

# Droitwich Canals Restoration Reed Bed Creatures

## Introduction

This lesson introduces children to the creatures that depend upon the rare reed bed habitats found in the Droitwich canals.

**QCA Schemes of Work** [KS2 Science Unit 4b Habitats](#).

## Learning Objectives

To understand that living creatures depend on specific habitats.  
To understand that loss of habitats results in the loss of living creatures.

**National Curriculum** KS2 Sc2 5a, 5b, 5c

## Resources

Source sheets A, B & C.

## Key Vocabulary

Habitat, environment, rare, scarce, endangered, adaptation.

## Teaching Activities

**Introduction** Ask the children what animals, birds and insects might live in and around the canal. Introduce them to reed beds and explain what reeds were used for in the past and why it is important to keep the few reed beds that exist in Worcestershire.

**Activities** Print off copies of Source sheets A & B and cut out and separate the six descriptions from the six drawings. Explain that there are a number of endangered creatures that need the reed beds and show the colour pictures. Children should study the images carefully, then match the descriptions to the pictures and stick them alongside. This could be done as a whole class or small group activity.

Print off photos of the reed bed creatures from Source sheet C. (In a class of 30, issue 10 reed warblers, 6 reed buntings, 8 grass snakes, 4 water voles, 4 otters and 2 beetles.) Each child should have only one picture which is then stuck to the child's back.

Children must then find their own kind by asking questions based on the identifying features they have just learned e.g 'Do I have a black head and brown feathers?'

Stop the activity when all the children have found their own kind.

**Plenary** Discuss the distribution of creatures. Why are there fewer of some creatures and more of others? What would be the consequences of this if the reed beds disappeared? Which creatures could adapt and which would die out?

## Differentiation

This lesson has been designed for use with children in Years 3 and 4. Younger or less able pupils might be issued with copies of the pictures with the descriptions attached. Older or more able pupils might be asked to match up the descriptions on their own or in pairs.

## Cross-curricular

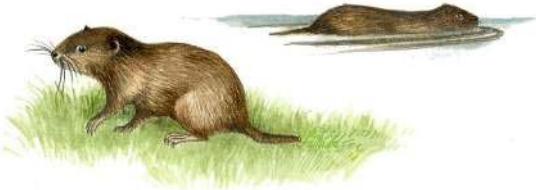
This lesson could be linked with work in ICT and art.

## Follow-up

Use the Internet to discover more about reed beds and the creatures that live there. Discuss the planned new reed beds and how these might help the displaced wildlife. Use the WOW website to discover more about [Water Voles](#), [Moorhens and Coots](#), and [Swans](#). Explore food chains by using the [Who eats Who?](#) lesson plans.



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Water Vole

I have a short hair-covered tail, a blunt, rounded nose, and a small chubby face with small ears and a rich chestnut-brown coat

I eat grasses, sedges and bark

I live in slow-flowing water where there are tall plants on the banks



Otter

I have a sleek, thick coat and a broad tail that helps me swim powerfully

I eat mainly fish, though sometimes I eat frogs and voles

I live in a 'holt' dug deep into the bank



Reed Beetle

I have two antennae

I have tough wing cases to protect my delicate wings

I must have reeds to live on

My young feed under the water on weed

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Reed Bunting



Water Vole



Reed Warbler



Otter



Grass Snake



Reed Beetle