

Supported by



# Explorers

# Canal & River Challenge Badge



## Introduction

The Canal & River Trust looks after most of the canals and rivers in England and Wales. The Canal & River Challenge Badge is supported by Girlguiding Birmingham and has been specially designed to help you to discover canals and rivers while having lots of FUN!



**To earn your badge** you must complete 1 activity from each of the 6 sections:

Each time you complete an activity fill in the Canal & River Challenge Badge record card (see page 26) and ask your leader to sign it.



## How to order your badge

Ask your leader to [order your badge](#). Let us know how you're getting on with your badge or tell us about the other ways you've been exploring your local canal or river. We might even feature your adventures on our news page!

## What's next?

If you enjoyed working towards this badge then you'll love our downloadable activity sheets for uniform groups. These activity sheets will help you to work towards other badges [canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/group-leaders](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/group-leaders)

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# Arts and Crafts

## Roses and Castles

Narrowboats and household items such as plates and water cans were often decorated with traditional patterns of stylised roses and fairy tale castles and called Roses and Castles. No one is sure how the patterns developed but the most likely idea is that they were copied from everyday china popular in Victorian times.

In this project you design a new Roses and Castles pattern for a narrowboat.



### You will need

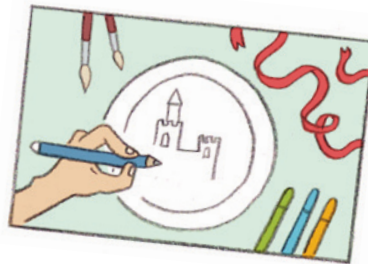
- ✿ A paper plate
- ✿ Paint and paint brushes

### What to do

Things to think about:

- ✿ A bold pattern to make the boat look cheerful
- ✿ A pattern that can be painted quickly and easily
- ✿ Painting a picture of your house or school instead of a castle (if there is a stately house or a castle nearby, you could use that)
- ✿ Use another flower instead of roses.

Then draw out your design on the paper plate in pencil and colour in.



### TOP TIP

Use soft paint brushes that come to a nice point and create the same sort of effect as traditional Roses and Castles.



### NEXT STEP

Test out your design by pinning it up several feet away to see if it is visible from a distance just as Roses and Castles would have been on a narrowboat.

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## Arts and Crafts



### Making marks

Natural materials found along towpaths make great 'tools' for art projects. Go for towpath walks and gather materials such as twigs, seed heads and feathers. Fill sheets of paper with as many marks as possible and write the name of each tool alongside them.

Remove bark from a twig, crush one end and 'paint' with it

Use a feather and ink to draw with

Draw with a stick dipped in fire embers

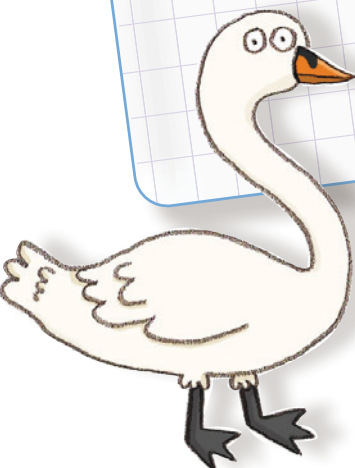
Tie or glue a sponge to a stick

Dip seed heads into paint and brush across paper

Make marks with wax candles and paint or crayon on top

**TOP TIP**  
Experiment with everyday items such as highlighters, biro, drawing pens and young children's crayons too.

Flick paint from an old toothbrush



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## Arts and Crafts

### Build a bird feeder

Canals are a great place to spot birds. Your back garden is a good place for bird-spotting too. Make this feeder from recycled materials.



#### You will need

An empty milk or juice carton; scissors; a twig 30 cms long; a length of thin wire; some birdseed

#### What to do

- 1 Wash and dry the carton
- 2 Using scissors, cut windows in two sides leaving margins as shown in the picture
- 3 Cut a small hole in each of the same sides at the base of the feeder
- 4 Push a twig through the holes to make a perch
- 5 Push the wire through the top of the feeder. Twist the end together to make a loop
- 6 Sprinkle some birdseed in the bottom of the feeder - and keep watch!

#### TOP TIP

Hang the feeder on a high branch outside so that cats can't reach it.



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# Arts and Crafts

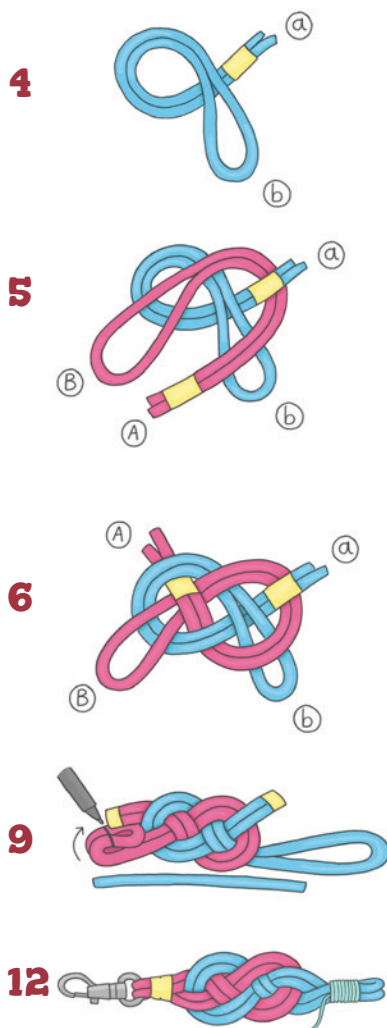
## Make a Knot bracelet

Next time you spot a narrowboat look out for decorative knot work on the fenders (buffers to stop boats crashing into banks and boats).

