

British Wildlife: Odd One Out

Mammals



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Created by the Primary Science Teaching Trust (PSTT) and The Nature Collection

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[The Nature Collection](#) is an extraordinary collection of animal bones, skeletons, feathers, antlers, skins and photographs and was created by Susanna Ramsey.

Several of the photos were taken at the [British Wildlife Centre](#) in Surrey.

We are grateful to Dr Ralf Britz and Ritva Roesler for their assistance in creating this resource.

Guidance for using **British Wildlife: Odd One Out**

This resource is designed to encourage children to observe closely and to stimulate talk about the features of local mammals and their habitats.

There are five **Odd One Out** activities in this slideshow. Each activity has four **mammals** shown on one slide. All are commonly seen in the UK.

Each **Odd One Out** activity reflects a notable animal characteristic or behaviour (described in the slide notes). This may be useful when deciding which activity to use. We suggest that you share only one Odd One Out activity at any time. You can revisit the other activities another time.

Running the activity:

Choose a slide. Ask – **How are these animals similar? How are these animals different?**

Listen to children's suggestions. Encourage children to notice special features of each animal such as their different body parts, the colour (are they camouflaged?), how they move, where they might be found (different habitats).

Possible questions to prompt thinking & talking:

- What special body parts can you see? (wings, fur, horns, spines, etc.)
- What colour is the animal? Is the animal easy to see? It is camouflaged?
- Where do you think the animal lives? (in a tree, in water, on land, in a web)
- How do you think the animal moves? (running, walking, crawling, flying, swimming) How do you know this?

Then ask everyone to decide which is the **Odd One Out** and WHY. Encourage a reason for every answer given. There is no wrong answer here!

Background science:

The slide notes below each slide provide detailed information about the characteristics of each of the animals shown. This is intended to support teachers' subject knowledge. We are not suggesting that children should be taught these facts.

British Wildlife: Odd One Out

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red squirrel



hedgehog



badger



fox

Possible theme: Nocturnal

Squirrel is active by day - diurnal. The others are mainly active by night – nocturnal.

Other possible reasons for being the Odd One Out:

Hair/Prickles: Hedgehog is covered in prickles which protect it from predators. It can roll into a ball if it is attacked. The others are covered in thick hair.

Body Colour: Fox and squirrel are ginger. Badger is black and white. Hedgehog is medium brown. Fox and squirrel have white fur underneath their body, on the chest and belly.

Face Colour: Badger has a black and white striped face. The lower part of the fox's face is white. The other faces are all one colour.

Eyes: The fox has pale brown eyes. The others have black eyes.

Nose: Squirrel has the shortest nose.

Ears: Fox has upright, pointed ears. Hedgehog, badger and squirrel have smaller, rounded ears.

Whiskers: They all have whiskers.

Legs: Fox has the long, thin legs. It chases after its prey. Hedgehog has short legs. Badger has short, wide legs; good for living underground. Squirrel has long back legs and shorter front legs. Also, long feet; good for pushing off, up into the trees.

Claws: Badger has big, wide claws for digging. Squirrel has tiny claws for gripping onto the trees and handling food. Fox has sharp claws for pouncing onto its prey to kill it. Hedgehog has small claws for gripping the earth as it moves along.

Home: Squirrel lives mainly up in the trees. Fox and hedgehog live on the ground. Badger lives underground but moves around and hunts, above ground.

Endangered: Red squirrel is endangered in the UK. It only survives in some areas. The others live all over the UK. Hedgehog is at risk, too, as its numbers are declining.

Notes:

Mammals are vertebrates, warm blooded and give birth to live young.

Many of the photos were taken at The British Wildlife Centre in Surrey, which is open to the public and for school visits.



rabbits



otter



weasel



house mice

Possible theme: Ears

Rabbit has very long ears which it can hold upright and twist around to catch the sounds. Otter has small rounded ears which it can close underwater. House mouse has relatively big ears. Weasel has smaller ears.

Other possible reasons for being the Odd One Out:

Eyes: They all have black eyes. Rabbit and mouse have eyes which are large and on the sides of the head, as they are prey animals. Weasel and otter are predators. Their eyes are closer together and face forwards to look for prey.

Feet: Otter has webbed feet which help it to swim quickly. The rabbit has claws for digging. The mouse and weasel have sharp claws to grip the ground or trees and hold their food.

Tail: Otter has a long tail which it uses when swimming.

Water: Otter is the only one to hunt and move around in the water. Rabbit and weasel sleep and nest underground but move around on the ground. Mouse builds a nest in or near human buildings such as farms, barns, sheds or houses.

Size: Otter is the biggest animal. Then rabbit, weasel, mouse.

Camouflage: All these animals have brown fur which keeps them warm, protects them and is good camouflage.

Whiskers: All have whiskers to sense what is around them in the dark.

Nocturnal: All these animals are mainly active by night – nocturnal.



fox



badger



rabbit



field vole

Possible theme: Diet

Rabbit and field vole are herbivores (animals that eat plants), eating grass, fruit, seeds and crops. Fox eats small mammals like voles, mice and rabbits, also birds, worms, beetles, berries and fruit. Badger eats worms, beetles, slugs, birds' eggs, small mammals, hedgehogs, roots and crops. Fox and badger are omnivores (animals that eat both plants and animals).

