

INSECTS DON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

NATURE & BIODIVERSITY

Nature is all around us and plays a vital role in our day to day lives. Our forests, soils, rivers and oceans, and the species that live within them, are essential to life – from the air we breathe to the food we eat. Urgent action is needed to help protect our natural world against the irreversible effects of climate change. The biggest cause of climate change is greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from human activity.

Our natural environment is made up of many different parts, including flora (plants) and fauna (animals), that interact with each other and the physical environment they live within. **Their relationship is known as an ecosystem** – and changing one part of it will lead to a change in another. We depend on natural ecosystems for a variety of reasons; they provide humans with resources to build prosperous economies and societies, and **are vital for our happiness, health, and wellbeing.**

Devon is home to a wide range of species and habitats of international importance including bogs, heaths, woodlands, grasslands, sea cliffs, dunes, estuaries, reefs and sea caves. The county is also a stronghold for rare species, such as the greater horseshoe bat, as well as species that are not found anywhere else in the world – **the Lundy Cabbage Flea Beetle for example!**

Did you know...?

There are currently **257,889** designated protected areas recorded around the world. These locations receive protection because of their natural, ecological or cultural importance.

Sadly, climate change together with other human activities, is resulting in the loss or migration of species, the loss of habitats, and **IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES** to our ecosystems, which will inevitably have impacts on human well-being too.

Between 1970 and 2016, the population of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish declined by an average of 68%. That's over two thirds in less than 50 years.

CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS



The Thelma Hulbert Gallery



THINK OF YOUR FAVOURITE WILD ANIMAL, BIRD, INSECT, OR PLANT...

We must also remember that to fight climate change, we need nature's help! As many of us know, our forests and oceans produce the oxygen we breathe, but if that weren't amazing enough, these natural assets can actually absorb some of the harmful carbon dioxide we produce, by capturing and storing it. These are known as 'carbon sinks'. Let's give a round of applause for these natural climate champions!

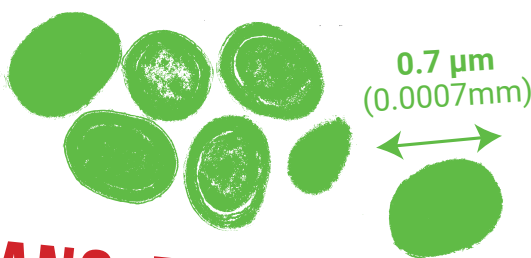
- What does their natural habitat look like?
- What does this species need to thrive?
- Is there anything you could do to help ensure it thrives?



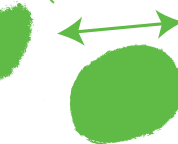
More than a fifth of the world's oxygen is produced in the Amazon Rainforest. One large tree can provide a whole day's supply of oxygen for up to four people.

FUN FACTS!

At least half of Earth's oxygen comes from the ocean, from plants and algae that can photosynthesize. One of them is the smallest photosynthetic organism on Earth but produces up to a fifth of all the oxygen in our entire biosphere!



0.7 µm
(0.0007mm)



0.7 µm
(0.0007mm)



Peatlands are a natural 'carbon sink' absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere and burying it in the soil. In Europe they lock up five times more carbon than forests.

AS HUMANS, THERE ARE MANY WAYS WE CAN HELP NATURE TO THRIVE.

Here are three simple things you can do to help:

GROW WILD:

Planting wildflowers or allowing a space to 'grow wild' provides vital resources to support a wide range of insects and other wildlife. This could be in a flowerpot, a flowerbed, or a section of your garden lawn. It doesn't matter what size your space is, there's always room for something to grow!

BECOME A CITIZEN SCIENTIST:

Many conservation organisations rely on data collected by members of the public to help them monitor and protect wildlife. The good thing is you don't need any specialist skills to get involved. Not only will you be contributing to the protection of nature, but you'll be learning about it too!

PLANT A TREE:

Organisations such as the Woodland Trust offer free trees for planting in your school, local community garden or land where you have permission. Not only is this good for nature, but it's good for your wellbeing too!

Useful Information