### You will need

Cord, tape measure, masking tape, glue, embroidery silk, large spring clasp, large needle.

### What to do



- 1** Measure your wrist. Cut the cord to the same measurement
- 2** Measure the clasp and cut this length from the cut piece of cord. This is your measuring cord
- 3** Cut two pieces of cord measuring at least 56cms. Fold one piece in half and tape the ends together using the masking tape. Repeat with the other piece of cord
- 4** Take one piece of the long taped pieces of cord and make a loop with the taped end on the underside pointing upwards
- 5** Take the second piece of taped cord and place it on top and under the loop you've made
- 6** Now wrap end A under the loop and over B and back under the loop. Pull all four ends tight
- 7** Finish your bracelet by bringing the ends of the cord together. The taped ends need to be shorter than the looped ends. Cut both taped ends (a and A) to about 2.5 to 3.5cms from your knot
- 8** Place the measuring cord you made in Step 1 next to your bracelet and make sure the knot aligns to the centre of the cord
- 9** Take one of the looped ends and fold it back over itself so that it lines up with the end of your measuring cord. Take the taped end of the bracelet and place it over the folded side. Mark a line where the cords meet
- 10** Unfold the longer, marked cord and tape over the mark. Trim at the line and repeat on the other side
- 11** Slide the clasp on to one end of the longer cord. Fold it to meet and glue where the end meets. Cover with tape. Repeat on the other side to make a loop for the clasp
- 12** Finish your bracelet by wrapping embroidery silk round the masking tape.



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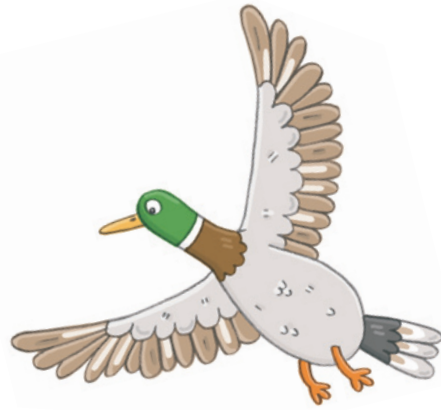


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## Games and Activities

### A collection of feathers

Most people collect something. It could be anything from fossils to football programmes. So, why not make a collection of feathers? Canal towpaths and riverbanks are a great place to look for them.



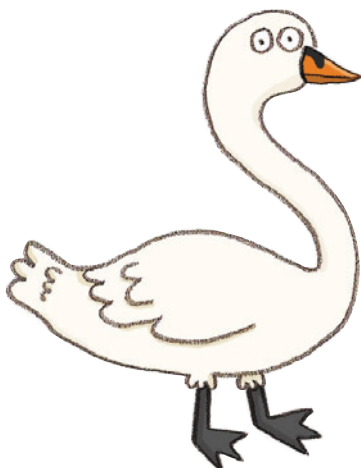
#### What to do

-  Go for a walk along a towpath and collect different feathers
-  Identify the feathers and the birds they came from using books
-  Display the feather by fastening the base of the feathers on to card with sticky tape
-  Now label them, noting which bird the feathers came from, where you found it and when
-  Don't forget to give your museum a name!



#### TOP TIP

Offer your 'museum' to a local primary school and perhaps help young children make a collection.



**NEXT STEP**  
Don't forget to place any labels at the right height for young children.

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# Games and Activities

## Play hopscotch

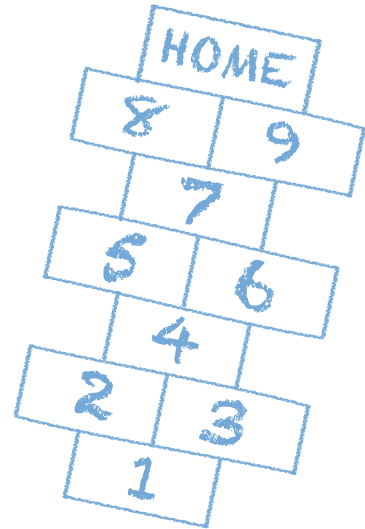
Hopscotch was a favourite game with boaters' children because they could play it on the towpath when the boat was tied up for the night.

### You will need

A stick of chalk; a pebble or coin

### How to play

- With the chalk, mark out a 'court' on the ground and number the squares. The top square is labelled 'home'
- The first player tosses a pebble into the first square. The marker must land completely in the square without touching a line or bouncing out
- The player hops through the course skipping the square with the marker in it
- Single squares must be hopped on one foot. Double squares must be straddled with the left foot in the left square and the right foot landing in the right square
- When you reach 'home' you turn round and return through the course in the right order i.e. 9, 8, 7 etc. When you reach the square with the marker you must pick it up and continue on the course without touching a line or stepping into another square
- The person who completes the course in the quickest time wins.