Other possible reasons for being the Odd One Out:

Ears: Rabbit and the fox have very long ears. The others have smaller, rounded ears.

Eyes: They all have black eyes. Rabbit and vole have eyes which are large and on the sides of the head, as they are prey animals. Fox and badger are predators. Their eyes are closer together and face forwards to look for prey.

Colour: The rabbit and vole have soft, brown fur which keeps them warm, protects them and is very good camouflage. The fox is ginger and white. The badger is black and white. It has bristly hair.

Legs: Fox has the longest legs. The others are shorter, which is more suited to living in tunnels underground.

Tails: Fox has the longest tail. The rabbit has a short, white tail which shows well when it runs. This warns other rabbits of danger. The badger and vole have short tails.

Homes: Rabbit and badger live in underground chambers and tunnels, in family groups. Field voles live just above the soil, in tunnels made in the long grass. Foxes stay above ground but may dig out an underground chamber when they have their young or when it is very cold, in winter.

Nocturnal: All these animals are mainly active by night.

Whiskers: They all have whiskers to sense what is around them in the dark.



water vole



deer



grey seal



grey squirrel

Possible theme: Feet

Seal has flippers instead of legs and feet. The front flippers have claws to grip the rocks and prey and the back flippers propel the seal through the water. Deer have two hard hooves on each foot. Squirrels and voles have tiny toes and sharp claws. They use their front claws to grip their food. Although water voles are aquatic, they do not have webbed feet.

Other possible reasons for being the Odd One Out:

Ears: Deer have the biggest ears. Seals have very small ears.

Whiskers: They all have whiskers to sense what is around them in the dark.

Tails: Squirrel has the longest tail. It is useful for balancing up in the trees.

Hair: Seal pups have thick, white fur when they are born. This moults and they grow a coat of thick, mottled grey hair as they get older. All the animals have thick fur as adults for warmth and protection. Water voles can have black or brown hair. The Red deer calf has white spots when it is young for camouflage. The adult deer has a plain coat.

Blubber: Seal has a thick layer of blubber to insulate it against the cold water.

Diet: Seals are carnivores and eat fish such as salmon and cod. Also, sea birds, crabs and squid. Deer and water voles are herbivores, eating grasses and other plants. Squirrels are omnivores. They eat nuts, seeds, fruit, birds' eggs, insects, fungi and tree bark.

Nocturnal: All these animals are mainly active by day – diurnal.

Habitat: Seals live in the sea and on the rocky shore. Water voles live by rivers. Squirrels live in the trees. Deer live in grassland, woods and moors.

Swimming: Seals and water voles are very good swimmers. The others are not.



harvest mouse



otter



stoat



fallow deer

Possible theme: Antlers

Deer have antlers. Only male deer have antlers. They use their antlers to fight other males, to win the females. Antlers fall off every year and a new set grows back. The other animals do not have antlers.

Other possible reasons for being the Odd One Out:

Hair: All have brown hair which is good camouflage and white hair on the throat and underside.

Spots: Fallow deer have white spots and a stripe on their coats. The others are plain.

Ears: Deer and mouse have large ears which stick up from the head. They are prey animals. Otter has small ears which lie flat against the head and shut off while swimming. Stoat has an extra flap on the ears.

Eyes: Deer have big eyes, high up on the head. They can look out for danger while grazing. Otter and stoat have eyes closer together, facing forwards which is good for hunting prey. They do not need to watch out for predators. Mouse has very large, beady eyes, which stick forward from the head so they can see all around.

Whiskers: Mouse, stoat and otter have very long whiskers. Deer have very short whiskers. Whiskers enable an animal to sense movements in the air and to feel their way around in the dark or underwater.

Necks: Deer have the longest necks. They have the longest legs and need to be able to reach the ground to feed and reach up into the trees for fresh leaves.

Body shape: Stoats have a long, narrow body for chasing prey through underground tunnels. Otters also have a long, narrow body, good for swimming. Deer's body shape is not suited for tunnels! Mice can squeeze into tiny spaces and gaps.

Predators: Otters and stoats are predators. Mice are **predators** and **prey**. Deer are prey animals but have no predators in the UK.

Diet: Otters are **carnivores** and eat fish such as salmon and carp. Also, frogs, water birds and insects. Stoats are **omnivores** eating rabbits, small mammals, birds' eggs, fruit and worms. Harvest mice eat seeds, berries, fungi, insects and spiders.

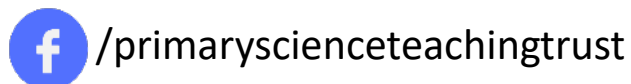
Deer are **herbivores**, eating grasses and other plants.

Size: Deer are the biggest, then otter, stoat and mouse.

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pstt.org.uk



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wowscience.co.uk

and we regularly provide further suggestions on how to use these in the classroom through social media platforms:

