

The background features a dark green circular area on the left containing several overlapping circles in various shades of green. A white silhouette of a plant with two leaves is positioned in the lower part of this circle. The rest of the background is a light green color with a dark green curved shape at the bottom right.

# The Case of The Planted Clue

**A careers/teaching resource  
for ages 9 to 17**

**Green Jobs for Nature**

# Teachers Notes

## Lesson Overview:

This session is designed to be a short, focused icebreaker activity lasting no longer than 15 minutes. It aims to help students recognise, in a simple way, a small selection of careers available within ecology and environment sector. This session can be used as an introduction to other lessons on either careers or ecology.

## Instructions for Teachers:

1. Print out a copy of the "Suspects" slide for each group, this doesn't need to be in colour. Print out the "Crime Scene" and both "Species Identification Guide 1" and "Species Identification Guide 2" in colour. Print the "Scoresheet" page and cut the three rectangular scoring cards out.
2. Display the "Victim" slide on a screen at the front of the classroom, talk the students through the scenario (reassure them that this is fictional).
3. Move the screen on to the "Suspects" slide and talk through each, explaining anything the students are unsure of (i.e. terminology).
4. Move the screen on to "The Crime Scene" slide - tell the students that it will be their job to identify each clue - and by doing so they should be able to work out who the murderer is.
5. Split the students into groups of no more than three students per group. Provide them with a copy of the "Suspects" slide, the "Crime Scene" and both "Species Identification" guides (1 & 2). Give each group a Scoresheet to summarise their findings.
6. Tell the students that they have up to 15 minutes to solve the crime - identify the suspect AND the clue that they planted. Make it clear to them not to tell other groups that they have solved it - instead to raise their hand so a member of the teaching team can see if they have got it correct - if they haven't then ask them to check the evidence again and highlight the area(s) to focus on. Make a note of the first group to get both the suspect and clue correct.
7. Once you have reached the end of the 15 minutes, you can go around the groups to ask who their suspect is and what they believe the planted clue is.
8. Move the screen on to the "Case Closed" slide - so that everyone in the class can see whether they were right or wrong on both the clue and the "Suspect" slide. Highlight the team who solved the case first.
9. Ask some careers based questions of all the students; "Which of the careers identified (ecologist, environmental adviser, ranger), would you be interested to hear more about? Which habitats sound more interesting (heathland, grassland coastal)?"
10. Consider approaching someone who has one of these careers, who works in your local area, to come and speak more about what they do.



# The Case of The Planted Clue: An Ecology Murder Mystery

## Welcome, Detectives!

A crime has been committed and it's up to you to solve it! A victim has been found, and four clues were left behind - but one was planted by the murderer to mislead you. Your mission is to figure out which habitat the real evidence points to and catch the culprit!

What you need to do:

- Study the Clues: Examine the four clues left at the scene and use the Wildlife Guide to see which habitats they match.
- Spot the Red Herring: One clue is fake—it doesn't belong to the crime scene. Can you figure out which one?
- Match the Evidence: Look at the remaining clues. Which habitat do they point to - grassland, heathland, or coastal?
- Identify the Murderer: Each suspect works in one of these habitats. Match the habitat to the suspect and reveal the murderer!

Good luck, detectives!



# The Case of The Planted Clue: The Victim

Dr. Mia Fairweather's body was found early in the morning beside their car. There were no clear signs of what had happened, and the cause of death remain unknown.

But something was odd - the body had been moved. Scattered nearby were a few clues, hinting at where the real crime had taken place. Most matched the surroundings, but one seemed out of place... Had it been left there to mislead investigators?

## Dr. Mia Fairweather

Dr. Fairweather was an expert in protecting nature and wildlife. They worked in different habitats and often challenged others to change how they cared for the environment.

- Clashed with Flora Meadows over grassland management, believing that grazing methods were damaging wildlife
- Opposed Dr. Forest Green's coastal project, worried it would harm rare species.
- Worked with Rowan Bracken on heathland conservation, arguing for stricter protections that could limit public access and school visits.

Some people admired Dr. Fairweather's passion - but not everyone agreed with them. And one person may have wanted to stop them for good.



