

WILDLIFE FACTS WORKSHEET

DEER

At Lower Mill Estate in The Cotswolds, we have two different types of deer; Muntjac deer and Roe deer. Muntjac are also known as 'barking deer', due to the loud, barking noise that they make. Both Muntjac and Roe deer have fur that is a reddish-brown colour for most of the year, but turns to a dull grey in winter. Male (boy) deer have small antlers on their heads. Muntjac were brought to the UK from China but Roe deer are native to the UK. Both types of deer are herbivores, meaning that they eat plants.

Q1: What colour fur do Muntjac and Roe deer have in winter?

Q2: Which type of deer that we have at Lower Mill Estate was brought to the UK from China?

BADGERS

Badgers are omnivores, which means they eat plants and animals. Some of their favourite foods are small mammals, such as mice, birds' eggs, worms, fruit and plants. However, around 70-80% of a badger's diet is actually earthworms, and their big claws are useful for digging these out of the soil. Badgers are nocturnal, which means they come out at night-time. They have short, wide bodies with black and white striped markings and short legs for digging. Digging is an important skill for badgers, as they live underground in burrows called setts.

Q1: Name two things that badgers might eat?

Q2: What is a badger's home called?

BEAVERS

We introduced a family of beavers to Flagham Fen at Lower Mill Estate in 2005. Many people believe beavers eat fish, but as a matter of fact, they eat bark! They will cut a branch off a tree, strip the bark off it and eat it and make an underwater store of small branches to eat over winter. After they have cut a branch off a tree, it naturally regenerates (keeps growing) and creates lots of smaller shoots. The beavers will cut these off at 45° angles with their incisor teeth (their big orange front teeth).

Q1: What do beavers eat (a) and where do they store it over winter (b)?

Q2: What kind of teeth do Beavers use to cut the shoots off trees?

OTTERS

Otters are hungry little things and need to eat up to 25% of their body weight in food every day. They have the thickest fur among mammals, made up of two layers. Their fur not only keeps them warm, but helps them to stay buoyant by trapping air close to the skin.

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Q1: What % of their bodyweight does an Otter need to eat each day?

Q2: How many layers of fur do Otters have?

FOXES

Foxes are regularly seen on our estates, particularly after dark. They are known as clever and shrewd animals. A male fox is called a “Dog”, Females are “Vixens” and the cute babies seen here in our video are “Cubs” or “Pups”. They eat just about anything, but rodents are their favourite meals. They are expert hunters of mice, rabbits and squirrels. If they live near people, they might eat dog food or fruits and berries from your garden.

Foxes are known as friendly, curious and shy creatures and will not hurt people. However, they may carry diseases, so do not try to catch or feed them. Although they are relatively small, most weigh only 6-8 pounds, which means they can run fast – up to 30 miles an hour! Like cats, they are most active after the sun goes down. They have vertically oriented pupils that allow them to see in dim light. They even hunt like a cat by stalking and pouncing on its prey.

Q1: What do you call a baby fox?

Q2: How fast can foxes run?

ANSWERS:

DEAR
A1: Grey
A2: Muntjac deer

BADGERS
A1: Any two of the following would be correct: small mammals, birds' eggs, worms, fruit and plants
A2: A sett

BEAVERS
A1: Bark (a), underwater (b)
A2: Incisors

OTTERS
A1: 25%
A2: Two

FOXES
A1: A cub or pup
A2: They can run up to 30 miles per hour! The same speed as a car!