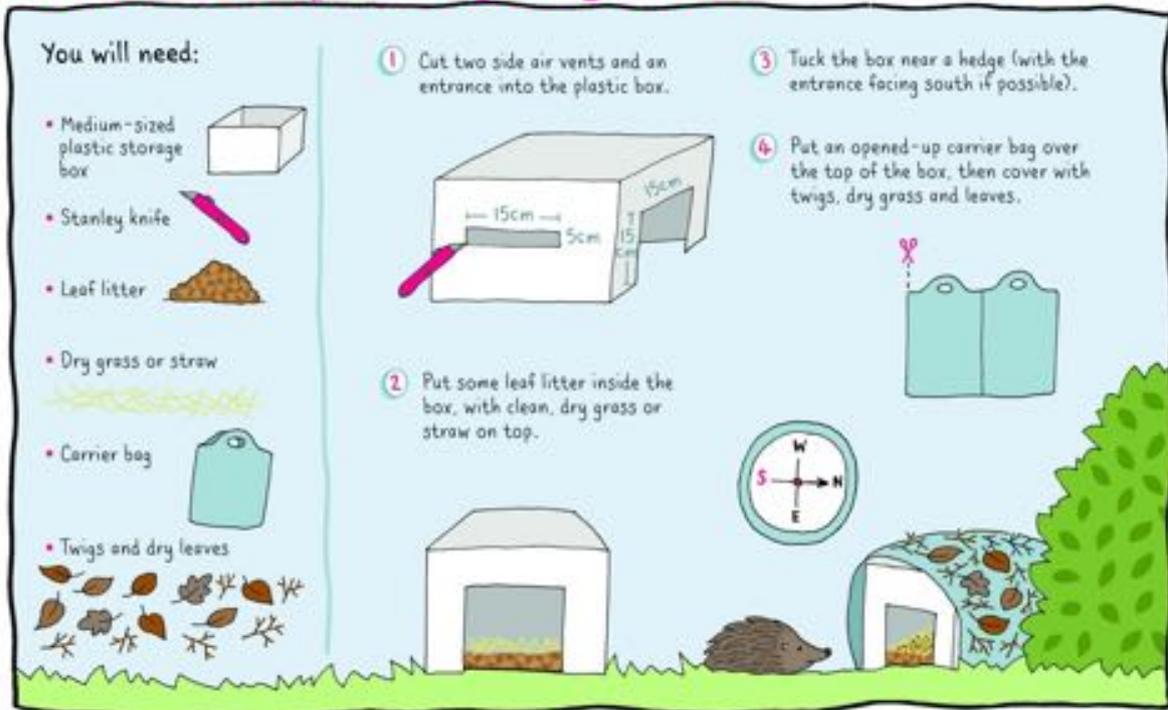
hedgehogs are killed on the road as they travel to different feeding grounds and to find mates. Some councils are now helping the cause of animals like hedgehogs by making wildlife corridors through urban areas and under roads. We can do our bit too by making small tunnels, like the one in the picture, to help small animals travel between our gardens.



Can you help and encourage animals to visit your garden?

Make a simple hedgehog house

wildlife
watch



Build a Hedgehog Shelter: Build the hedgehog house in a quiet, unused corner of your garden or school playing field. Build a mesh of twigs and branches around the pile, and leave an entrance space at the bottom. Rake some sand or fine soil at the entrance and check this daily to see if there are any footprints.



For more information and animal activities visit the Manx Wildlife Trust website <http://www.manxwt.org.uk/discover-our-island/stuck-home>

Flying Beasties

With its many different habitats, the Isle of Man is home to a wide variety of birdlife. From Guillemots, Puffins and Gannets on the Coast and Sea; to Tawney Owl, Bullfinch and Sparrowhawks in the Woodlands. From Moorhens, Mallard and Grey Wagtails on Inland Water; to Jackdaws, Rooks and Robins in Urban areas.

