

## PS5 - Ecology KS1 - 5 - 7



### What is the main task of this puzzle?

Will the squirrel or the snake reach the centre of the oak tree first?

#### Squirrels:

There are two types of squirrel in the UK, red squirrels and grey squirrels. Red squirrels are our native species and they have been pushed out by the introduction of grey squirrels and because their habitat is being destroyed. Now red squirrels are mostly found in Scotland and the north of England. Grey squirrels are larger and better at finding food and holding on to territory and they can be found pretty much everywhere.

You would find a squirrel in a tree because squirrels eat acorns and are frequently found near oak trees. They also eat other types of nuts, fungi, eggs, bark and flowers.

#### Snakes:

The snake in the picture might be a grass snake.

There are three types of snake found in the UK. They are the grass snake, the smooth snake and the adder. Only the last one has venom. You might find a grass snake in a tree because they are quite good climbers. A grass snake mainly eats frogs, sometimes fish and small mammals, it will also eat birds and birds eggs if it can.

So, while the squirrel might be trying to reach the acorns the snake might be after the bird!

### What are the other topics or tasks in the puzzle?

- There are many other animals hidden in the oak tree amongst the leaves. What are they? Butterfly, bird, bumblebee, ant, ladybird.

This is just a tiny fraction of the different types of animals that live in an oak tree. What would happen to the bird if the insects were removed? What would happen to the tree if there were too many squirrels?

- Under the oak tree there are some flowers growing. Can you match them to the larger flowers shown around the edge? What kinds of flowers are they?

From top left moving clockwise: daffodil, dandelion, buttercup, daisy. Dandelions, buttercups and daisies are all considered weeds. Despite having bright yellow flowers, dandelion leaves cut out light to the grass underneath and kill it, which is why they are so unpopular when they are in a lawn. When they make seeds they produce what is known as a dandelion clock.

Daisies come in all shapes and sizes but we know most about the common daisy which usually grows in lawns.

- Which animals in the picture can fly? Which animals have six legs?

Bugs which have six legs are called insects. A bug with more than six legs could be a spider, a centipede or a millipede.

## Where does it fit in the curriculum?

### England

2B Plants and animals in their local environment.  
2C Variation.

### Scotland

Sort living things into broad groups.  
Give the conditions needed by animals and plants in order to remain healthy.  
Recognise and name some common plants and animals found in the local environment.

### Northern Ireland

Interdependence - How plants and animals rely on each other within the natural world.  
Place - How place influences plant and animal life.  
Ways in which living things depend on and adapt to their environment.  
Movement and Energy - How and why people and animals move.

## Further information and links.

### Snakes:

More about the grass snake: <http://www.plantpress.com/wildlife/o95-grasssnake.php>

Videos of grass snakes, including an amazing one of how they can climb trees: [http://www.arkive.org/species/ARK/reptiles/Natrix\\_natrix/more\\_moving\\_images.html](http://www.arkive.org/species/ARK/reptiles/Natrix_natrix/more_moving_images.html)

More about adders: <http://www.wildlifebritain.com/theadder.php>

### Squirrels:

For lots of information about squirrels have a look at this webpage: <http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/resourcefiles/20040625132643Squirrels.doc>

The grey squirrel: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildfacts/factfiles/190.shtml>

### Other creatures:

All about ladybirds: [http://www.ladybird-survey.org/youth/ladybird\\_spotters.htm](http://www.ladybird-survey.org/youth/ladybird_spotters.htm)

Find out about insects and bugs, their habitat and how they fit into an ecosystem: [http://www.yptenc.org.uk/docs/factsheets/env\\_facts/minibeasts.html](http://www.yptenc.org.uk/docs/factsheets/env_facts/minibeasts.html)

### Oak trees:

Everything you wanted to know about oak trees and more: [http://www.arcytech.org/java/population/facts\\_oaks.html](http://www.arcytech.org/java/population/facts_oaks.html)

What lives in an oak tree? <http://www.icons.org.uk/theicons/collection/oak-tree/biography/life-in-the-oak-wood>

### Other information:

How to make a daisy chain: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/gardening/gardening\\_with\\_children/homegrownprojects\\_daisy.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/gardening/gardening_with_children/homegrownprojects_daisy.shtml)



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