

FAMILY QUEST

BALTIC

Explore the world beneath your feet! Find some soft earth, dig in the soil and look under rocks. What can you find? Write down, draw or record them in some way. Here are some examples to get you started:



Roots anchor plants into the soil, drawing water and nutrients up



Smooth newts are widespread across the UK and are often found in garden ponds ²

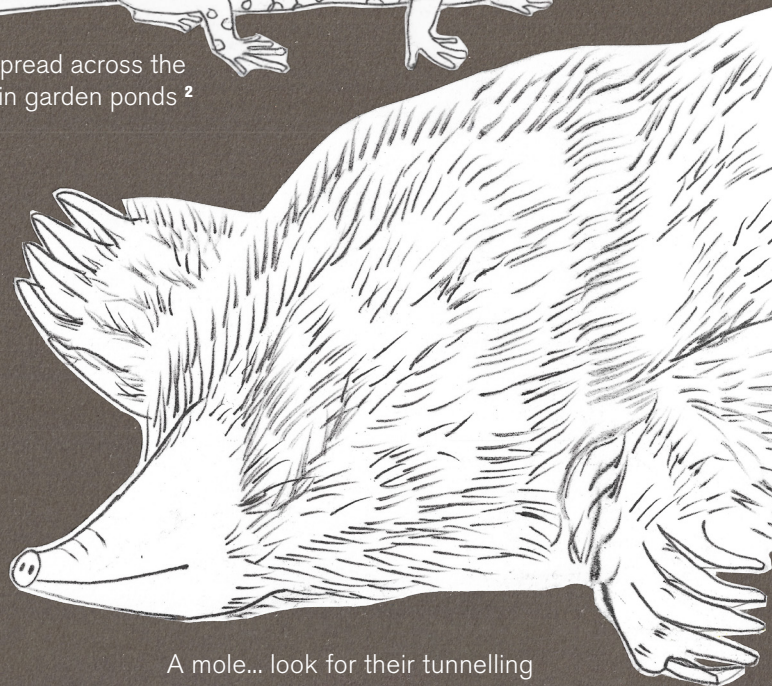
Woodlouse; they may look like insects, but in fact they're crustaceans and are related to crabs and lobsters! ¹



Grub or Pupae



Earthworm... they recycle nutrients and keep soil healthy



A mole... look for their tunnelling debris - little hills above ground.

A LOOK AT ANIMAL TRACKS

You will need:

- A sieve
- Thick paper
- Water
- Stick
- Paintbrush
- Runny glue
- Collected soil samples
- Paint in earthy colours (if you have any)

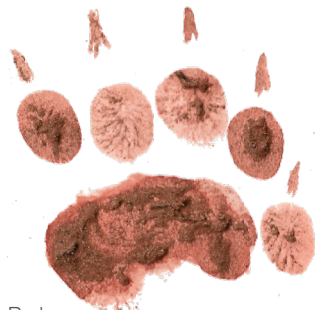
Collect soil samples whilst on a walk. Don't take too much - you will only need an egg cup full.

Sieve your soil sample to make it fine and smooth and put an amount the size of a sugar cube into a small bowl or empty carton. Add a drop of runny glue, and if you like, a drop of earthy coloured paint. You can make a number of colours or just one.

Use your fingertips, a stick and a paintbrush to recreate animal prints like these!



Blackbird



Badger



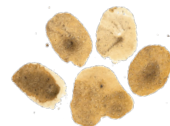
Hedgehog



Fox



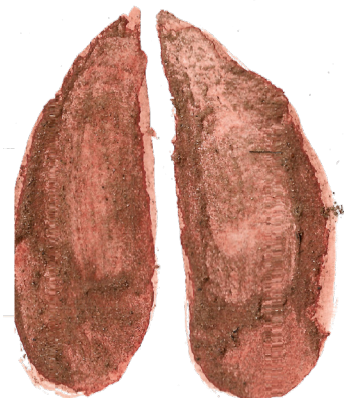
Dog



Mouse



Cat



Fallow Deer

The hedgehog is the UK's only spiny mammal. However over the last 20 years we have lost a third of their population.

Hedgehog footprints are hard to spot but quite distinctive in their long, narrow shape. They have three toes that point forward and two that go out to the sides.

Abel Rodríguez's studies teach us the natural cycle of the rainforest and its inhabitants, plants, animals, humans and other beings. He has produced detailed studies of the forest and illustrated the various seasons, showing how the habitat changes for the animals and other life there. How do the seasons affect animal habitats where you live?

Consider helping hedgehogs go about their mile-long, nightly journey for food by making sure they can get around where you live. If you have a garden with fencing around it and no gaps, remove the barrier to hedgehogs by creating a 13 x 13cm hole - big enough for the hedgehog to crawl through, but small enough that pets can't fit. If it's a wall, try removing a lower brick, or dig a small channel underneath. You can even get a sign to label your hedgehog highway and keep them shuffling & snuffling.



¹ To learn all you need to know about woodlice, go to: <http://bit.ly/Woodlouse>

² For more information on newts, visit: <http://bit.ly/BritishNewt>

³ Identify animal tracks you find here: <http://bit.ly/IdentifyTracks>

⁴ For more information, images and virtual tours about Abel Rodríguez, visit: <http://bit.ly/AbelRodriguez>

⁵ Link your garden with a hedgehog highway: <http://bit.ly/HedgehogHighway>

Artist credit: Natalie Frost. With thanks to Foundation Press and The Comfrey Project, who collaborated to create the typeface used in the titles of Family Quest.