

Name of habitat:

Hedgerows and trees



What is it?

Canal hedgerows are made up of many different plants which were first planted when canals were built over 200 years ago. The wide-ranging mix of plants in a hedge provides food and shelter for many different species of animals and birds.

How do I create this?

You could plant a selection of native plants or shrubs in your chosen area for local wildlife to use for food.

Conditions found here:

Thick hedges and trees provide good, shady coverage for the wildlife that chooses to live here. They also provide a plentiful supply of food in the form of berries and flowering plants.

What lives here?

Bees, caterpillars and birds are just a few of the creatures that you can expect to find in this habitat. Dormice can also be found here, feeding on flowers, fruits and nuts often found in hedgerows.

Useful links

Here's some ideas on planting a wildlife hedge in your garden.



Key words

Shelter: a place or structure that gives protection against weather or danger

Habitat: the natural environment of an animal or plant



Name of habitat:

Grassland (or towpath)

What is it?

This is the grassy path alongside the canal. Towpaths were originally built for horses to walk along when pulling the canal boats. Today they are used as footpaths for people to enjoy exploring the canal network.

How do I create this?

To recreate this habitat you can plant your own grassland and wildflower patch.

Conditions found here:

Long stretches of grass with flowering plants. The verges are the places where lots of different plants including wildflowers and grasses grow. The plants provide food – seeds for birds and nectar for insects that live here.

What lives here?

Bees, snails and butterflies can be found here. Towpath habitats are also home to wood mice and voles.

Useful links

Here are some ideas for creating a mini wildlife meadow.



Key words

Verge: the border or edge of something

Habitat: the natural environment of an animal or plant



Name of habitat:

Marginal Fringe



What is it?

This is the area at the edge of the water.

How do I create this?

With the help of an adult you can make your own marginal fringe area by creating a bog garden using pond liner with soil on top. This can also be recreated using a fish tank or washing up bowl. Rushes and reeds can be planted to make it look like a marginal fringe habitat.

Conditions found here:

This is the shallow part of the canal, where you can find reed beds growing out of the water. Reeds provide cover for all kinds of wildlife.

What lives here?

You will find many creatures living in the plants around the water's edge, including: water birds (such as coots, ducks and swans) damselflies and even grass snakes. The marginal fringe is also home to one of our most endangered species, the water vole. Slow-moving, deep water such as canals suit water voles, who do not have webbed feet like most other water-dwelling animals.

Useful links

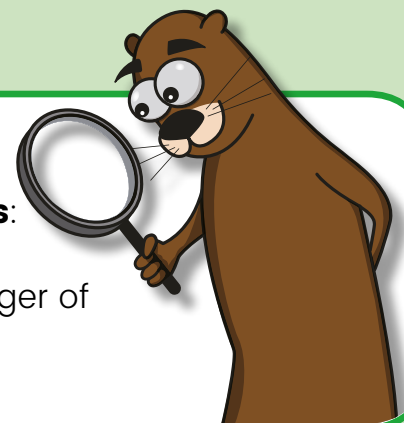
Find out how to build a bog garden.



Key words

Endangered species:

a species of plant or animal that is in danger of becoming extinct



Name of habitat:

Open water



What is it?

The open water habitat refers to the main channel of deep water in the canal. Canals may look like rivers but the main difference is that canals are man-made. They were created hundreds of years ago to transport cargo from one location to another – long before we began using lorries and containers for this job.

How do I create this?

To create a similar habitat, a pond or large container sunk into the ground can be used. Instead of fish, a range of plants can be added to attract local wildlife, including pond weeds and water lilies.

Conditions found here:

Deep, slow-moving water.

What lives here?

Here you will find water beetles and water boatmen above the water and fish such as perch in the deep water. In the mud at the bottom of the canal you can expect to find mussels and invertebrates.

Useful links

Find out how to build a [mini wildlife pond](#)



Photo credit: Jack Perks

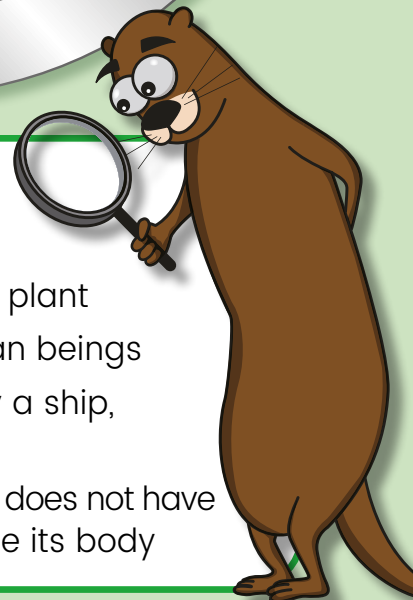
Key words

Habitat: the natural environment of an animal or plant

Man-made: made by human beings

Cargo: the goods carried by a ship, aeroplane or other vehicle

Invertebrates: an animal that does not have a backbone or skeleton inside its body



Name of habitat:

Scrubland  



What is it?