### TOP TIP

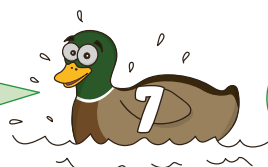
Did you know that the Romans played hopscotch? Today, it is played all over the world.



### NEXT STEP

Organise a hopscotch tournament for your Patrol. The winner is the first person to complete the course successfully in the fastest time!

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## Games and Activities



### Cook up some chutney

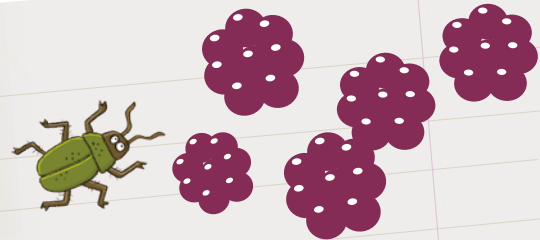
With the coming of the canals, came new foods imported from other countries. By the late 1700s, ready-mixed curry powder was on sale and ketchup, originally from India, was made in factories like the HP sauce factory in Birmingham.



In autumn, wild blackberries are plentiful along towpaths. Pick them to make this delicious spicy blackberry chutney.

#### You will need

- 500 g blackberries
- 140 g caster sugar
- 140 g chopped red onions
- 3 tablespoons of grated fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons of French mustard
- 150 ml white wine vinegar

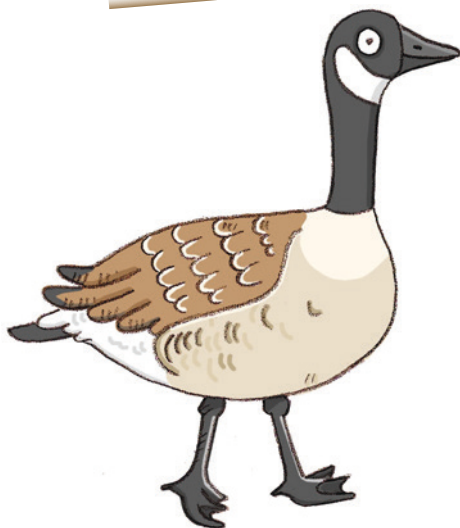


#### To make

- Put all the ingredients except the vinegar into a large saucepan
- Stir over a medium heat until the blackberries soften. Season with salt and pepper
- Add the vinegar and simmer the mixture uncovered for 10 minutes until no longer sloppy. Cool, put into sterilised jars and seal.

#### TOP TIP

This chutney is great in cheese sandwiches!



#### NEXT STEP

Design labels and cover the lid with circles of patterned fabric. They'll make great gifts!

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# Games and Activities

## A map in a matchbox

All good Scouts and Guides can read maps - but how about making a map? Try making this map in a matchbox.

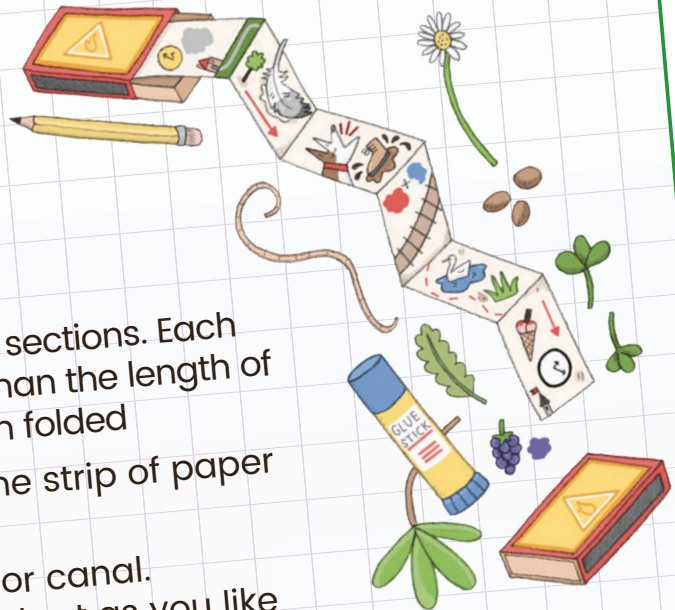


### You will need

- ✿ An empty matchbox
- ✿ A strip of paper just wide enough to fit into a matchbox and about six times longer
- ✿ A pencil and felt tips

### What to do

- 1 Divide the strip of paper into equal sections. Each section should be slightly shorter than the length of the box so that it will fit inside when folded
- 2 Using the lines as a guide, fold the strip of paper into a concertina
- 3 Decide on a length of riverbank or canal. Remember it can be as long or short as you like - and carefully mark on the features you think are important. For example you may like to mark wild flowers, or canal features such as signs, bollards, locks and bridges. It doesn't even have to be features - it could be smells or sounds! How about the smell of cooking on a narrowboat or the sound of water trickling through a lock gate?
- 4 Draw and colour pictures and write instructions in each section. Put the map into its box.