**Victim**

# The Case of The Planted Clue: The Suspects

## Dr. Forest Green

Coastal Ecologist: Dr. Green studies and protects nature along the coast, like sand dunes and beaches, making sure wildlife is safe while allowing people to visit these areas.

Dr. Fairweather strongly disagreed with Dr. Green's latest tourism initiative, saying it could harm rare animals. If it was cancelled, years of work - and Dr. Green's reputation - would be ruined. Would they do anything to stop that from happening?



**Suspect 1**

## Flora Meadows

Grassland Environmental Adviser: Flora helps farmers and landowners care for grasslands, making sure wildlife can thrive while keeping the land healthy.

Dr. Fairweather claimed cattle grazing was harming wildflowers and insects. If farmers stopped following Flora's advice, their work and reputation could be at risk. Would they go this far to protect it?



**Suspect 2**

## Rowan Bracken

Heathland Ranger: Rowan looks after heathlands by keeping paths clear, controlling problem plants, and protecting rare wildlife, all while helping people enjoy nature.

Dr. Fairweather wanted to close parts of the heathland to protect rare species. Fewer visitors could mean fewer school trips—and even put Rowan's job at risk. Would they do whatever it takes to stop that?



**Suspect 3**

# The Case of The Planted Clue: The Crime Scene



3



1

2



4



Green Jobs  
for Nature

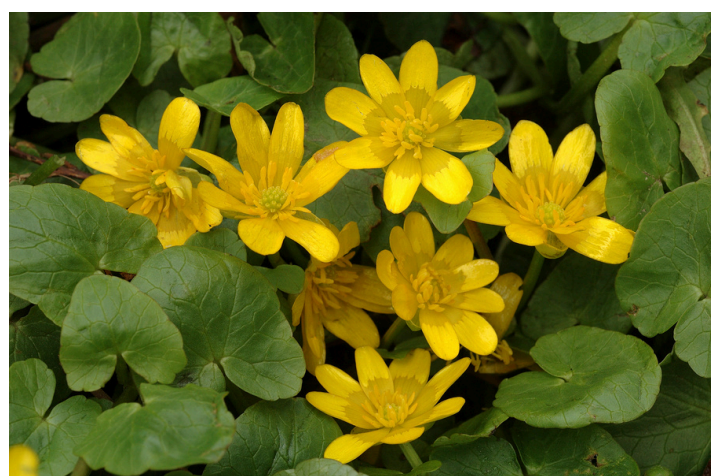
# The Case of The Planted Clue: Species Identification Guide 1

From the Guide to UK Wildflowers, by Basil Woods



**Cowslip**

Its flowers provide an early source of nectar for bees, beetles, butterflies, and other insects. Grows in grasslands and woodlands.



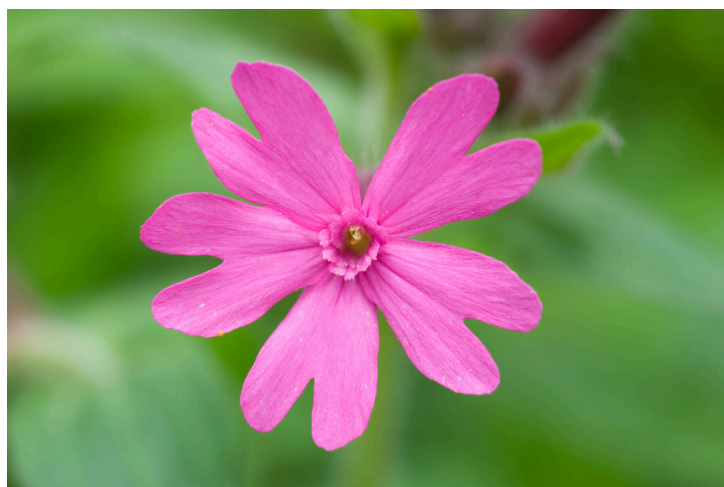
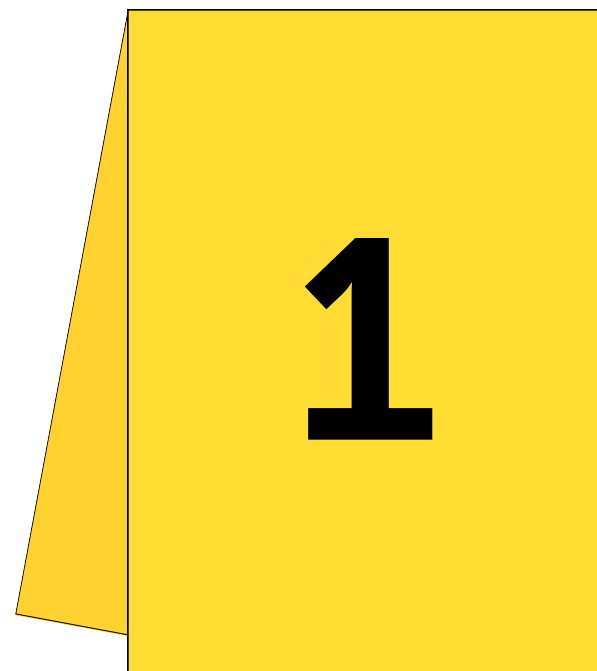
**Lesser Celandine**