This is the wild, dense, over-grown area on the sides of a canal or river.

How do I create this?

To create a scrubland environment, allow your chosen area to grow wild to attract the type of wildlife usually found in this habitat.

Conditions found here:

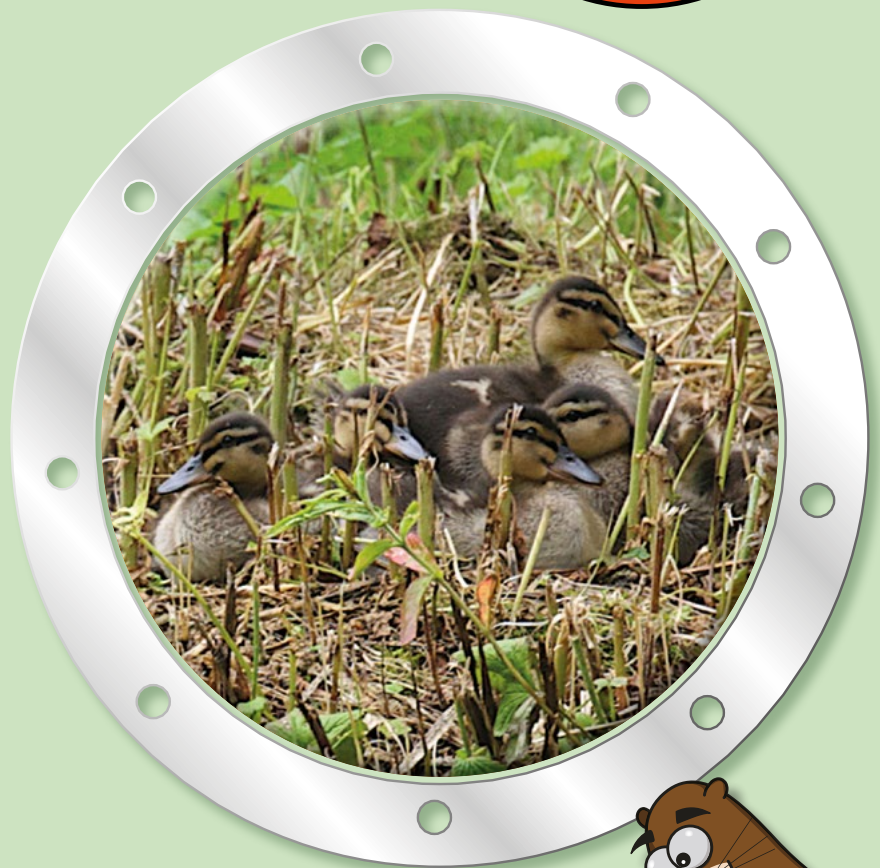
Overgrown plant life make this area difficult for humans to access but an effective shelter for a wide range of wildlife. Bushes, shrubs and mature trees can be found here and a variety of different plants.

What lives here?

The shaded safety of the thick undergrowth provides a home to creatures which rely on dense vegetation for their protection. These include badgers, hedgehogs and grass snakes (which are equally happy on land and in water). If you're particularly lucky you might spot an otter, although they are very timid and rarely seen by humans.

Useful links

Find out how to make the perfect home for hedgehogs in your garden.



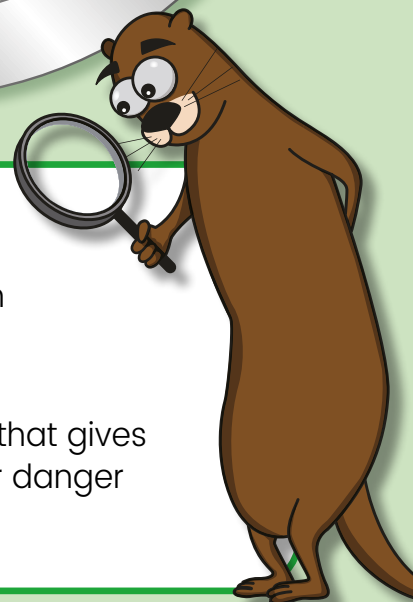
Key words

Dense: very close together, with little space in between

Opposite: facing

Shelter: a place or structure that gives protection against weather or danger

Mature: fully grown



Name of habitat:

Buildings



What is it?

Man-made structures found along canal and river banks.

How do I create this?

Bird boxes and bug hotels can be added to an outside space to recreate a habitat used by animals which make our waterways their home.

Conditions found here:

Built to be water tight, most man-made buildings will offer a dry and sheltered environment for its occupants.

What lives here?

Here you can find lichens, invertebrates and roosting birds. Many of our 200-year-old tunnels, bridges and buildings are also home to bats who have been forced to seek other roosting sites now that much of our forest land has been cut down.

Useful links

Try making this simple [bug hotel](#)



Key words

Invertebrates:

an animal that does not have a backbone or skeleton inside its body