**TOP TIP**  
Think about different viewpoints - for example a duck's eye view!

**NEXT STEP**  
Test your map on your Patrol! Can they find the features you have marked?

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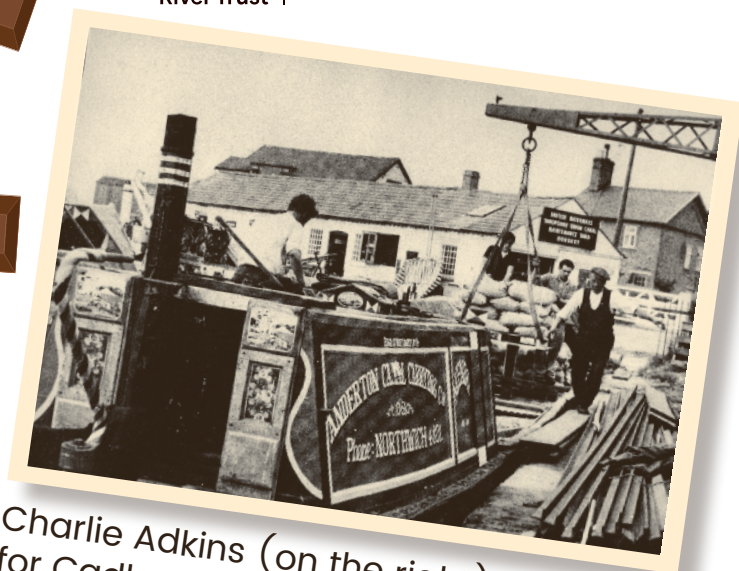


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# History

## Chocolate spiders

Chocolate 'crumb' was imported by ship into Gloucester and Liverpool Docks from the Caribbean. From there it was transferred on to canal boats and delivered to Cadbury's in Bournville, Birmingham. Some seniors still remember that when they were young, passing boaters gave them chocolate crumb to eat!



Charlie Adkins (on the right) worked for Cadbury's. He was known as Chocolate Charlie.

### Try making these scrumptious chocolate spiders.

#### You will need

- 1 packet of ready-to-serve fried noodles (available from supermarkets)
- 2 tablespoons of crunchy peanut butter
- 200g milk chocolate
- Greaseproof paper

#### To make

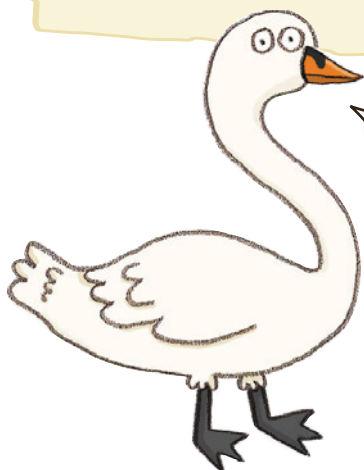
- Heat the chocolate and peanut butter together in a bowl over simmering water, or microwave for 60 seconds on high.
- Mix to a smooth paste.
- Add the noodles and coat with the chocolate mixture.
- Put small spoonfuls on to greaseproof paper.
- Put in the fridge until set. Yum!

#### TOP TIP

Don't forget to use crunchy peanut butter - not the smooth type.

#### NEXT STEP

Chocolate spiders make great gifts - if you haven't eaten them all first!



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# History

## Knit a hood

In the days when canals were used for delivering goods all over the country, boaters were out in all weathers. Girls and women wore elaborate bonnets to keep the hot sun off their face and neck, men and young lads wore caps, and children wore homemade hats to keep them warm and dry in winter.



A Christening party, 1910. All the women are wearing traditional black bonnets.



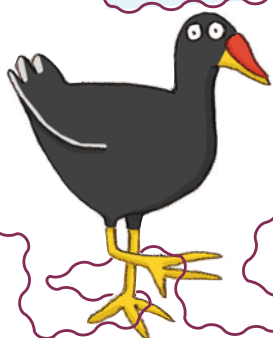
### You will need

- 1 ball of wool,
- 15 mm knitting needles



### What to do

- Cast on 24 stitches
- \*Knit 4, slip 3rd stitch over 4th stitch, knit to last 2 stitches, slip previous stitch over, knit 2. /knit row \*
- Repeat \* to \* until last 6 stitches
- Knit 2, knit 2 together, knit 2
- Knit row
- Knit 1, knit 3 together, knit 1
- Knit row
- Knit 3 together
- Repeat for the second triangle
- Place triangle 1 on top of triangle 2 and join the seam to make a hood.