A relative of buttercups, blooms in early spring and thrives on hedge banks, in woodlands, damp meadows, lawns, and along streams or ditches.



**Gorse**

Thrives in a variety of habitats, including heaths and grasslands. It offers valuable shelter and food to numerous insects and birds



**Red Campion**

Grows in woodlands and hedges. It has bright pink flowers with five heart-shaped delicate petals.



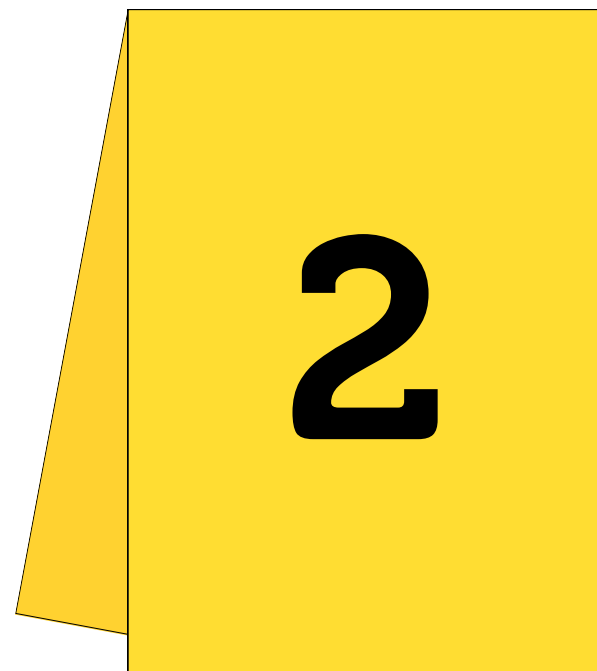
**Red Clover**

Grows in grasslands, it has round, pinkish-red flower heads. A member of the pea family, it helps improve soil by capturing nitrogen.



**Sea Thrift**

Found in coastal areas, it has tufts of pink, globe-shaped flowers. It has adapted to growing in salty winds.



# The Case of The Planted Clue: Species Identification Guide 2

From Poo, Pellets, and Puke: Solving Nature's Mysteries, by S. Catman



**Barn Owl Pellet**

Barn Owls hunt in grasslands, woodlands and heaths. They swallow prey whole but later cough up thumb-sized pellets of fur and bone.



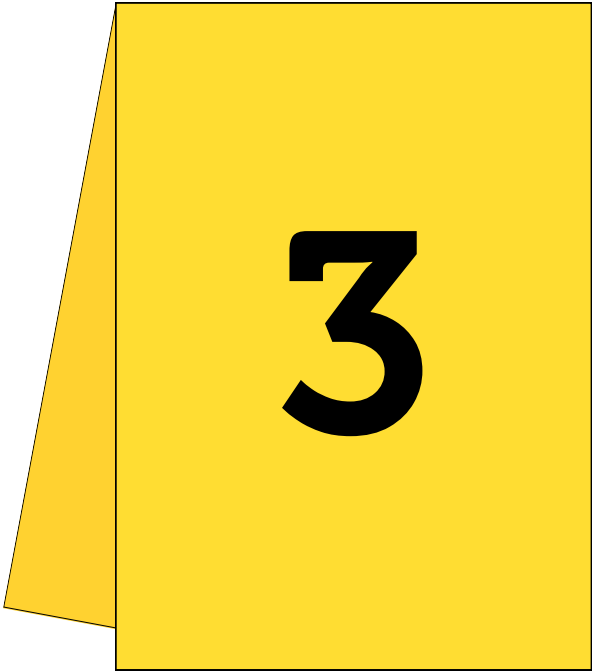
**Rabbit Droppings**

Rabbits are found in grasslands, woodlands, and farmland, producing dark brown and pea sized droppings which help improve the soil.



