

CASE STUDY

HOW CAN WE CONSERVE BIODIVERSITY?

Learners had noticed the first butterfly of the year in the school grounds. They were keen to discover what else lived there and to see if they could attract more animals such as the butterfly.

Learners, working in progression step 3, investigated the meaning of 'biodiversity' before assessing the biodiversity of their school grounds. The teacher had come across [The National Education Nature Park programme](#) from the Natural History Museum. Although this programme is for schools in England, the teacher felt that the process described as: Step 1: Getting to know your space, Step 2: Identifying opportunities, Step 3: Making decisions and Step 4: Making change happen, would be straightforward to follow across two school years.

Learners started by assessing the biodiversity of the school grounds in late spring taking photographs, making notes and most importantly identifying plants and animals in the space, as described in the activity. They studied leaf litter and identified many invertebrates. Learners worked in groups focussing on one area of the grounds. They produced spreadsheets of organisms they found. Learners repeated the process in autumn and compared the two spreadsheets.

Learners then brainstormed their ideas as to how biodiversity could be increased before making decisions as to how to do it in their area. They planned what to do and when to do it for maximum effect. Ideas that were implemented included:

- Turning off outside lights when not needed at night
- Planting some natural shrubs and wildflowers
- Building 'bug hotels' and adding large tree trunks to natural areas.

Some six months after completing their interventions, learners sampled the school grounds again. Pleasingly they increased biodiversity, the number of different species living in the area, by over 30%. This included increases in pollinator species and invertebrates.



Before the end of their restoration of the school grounds, learners completed the activity on Tirlun. They really enjoyed drawing their imaginary desert animal and went on to use AL to draw different versions as well as writing poetry about their animal's life.