**TOP TIP**  
Look for cheap knitting needles and wool in your local charity shop.

**NEXT STEP**  
Challenge your Patrol to make the funkiest hood by mixing different colours and types of wool.

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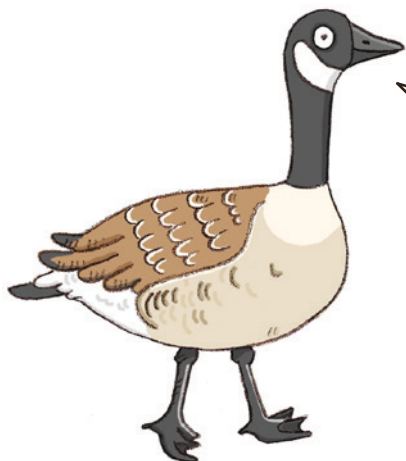
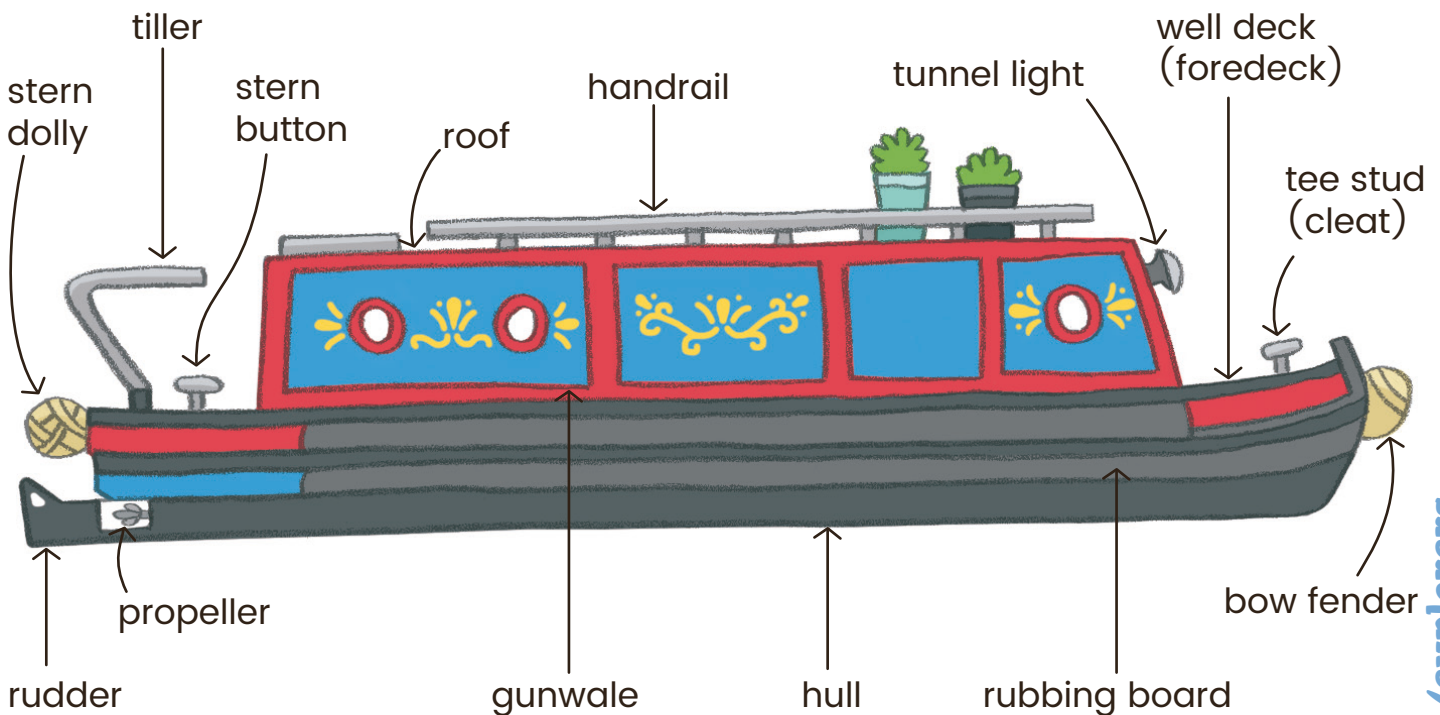
# History

## Learn the language of narrowboats

Narrowboats are the workhorses of the canals. They were 70 feet/21m long and 7 feet/2m wide. They could carry loads of 30 tonnes and were designed to fit the narrow canals.



The motorboat 'Ian': one of the Samuel Barlow Coal Co. boats.



**TOP TIP**  
You'll see narrowboats on canals and rivers but not at sea. One large wave would overturn them.

**NEXT STEP**  
Go for a walk along the towpath and when you spot a narrowboat see how many parts you can remember.

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## History

### Hot cakes!

Cooking aboard a narrowboat was a bit like cooking at camp. Meals had to be nutritious but made with the minimum of equipment. For example, stews were made in one pot that simmered away while the boaters worked. These oatcakes could be made on top of the tiny stove in the cabin. They were cheap to make and filling too.



Mrs Skinner prepares a meal in the cabin of a narrowboat, 1950.

### You will need

- ✿ 1 cup of medium oatmeal
- ✿ A large pinch of salt
- ✿ 1 tablespoon of melted dripping or lard
- ✿ 1 cup of boiling water
- ✿ A bowl and a thick frying pan or griddle.

### What to do

- ✿ Put the oatmeal in the bowl and add the salt and dripping or lard
- ✿ Now add the boiling water, mix everything together and knead into a ball
- ✿ Break off pieces the size of an egg.
- ✿ Flatten with the palm of your hand to about 5mm thick
- ✿ Heat the frying pan or griddle and bake slowly on both sides over a low flame until crisp.



### TOP TIP

Oatcakes are delicious spread with butter and jam or marmalade. Yum!



### NEXT STEP

Why not bake oatcakes on top of a camping stove at your next Patrol camping trip?

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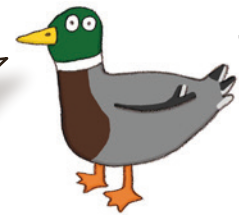


## Wildlife

### Feed the ducks

We all love to feed the ducks but did you know that bread – especially white bread – is BAD for them?

Like you, we need a healthy diet.