Coastal birds - most of the coastal birds make their nest on small ledges on the sea cliffs such as the **Guillemots** and **Razorbills**. They nest on the same sea cliffs in colonies that can be in the thousands each nest only a beaks distance away from the next. They look very similar to each other, and are in fact a part of the 'Auk' family of birds. The best way for you to tell the difference



is the beak; the **Razorbill** has a thick beak with white lines and the **Guillemot** has a more pointed, solid black beak.



A less common, but easier to identify, member of the Auk family are **Puffins**. These birds, with their bright orange coloured beaks, nest in borrows at the top of sea cliffs. Puffins spend most of their lives out at sea through the winter and only come to land to breed and raise their young. When out at sea they can form groups of over a thousand. A group of puffins can be called a Colony, Circus, or,

my favorite, a Puffinry.

Garden Birds - Two birds you may see in your garden are the Blue Tit and the Great Tit. They feed on the same types of food and if you have a bird feeder in your garden then these will be regular visitors. As well the food you may put out for them, such a nuts and seeds, they also feed on insects and caterpillars. They nest in small holes in trees or can be found nesting in old farming equipment.

Flying Beastie Spot the Difference

Both birds are very similar. Look at the two pictures below and see if you can identify the differences.



Main features



Main features

If you found that one of the birds had a black cap, and a dominant stripe down its chest and was possibly larger, then that would be a Great Tit. The Blue Tit would have a blue cap and black eye band and yellow chest.

Using the Manx Birdlife ID Sheet, see what you can find in your garden or park. Tick off the birds as you find them.

<http://manxbirdlife.im/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Garden-bird-identification.pdf>



For more information and bird activities (including a 'My Favorite Bird' Competition, with prizes!) visit the Manx Birdlife Website <http://manxbirdlife.im/education-programme/>

Bats – Another type of Winged Beasties are bats. These are the only true flying mammals. These creatures rarely cause any problems to man and many people never realise that they are providing a refuge for a colony in their roof, in an old tree with rot holes or between the stones of an old building or bridge. In summer bats are born and cannot fly at first. In winter they hibernate and may leave few signs of their presence.

There are 7 species of bats living on the Isle of Man:

- Brown long-eared bat**
- Common pipistrelle**
- Daubenton's bat**
- Soprano pipistrelle**
- Leisler's bat**
- Natterer's bat**
- Whiskered bat**



Installing a bat box will help local bats, encouraging them to move into areas that have limited roosting space. All our bats are insect-eaters, so having a few flitting around might just make those evenings in the garden a little less buggy!

Make your own bat box



What you need:

- an adult to help you
- rough cut, untreated timber
- tape measure and pencil
- saw
- hammer and nails
- rubber flap
- odourless wood glue (optional)

Instructions:

1. Cut timber to the following lengths: 140mm, 200mm, 40mm, 200mm, 150mm, 50mm. The 140mm piece is the front, 200mm is the side, 40mm is the top, 200mm is the bottom, 150mm is the back, and 50mm is the rubber flap.

2. Make an angled edge cut at 22° on the top and bottom edges of the front and side pieces.

3. Attach the top and bottom pieces to the side piece with nails.

4. Attach the back piece to the side piece with nails. The back piece should have a 22° cut on its top edge.

5. Attach the rubber flap to the back piece with wood glue. Seal gaps at the edges with wood glue.

6. Mount the box on a tree trunk 5 metres high. The entrance slit is 10mm wide between the base and the back plate.

Important: Do not use wood stain or preservative anywhere on the box.

Wildlife Watch logo

IT IS ILLEGAL TO DISTURB BATS WITHOUT A LICENSE - DO NOT INSPECT BOXES IF YOU THINK BATS ARE USING THEM. Look for droppings below to check for occupancy.

Wee Beasties

Wee Beasties are vital to the survival of all the other Beasties, and come in many different forms; from Earwigs to Butterflies, Bees to Slugs, together they form the main food source for birds and small mammals.

