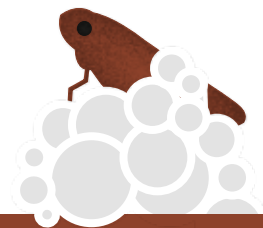
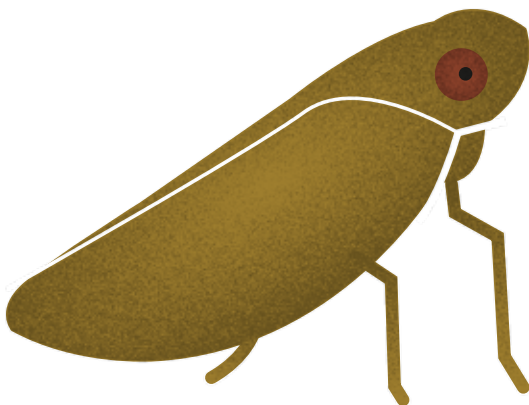


Hidden Creatures: Frog Hoppers



Did you know...?

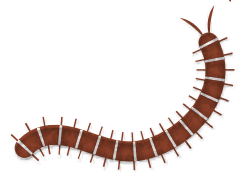
- ◇ Froghoppers are small brown insects that live in grassland and on leafy plants.
- ◇ They feed on plant sap using specialised sucking mouthparts.
- ◇ The adult is a champion jumper and can jump great distances when under threat, they are able to leap 70cm into the air which is similar to a person jumping over a tower block!
- ◇ Their nymphs (young) can be seen coated in a mass of bubbles (also known as cuckoo spit) on plant stems. This froth helps to keep the nymph from drying out and also protects it from predators as it feeds on young leaves and shoots.
- ◇ These tiny creatures can be found during the spring and summer months along the canal, especially in the long grass at Duke's Drive.



I Spy Challenge

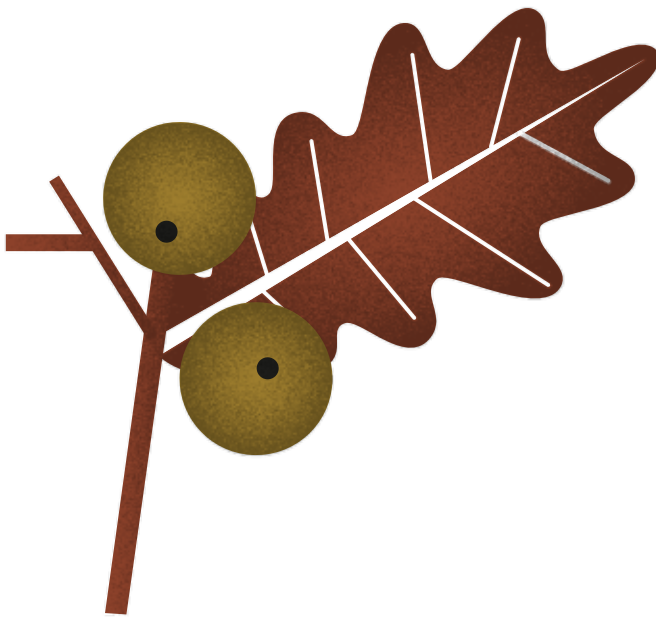
Take a walk through the long grass and see if you can find any cuckoo spit. When found use the end of a blade of grass to gently find the green frog hopper nymph inside the bubbles. If you look carefully you will be able to see its two tiny black eyes. Make sure you put it back in the bubbles when you have finished looking at it.

Hidden Creatures: Gall Makers



Did you know...?

- ◇ Galls are strange growths found on plants which are caused by insects, fungi, bacteria and mites. Galls come in all shapes and sizes, some resemble cotton wool or marbles, pineapples or tiny UFOs!
- ◇ The Oak tree Gall is caused by small wasps laying their egg on to part of a tree such as the catkin, leaf bud or even the roots. The egg or larvae then creates a chemical which begins to have a strange effect on the tree. It starts to grow more cells and creates a gall which grows around the tiny insect.
- ◇ The gall provides the wasp larvae with a home and source of food, the hard exterior of the gall gives it protection from the weather, predators and parasites.
- ◇ When fully grown the adult wasp leaves the gall in summer or the following spring to begin the whole cycle again.
- ◇ There are over 1500 species of gall makers in the world.
- ◇ The study of plant galls is called Cecidology.



I Spy Challenge



Find an Oak tree and see if you can find any galls on its leaves or twigs. They will look like small hard brown marbles. Some galls will have a tiny hole in the shell showing the insect has fully grown and left home!

When you are out and about along the canal see if you can spot any other types of gall....