A family feeding the ducks

Try:

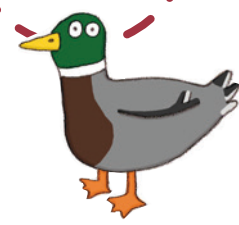
Grain and birdseed



Chopped vegetable peelings



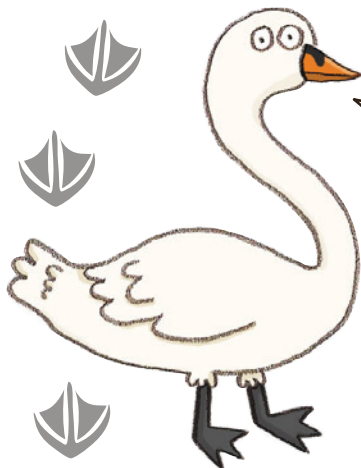
Porridge oats



Defrosted peas



Chopped lettuce



**TOP TIP**  
Don't follow the crowds, spread the love and visit a new family of ducks who may need a new friend.

**NEXT STEP**  
Try copying a duck's funny little waddle! You should flap your arms and keep your feet flat. You're not allowed to bend your knees!

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# Wildlife



## Canal corridors

Canals are man-made wildlife corridors which means that plants, fish and other creatures make their way along from one place to another.



The Llangollen canal



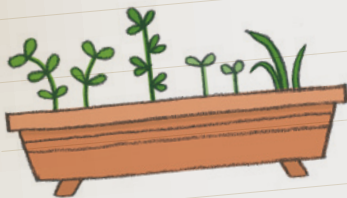
Try this experiment to find which plants 'travel' easily.



### What to do



- 1 Put on wellies and go for a muddy walk along the towpath
- 2 When you get back, scrape the soil off your boots into a flat box or an old seed tray
- 3 Keep the soil damp and watch what starts to grow
- 4 Which plants have you 'spread'? Identify them using illustrations and books.



### TOP TIP

'The Woodland Walks: A Guide to Trees and Wildflowers' by Charlotte Voake published by Eden Project Books is a great book for identifying plants and trees.



### NEXT STEP

Be inspired by Charlotte Voake's illustrations. Why not make an illustrated guide to the plants you find along your local canal or river bank?

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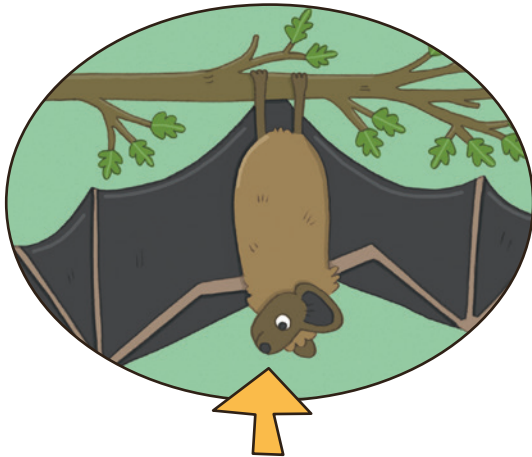
# Wildlife

## Go on a bat hunt

Canal towpaths are great places for spotting bats, especially Pipistrelle, Daubenton's and Noctule bats.



Daubenton's bats love living under canal bridges and tunnels. They feed on water-loving insects using their hairy feet to scoop them up from the surface of the water.



Pipistrelles are our smallest bats and the one you are most likely to see. They are about the size of a ping-pong ball. Like all bats, they send out high-pitched sounds that bounce or echo back and tell them where their prey is.



Noctule bats are our biggest bats – but they could still fit into the palm of your hand. They like to live and hibernate in old woodpecker holes in trees and feed on moths, beetles, flying ants and mayflies. Noctule bats can fly at speeds up to 50 mph!

### TOP TIP

Bats are nocturnal so the best time to spot them is dusk when they wake up and fly out to catch their fave food – moths, midges and mosquitoes.



### NEXT STEP

Find out more about bats log on to [bats.org.uk/about-bats/fun-facts-about-bats](http://bats.org.uk/about-bats/fun-facts-about-bats) and/or [bats.org.uk/pages/uk\\_bats.html](http://bats.org.uk/pages/uk_bats.html)

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## Two best bugs

Canals and rivers are great places to spot two of Britain's most beautiful insects – dragonflies and damselflies.



Common Blue Damselfly

**Damselflies** are smaller and more delicate than dragonflies. A rare type of blue damselfly has recently reappeared in Britain. 50 years ago, its only breeding site was washed away in floods.

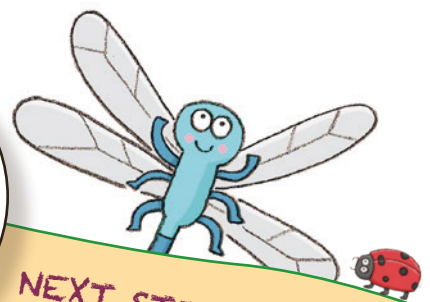


Emperor Dragonfly

**Dragonflies** may look beautiful but they are deadly predators! They feed on flying insects and their large eyes enable them to see backwards, forwards and sideways. They can hover, fly fast and change direction quickly so their prey hasn't much chance of escape.

### TOP TIP

Small dragonflies and damselflies look very similar. How can you tell the difference? Damselflies hold their wings close to their bodies when resting whereas dragonflies hold their wings horizontally.



