

IN MY GARDEN - NETTLES



Nettles are really good for encouraging wildlife to come into your garden. Even a small bed of nettles can have a huge variety of living creatures in it.

Nettle beds can provide protection for small mammals like mice and pygmy shrews to move around and forage for food. The leaves are a source of food for the caterpillars of some of our favourite butterflies.

Nettles can attract up to 40 different species of invertebrates (small spineless creatures), like insects, who find protection among the stinging leaves. Nettle pollen is a source of food for them. These invertebrates in turn attract other creatures that eat them like ladybirds, insect eating birds, frogs and hedgehogs.

Draw your own picture of a nettle



Hint: Use Eleanor's drawing to help you get the scale right. Why not colour them in!

TO DO:

- Find a patch of nettles. Stand and look at them for at least 15 minutes. Count how many different types of creatures you see on the nettles.

Number Counted: _____

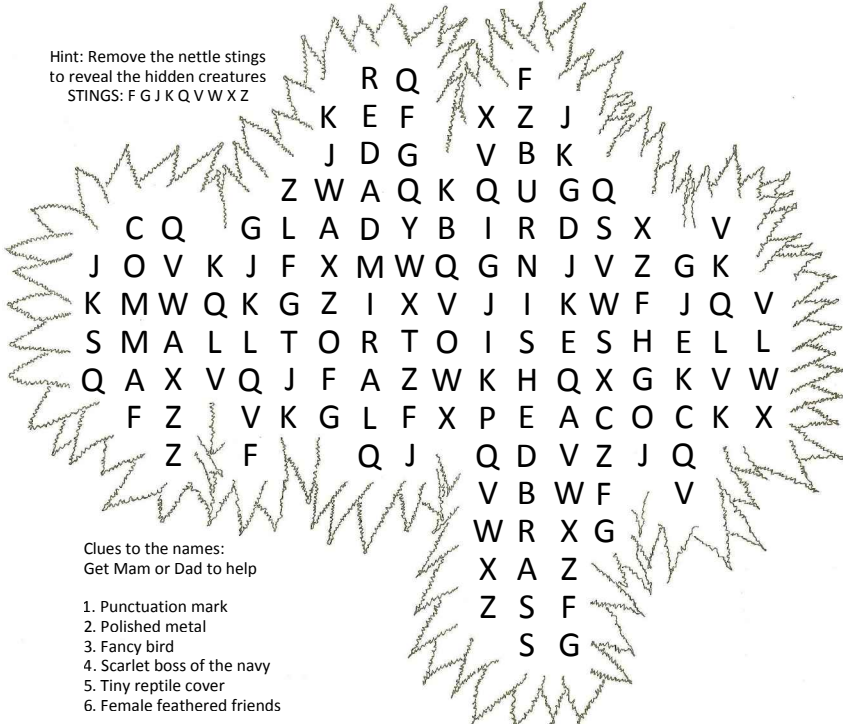
- Let a small part of your garden go wild. Cut the grass less often, maybe every 6 weeks in this patch. Keep an eye on it and see if you get more visitors to this new 'wilderness' in your garden.

- Set up an obstacle course in your garden. Get Mam or Dad to help. Use chairs or whatever you have to hand. The course is a nettle bed, you have to get around without touching anything and getting stung.

Time taken: _____

Find the caterpillars hidden in the bed of nettles
4 are butterflies and 1 is a moth - there is a bonus insect as well

Hint: Remove the nettle stings to reveal the hidden creatures
STINGS: F G J K Q V W X Z



Clues to the names:
Get Mam or Dad to help

1. Punctuation mark
2. Polished metal
3. Fancy bird
4. Scarlet boss of the navy
5. Tiny reptile cover
6. Female feathered friends

ONLINE NATURE:

wicklowmountainsnationalpark.ie

biodiversity.ie mountaineering.ie

birdwatchireland.ie npws.ie

met.ie orienteeing.ie

mothsireland.com wildflowersofireland.net



Páirc Náisiúnta Shléibhte Chill Mhantáin

Wicklow Mountains National Park