**Roe Deer Droppings**

Roe deer live in woodlands and farmland, leaving small, oval droppings that are dark and pointed at one end.



From the Guide to UK Butterflies, by Vanessa Flutterby



**Comma Butterfly**

Found in woodlands and grassland. Named after a white comma shaped mark on the underside of the wing.



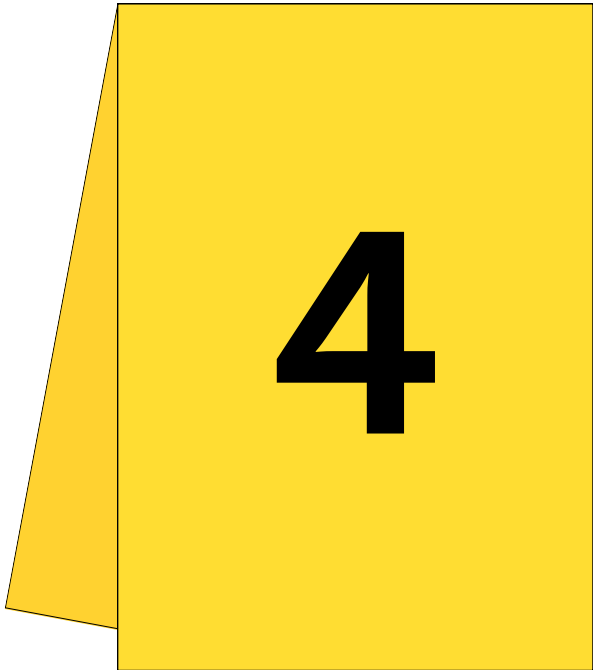
**Meadow Brown Butterfly**

A common butterfly found in grasslands and woodlands in the UK. It has a single white spot in larger black spot on forewing.



**Small Copper Butterfly**

The small copper is both tiny and brightly coloured! Look for it from April onwards in dry habitats like heathland and woodland.



# Warning

**The next slide reveals both the Murderer and the Planted Clue**

Only move on when you are ready to reveal this!

# The Case of The Planted Clue: Case Closed

## Murderer:

Flora Meadows

## Planted Clue:

Sea Thrift

### Flora Meadows

The evidence was clear - Flora Meadows is the culprit!

Motive: Dr. Fairweather's campaign against cattle grazing threatened Flora's entire career. If farmers stopped listening, their work would be worthless. Desperate to protect their reputation,

Flora saw only one solution...

The Planted Clue: Sea Thrift flowers found near the body. But wait Sea Thrift grows on coastal areas, not in the real crime scene's habitat!

Someone was trying to mislead the investigation... and now we know why!

Justice is served! Case solved by the finest detectives in the field!



### The Murderer

# The Case of The Planted Clue: Clue: Scoresheet

(cut out  
individually)

## The Case of The Planted Clue:

Identify each clue and write  
which habitats they are found in  
below:

Clue 1:

Clue 2:

Clue 3:

Clue 4:

Which clue was planted?

Who is the murderer?

## The Case of The Planted Clue:

Identify each clue and write  
which habitats they are found in  
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Clue 4:

Which clue was planted?

Who is the murderer?

# The Case of The Planted Clue:

An example of a correctly completed scorecard (do not give out to students)

## The Case of The Planted Clue:

Identify each clue and write which habitats they are found in below:

Clue 1: Cowslip - Grasslands and Woodlands

Clue 2: Sea Thrift - Coastal Areas

Clue 3: Barn Owl - Grasslands, Woodlands and Heaths

Clue 4: Comma - Woodlands and Grassland

Which clue was planted?

Sea Thrift

Who is the murderer?

Flora Meadows