### NEXT STEP

To find out more go to The British Dragonfly Society website [www.british-dragonflies.org.uk](http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk)

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## Water Safety

### Learn to throw a rope



Every year 400 people drown in the UK so it's vital to learn what to do if someone falls in.



#### You will need

A length of rope about five metres long (a washing line is perfect)

#### What to do

- 1 Coil the rope, hold one end without tying it to yourself, and throw it towards the person in the water.
- 2 Sit down/get low down to the ground so that the person in the water doesn't pull you in.

#### TOP TIP

Carry a mobile phone when going on waterways. Learn how to make an emergency call and how to ask for help.



#### NEXT STEP

Some Canal & River Trust sites have water safety boxes available for loan, if you can collect them. Contact the education co-ordinators for more information at [explorers@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:explorers@canalrivertrust.org.uk)

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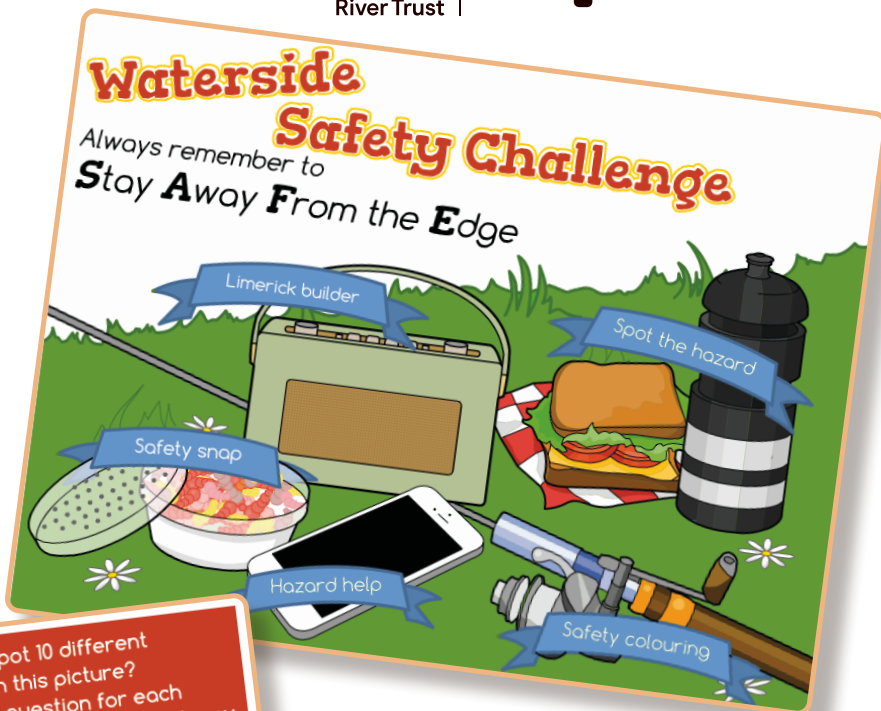
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# Water Safety

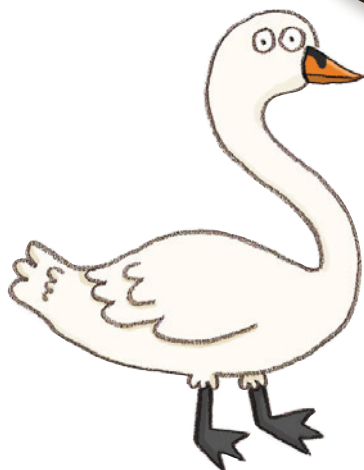
## Hidden hazards

Visit the Explorers website and take part in our Waterside Safety Challenge.



Play Spot the Hazard and answer a question about each hazard you find to discover how much you know about water safety [canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/waterside-safety-challenge](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/waterside-safety-challenge)

**TOP TIP**  
Always remember to stay **SAFE** near water  
**Stay Away From the Edge.**



**NEXT STEP**  
Younger children are not always aware of the hidden dangers at the waterside. With your group design a poster to explain the hidden dangers to them. The poster must have the **SAFE** message, identify some of the hidden dangers and show what type of water it is e.g. a canal, river, reservoir, lake etc.

Remember the **SAFE** message:  
**Stay Away From the Edge**



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## Water Safety

### How to steer a boat

Going on a canal or river holiday?  
Learn how to steer a boat without  
bumping into banks and other boats!



## SIX THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE WATERWAYS



- Boats keep to the right on canals and rivers. That's the opposite of cars on roads
- The maximum speed on canals is 4 miles an hour. You can go a bit faster on rivers. Don't forget the wind and currents will affect your steering
- In narrowboats, you push the tiller the opposite way you want to go. In cruisers, you turn the wheel the way you want to go
- When you come to locks, you'll have to jump out and help adults open them
- You might have to go through dark tunnels and open swing bridges too
- At the end of the day, you'll need to tie up your boat. Otherwise you will drift off!

### NEXT STEP

Go to the Canal & River Explorers website and test your steering skills with the 'Boat Afloat' game.



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# Water Safety

## Water safety workshop

Learning about water safety is very important. Canal & River Trust volunteers do a great job in helping to teach young people about keeping safe near water.



Use the Explorers online enquiry form to see if we have a team of volunteers nearby that can visit your group to run a water safety workshop.

**Step 1** Go to [canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers)



**Step 2** Click on **Group Leaders**



**Step 3** Click 'book a visit' and complete the enquiry form

Enquiry form fields including: Title, First Name, Last Name, Email address, Telephone, Postcode, School or Group Name, School or Group Type, Street Address, Town / City, Country, Postcode. Includes a 'We offer' section with checkboxes for Watercress visit, Autumn visit, Classroom or Clubhouse visit, Water safety assembly, Water safety lesson, and Water workshop. Also includes a 'Sign Up' button.



**TOP TIP**  
Don't forget to confirm with your Patrol Leader first!

**NEXT STEP**  
Go online and send away for FREE water safety booklets for your Patrol.



Remember the **SAFE** message: **Stay Away From the Edge**

**Leaders:** for advice on how to plan a visit go to



## Out and About

### Towpath trails

Before canals were built, goods were delivered by horse and cart. Journeys were slow, rough and dangerous. When canals were built, boats delivered goods more safely and journeys took days rather than weeks. The boats were towed by horses along towpaths, and often led by the boater's children.

### Take a walk along a towpath near you.

How many of these things can you spot?



1  Bollards to tie up boats



2  Grooves worn by towing ropes on tunnel walls or the top of canal bridges.



3  Heel grips so that horses didn't slip.



4  Old signposts to other places along canals.



5  Canal bridges



6  Locks which allow boats to go up or downhill.



8  Canal-side pubs where boaters once met to buy food and swap gossip.



7  Narrowboats specially designed to travel on canals.



**TOP TIP**  
If you like doing trails why not make your own by using the Explorers Trail Builder [canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/build-a-trail](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers/build-a-trail).

**NEXT STEP**  
Share your trail with another group.

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## Out and About

### Adopt a canal

Why not work with your Patrol to adopt a canal or river near you? The aim is to care for a stretch of waterway and make a difference to your community.



#### Adopting a canal could include:

- ✿ Keeping the canal and towpath clean, smart and clear of obstructions
- ✿ Recording and improving wildlife habitats
- ✿ Promoting the waterways to other local people
- ✿ Running events and guided walks
- ✿ Creating a community garden.

#### TOP TIP

If you're a Scout group go to [www.amillionhands.org.uk](http://www.amillionhands.org.uk) to find out more about Pocket Adoptions.



#### NEXT STEP

Email [volunteer@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@canalrivertrust.org.uk) for further information.

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# Out and About

## Gone fishing



Our canals and rivers teem with a wide variety of fish. It's not surprising that fishing is one of Britain's most popular outdoor activities.

**These fish are especially popular with anglers. How many can you identify?**



Clue: one of our largest fish. It lurks in dark pools and ambushes fish, ducklings, frogs and grass snakes.



Clue: this is anglers' most popular fish. Maybe because they are large, easy to catch and fight hard.



Clue: anglers love this fish because it puts up a good fight.



Clue: this fish has a spiky dorsal fin and pointed gills, so they have to be handled carefully.



Clue: this fish can be found on every canal that supports fish life.



Clue: this fish takes its name from the sensitive barbels found on its under-slung mouth.



**NEXT STEP**  
The Canal & River Trust website has lots of information on the fish in our waterways. Why not use it to invent a fishy game?

Answers: 1 pike; 2 chub; 3 roach; 4 carp; 5 perch; 6 barbel



**TOP TIP**  
Fancy going fishing? Visit the Canal & River Trust website and search for a place to fish. Remember, anyone over 12 will need a rod licence to go fishing.



Remember the **SAFE** message: **Stay Away From the Edge**



**Leaders:** for advice on how to plan a visit go to

canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers



## Out and About

### Paddle power!

Canoes have been used as a way of getting around for thousands of years. If you fancy seeing the waterways using people power rather than on a motor boat, why not get paddling? Nearly two million people already go canoeing in Britain and your Patrol could join them.



### Plan a canoe trip for your Patrol

1. Look for a good place for a canoe trip online at [canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://canalrivertrust.org.uk) or [britishcanoeing.org.uk](http://britishcanoeing.org.uk)
2. Find a coach or canoe club
3. Check what safety equipment you need
4. Work out how much it will cost
5. Complete booking forms and paperwork with your Patrol leader
6. Get paddling!



#### TOP TIP

Make sure you canoe with someone experienced as water can be dangerous.



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**NEXT STEP**  
We're creating England's first ever coast to coast canoe trail. The Desmond Family Canoe Trail will stretch 150 miles connecting Liverpool to Goole along the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and Aire & Calder Navigation. Find out how you can get involved on the Canal & River Trust website.



	Out and About	
	Wildlife	
	Water Safety	
	History	
	Games and Activities	
	Arts and Crafts	
Leader's signature	Activity	Date

## Canal & River Challenge Badge Record

### How to earn your badge

You must complete 1 activity from each of the 6 sections:

- **Arts and Crafts**
- **Games and Activities**
- **History**
- **Water Safety**
- **Wildlife**
- **Out and About**

Each time you complete an activity fill in the Canal & River Challenge Badge record card and ask your leader to sign it. When you have completed 6 activities ask your leader to fill in the badge order form (see page 2) and either post or email it to us.



**Explorers**

## Canal & River Challenge Badge



Name .....

Unit .....

County .....

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