



# December

## Breathing Places this month

### ✓ Do one thing

**Make a bird table or put up a feeder** to help birds survive the winter.

Find out more at [www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces](http://www.bbc.co.uk/breathingplaces)

### i What to look for

Most leaves have fallen by now, but ferns stand out on the woodland floor, especially the glossy evergreen fronds of **hart's-tongue fern** and **hard shield fern**. An obvious fungus on dead wood is the **candle-snuff fungus** which looks like a blackened candle-wick. Dark December days mean that many creatures such as **grey squirrels** are gathering what food they can in a short time. **Rooks and crows** roost together in huge flocks in woodland, and if you're lucky, you might see a **barn owl** ghosting over a frosty field late one afternoon. There are still a few late flowers: **chickweed**, **red dead nettle** and **winter heliotrope**. Yellow clumps of **mistletoe** dotted with white berries are food for **mistle thrushes**, **fieldfares** and wintering **blackcaps**. Down by the coast you can see **grey seals** with their pups and many wading birds.

Find out more at [www.open2.net](http://www.open2.net)

### ? Did you know

Common dolphins generally dive for only a short time (10 seconds to 2 minutes), although dives of 8 minutes have been recorded. They keep offshore but you can see them at any time of year, although numbers are greatest between August and December.

Find out more at [www.dolphincareuk.org](http://www.dolphincareuk.org)

Find out more at [www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk](http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk)

## Habitat of the month

**Estuaries:** Many birds visit Britain in the winter to escape from the cold further north. When the day is short winter waders have little time to feed so they probe the sand and mud for food when the tide is out.

## Photo opportunity

**Winter waders:** When the tide comes in birds huddle together in large groups and it's a spectacular sight. Wrap up warm and wear dark clothing so the birds don't become alarmed. A telephoto lens and tripod are essential as you are unlikely to get close.

## Photo opportunity



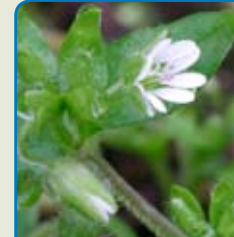
## Have you seen this month



Grey Squirrel

DATE:

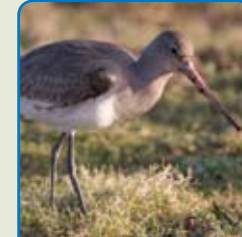
AMOUNT:



Chickweed

DATE:

AMOUNT:



Black-tailed Godwit

DATE:

AMOUNT:



Candle-snuff Fungus

DATE:

AMOUNT:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						