Butterflies, bees, wasps and flies go from flower to flower. They are feeding on a sweet liquid inside, called nectar as well as pollinating plants. If these Wee Beasties didn't do this, we wouldn't have the food sources we need as humans to survive.

Bees - There are many different species of Bees, some 20,000 worldwide! Of these only 7 are actual Honey Bees. The most common is the Bumble Bee, this is a large fluffy bee and can be the size of your thumb nail. If you get close enough to one, you may be able to see the pollen stuck to the spines on its legs as it flies from flower to flower. Bumble Bees live in holes in the ground and a colony can have anywhere from 50 to 500 bees in one nest. The Bumble Bees have a very distinctive look, with its black and bright yellow striped body.



The Honey Bee is less colourful and smaller in size. They have a more slender body, translucent wings, and the abdomen is pointy looking. Honey Bees live in hives, which can house anywhere from 10,000 to 60,000 bees in one colony.



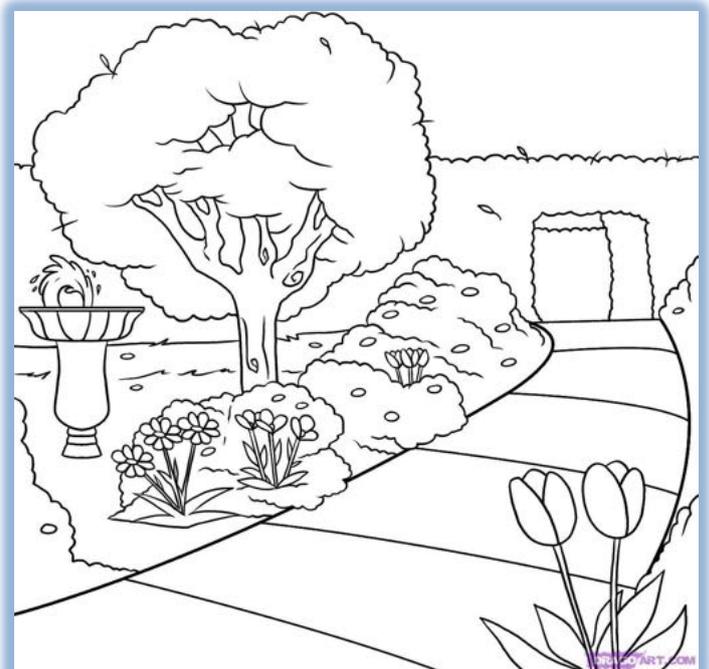
You'll find Wee Beasties high and low in your park or garden. As well as the flies, caterpillars, bees and butterflies in the trees and bushes, you'll find lots of Beasties on the ground, under stones and even in the ground.

What Wee Beasties can you find in your garden or park? Where do the different bugs and insects live?

Wee Beastie ID Sheet - Check off the beasties as you find them

	slug	<input type="checkbox"/>		butterfly	<input type="checkbox"/>
	beetle	<input type="checkbox"/>		wasp	<input type="checkbox"/>
	crane fly (daddy-long-legs)	<input type="checkbox"/>		ladybird	<input type="checkbox"/>
	earwig	<input type="checkbox"/>		dragonfly	<input type="checkbox"/>
	snail	<input type="checkbox"/>		ant	<input type="checkbox"/>
	millipede	<input type="checkbox"/>		worm	<input type="checkbox"/>
	fly	<input type="checkbox"/>		caterpillar	<input type="checkbox"/>
	bee	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Where did you find them? Can you draw pictures of some of the beasties you found in our garden? Or have a go at drawing your own!



Wee Beastie Word Search

Can you find the following on the word search?

butterfly
earwig
beetle
spider

cricket
dragonfly
cockroach
grasshopper

wasp
moth
bee
ant



Next week we'll be learning more about:
Plants & Flowers