

# A Hedge

## Equipment

Clipboard  
Pencil  
Bug viewer  
Rope with knots every 50cm

## Activity 1

Have a look at these plants in the hedge.

Which ones have thorns?

Holly \_\_\_\_\_  
Hazel \_\_\_\_\_  
Hawthorn \_\_\_\_\_  
Rowan \_\_\_\_\_  
Ivy \_\_\_\_\_  
Elder \_\_\_\_\_

## Did you know??

According to the Wildlife Act, amended in 2000, it is illegal to cut hedges from the 1st of March to the 31st of August to protect nesting wildlife.

## Activity 4

Lay a rope with knots every 50cm along a hedge. Record the plant that you find at each knot.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Curriculum Links

Science Strand; Living Things Geography Strand; Env. Awareness and Care Maths Strand; Number, Data English Strand; Competence and Confidence Using Language (Oral Language, Reading, Writing)

## General Information

Most Irish hedges were planted between 1750 and 1850 A.D. under the Acts of Enclosure. Hedges provide boundaries, shelter for livestock and are very important corridors for wildlife. Two thirds of all birds in Ireland nest in hedges.



## Activity 2

### Food Chain

Animals and plants depend on each other. This is called a food chain. The chain shows the flow of energy from one plant or animal to another.

See if you can fill in the following food chain using the numbers 1–5.



## Activity 3

### The Hawthorn

In Irish the hawthorn is called *An Sceach Gheal* which means the bright bush. Why do you think it is called *An Sceach Gheal*?

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## Activity 5

### A hedge is made up of four layers

1. **Ground Cover** — rotting leaves, dead wood.
2. **Field Layer** — bluebells, primrose, grass, cow parsley.
3. **Shrub Layer** — hawthorn, wild rose, holly, hazel, elder.
4. **Tree Layer** — ash, rowan, birch, crab apple, wild cherry.

List one from each layer that you can find on your trail:

Ground Layer — \_\_\_\_\_

Field Layer — \_\_\_\_\_

Shrub Layer — \_\_\_\_\_

Tree Layer — \_\_\_\_\_