



PRESS RELEASE

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*****B-roll, MP3 nature sounds and high-res images available here:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/e0vftbj6mlxkt1g/AACHriWTzm2OvelGzEwFdr1Ra?dl=0>***

GRANDPARENTS PUTTING THEIR GRANDCHILDREN TO SHAME AS GENERATIONAL-GAP IN NATURE KNOWLEDGE REVEALED

- 25% of parents cannot identify the sound a duck makes
- Nearly a third of parents rely on internet to educate their children on natural world
- Public encouraged to 'Stop, Look and Listen' and take part in canal charity's annual Great Nature Watch to test their own nature know-how (1)

Nature surrounds us and can be seen everywhere from the rural countryside to busy, urban areas. As the Canal & River Trust launches its annual Great Nature Watch campaign, it is calling for people to 'Stop, Look and Listen' to what's happening around them, following survey results which show surprising gaps in people's nature knowledge.

This year the Trust has worked with the renowned Wildlife Sound Recording Society (WSRS) to create a series of nature noises and challenge people to identify them as part of its *Wildlife Ear and Eye Q test*⁽¹⁾. Surveying toddlers to OAPs, the results showed that 25% of parents and 30% of children could not identify the sound a duck makes, plus 23% of parents and nearly a third of children thought that ducks have yellow feathers, perhaps the result of children's TV programmes such as Peppa Pig. (2)

Findings also show that 76% of parents believe that they are less knowledgeable about nature than the previous generation with 68% of parents also believing that their children are less knowledgeable about nature than they were at their age. When put to the test the gap in wildlife knowledge between parents and their children is actually surprisingly close, however the gap between grandparents and their adult children and grandchildren is much bigger.

In a bid to stem this decline of wildlife knowledge, the Trust has created an interactive guide and test on its website with audio and images to learn about some of the wildlife visitors can find along its 2,000 miles of waterways.

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Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Canal & River Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

Dr Mark Robinson, national ecologist for the Canal & River Trust, says: “It’s a shame to see that peoples knowledge of nature is declining, but this can easily be reversed. Did you know that a blackbird’s song mimics its surrounding noise, or could you identify the sound a fox makes? Just step outside your front door, stop, look and listen, and you can hear such a variety of nature sounds.”

Additional results from the Ear and Eye Q test show that 63% of parents and 69% of their kids incorrectly believe that owls can rotate their head 360 degrees, while both parents and their kids (44% & 54%) thought that goldfish have a mere 3 second memory. In fact goldfish have the ability to store information for up to five months!

Richard Beard from the Wildlife Sound Recording Society, says: ‘It’s great to be working with the Canal & River Trust on such an interesting topic. At the society we have been recording the sounds of nature for years, from the dawn chorus to the elusive otter. To be able to share these with the British public, as well as encourage everyone to listen to their surrounding nature, is fantastic.”

Dr Mark Robinson continues: “Canals and rivers provide a fantastic nature reserve right on your doorstep and they’re free. By taking part in our Great Nature Watch you can not only increase your own nature know-how by spotting and listening to a wide variety of wildlife but help us monitor the numbers of species living on our waterways, which is essential when looking after and maintaining a 200 year old part of our industrial history.”

Wildlife sightings can be submitted by downloading the Trust’s free mobile app: eNatureWatch (or search Canal & River Trust in the Apple App Store /Google Play Store). Anyone can take part and record as many sightings as they like between now and the end of September.

Please visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/great-nature-watch for more details and to test your own nature knowledge or join in the conversation on Twitter at #greatnaturewatch

ENDS

For b-roll footage, media enquiries, interviews and images please contact:
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Notes to editors:

The Canal & River Trust is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales, caring for the nation’s third largest collection of listed structures, as well as museums, archives, and hundreds of important wildlife sites.

We believe that *living waterways transform places and enrich lives* and our role is to make sure there is always a place on your doorstep where you can escape the pressures of everyday life, stretch your legs and simply feel closer to nature.

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk / @CanalRiverTrust / @crtcomms

(1) Wildlife Ear & Eye Q Research

The research for Canal & River Trust was carried out online by Opinion Matters between 21/01/16 and 25/01/16 amongst a panel resulting in 2,024 UK adult respondents, 1,007 children aged between 5-16 and 1,007 parents of children aged between 5-16.

All research conducted adheres to the MRS Codes of Conduct (2010) in the UK and ICC/ESOMAR World Research Guidelines. Opinion Matters is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and is fully compliant with the Data Protection Act (1998).

Further findings from the Wildlife Ear & Eye Q Research:

<p>Practically the same % of parents and children thought owls could turn their heads 360 degrees (they can't turn it 360 degrees but can swivel it 270 degrees):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents – 62.5% true • Children – 69.40% true • UK adults – 56% true
<p>There's just a 10% difference in the number of parents and children who thought a goldfish had a three second memory (in fact goldfish can recall information for up to 5 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents – 44.10% true • Children - 54.30% true • UK adults – 38.20% true
<p>There's only just over a 5% difference in the number of parents and children who guessed correctly that kangaroos can box (they leap up to 25ft in a single bound and won't hesitate to use their formidable leg strength in a fight during a 'boxing' bout):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents – 61.20% true • Children – 55.20% true • UK adults – 60.90 true
<p>A staggering 50% of children thought ostriches bury their heads in the sand when scared but so did their parents! (they don't, if they did they wouldn't be able to breathe):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents – 49.7% true • Children – 50% true • UK adults – 44.5% true
<p><u>UK adults</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One fifth of the UK male population never Stop, Look and Listen to nature
<p><u>Parents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents agree (more than 70%) that their children are less knowledgeable than they were at their age • Less than half of all parents educate their children on the natural world first hand by taking them to their local park or canal/river • A third of parents use the internet instead to educate their children
<p><u>Children</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than a third of children surveyed believed ducks had yellow feathers which could be blamed on youngsters learning about nature from programmes like Peppa Pig as opposed to real life.

- A fifth of kids thought toads could give you warts like in fairy tales but hilariously so did 10% of the UK adult population

The Wildlife Sound Recording Society

The Wildlife Sound Recording Society was founded in 1968 and is the oldest and largest recording society in the world. The core aim of the society is to encourage participation in the collection of the wonderful sounds of the natural world and help promote the need to understand their meanings. The Society's president is the acclaimed wildlife sound recordist Chris Watson. Chris is well-known across the world for his recordings which have featured in many natural history programmes on radio and television including the BBC's series 'Frozen Planet' with David Attenborough which won a BAFTA Award for 'Best Factual Sound' (2012).

NOTICE RELATING TO THE USE OF THE SUPPLIED RECORDING:

'This is a 'supplied recording' provided to you by Canal and River Trust solely for the purpose of the nature know-how phone-in programmes for your listeners. You will inform your listeners that the recordings are supplied by the Canal and River Trust who have obtained them from a member of the Wildlife Sound Recording Society (WSRS), for the purpose of the Great Nature Watch campaign of The Canal and River Trust in 2016. The supplied recordings should not be used by you for any purpose other than as specified in this notice and listeners must not be charged for listening to the supplied recordings. Not complying with this notice may give rise to a breach of the intellectual property rights of the WSRS member (who we acknowledge as the originator of the supplied recordings), and we may hold you liable for any such breach if any claim is made against us by the WSRS member or any other persons able to validly claim that there has been an infringement of their intellectual property rights in the use of the supplied recordings.'