



FOLKLORE & LEGEND



A detailed illustration of a crow perched on a weathered, light-brown branch. The crow is dark blue-black with a sharp, hooked beak and is looking towards the left. The background is a solid dark red.

Blossom and Stardust

Welcome Nature Explorer,

Did you know: a crow never forgets a face?

This month we are stepping into the world of folklore and legend with stories people told about the trees and animals around them, long before anyone wrote them down.

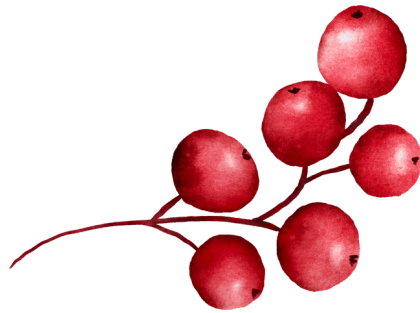
From the rowan tree that protected homes to the fox that outwitted everyone, nature has always been full of characters, mystery and magic. October is the perfect month to go looking for them.

Are you ready? Let's Go!

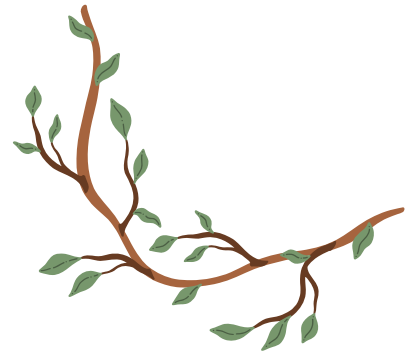
HUNT & FIND



A Black Feather



A Berry on
a Branch



Something Twisted



A Cobweb with
Morning Dew



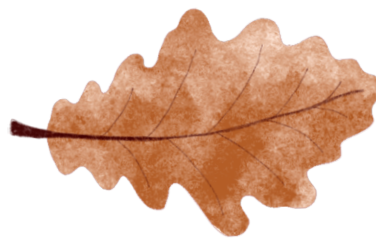
A Mossy Stone



A Hollow
or Hole



A Magical
looking Toadstool



Something moved
by the Wind



Animal Tracks



The Moon in
Daylight



Something
for Crafting



A Stick you can
Play with

MAKE A WISH

Long ago, wise souls made potions from things they found in the fields and hedgerows around them. They believed that nature held everything needed for healing, protection and manifestation (making wishes come true). This potion uses things you can find yourself next time you go for a walk. It is not for drinking – it is made to wish upon and return to the earth.



YOU WILL NEED

A bowl or jar
Water (ideally rainwater)
Natural Treasures (eg: Fallen leaves, berries, seed heads, soil, a stone, a feather, moss)
A stick for stirring
One wish

Go outside and collect your potion 'ingredients'. Take only things that have already fallen – nothing living.

Fill your bowl with water.

Add each ingredient slowly. Hold each one for a moment before you place it in and fill it with magic from your own mind.

Stir clockwise slowly with your stick.

As you stir, think clearly about your wish. You can say it out loud or keep it quietly in your heart.

When you are ready, take your bowl outside and pour it back onto the earth – at the base of a tree, into soil or onto grass.

Your wish will return to the earth with it for nature to look after.

ANIMAL SPIRITS



and the stories told about them...

Long before wildlife documentaries and nature books, people learned about animals just by watching them. Over the years, they noticed patterns in the way the animals behaved and they created stories about them.

Some of those stories became folklore and were passed down through generations as they gathered around fires and kitchen tables for hundreds of years.

Here are four animals you might spot this month and the old stories that were told about them.



THE FOX

The fox is the great trickster of British folklore. Known as the cunning one, the outsider, the creature that lives between the wild and the human world without fully belonging to either. In folk tales the fox is rarely the villain but almost always the cleverest character in the story. It outwits the farmer, escapes the hunter and survives by its wits alone. In some older traditions the fox was seen as a shapeshifter — an animal so quick and so elusive that people believed it must be something more than an ordinary creature.

DID YOU KNOW...?

The fox has an extraordinary sense of smell that is up to 40 times more powerful than a human's. It uses the Earth's magnetic field to hunt, lining up its pounce with the north-east direction for the highest success rate. Foxes are one of the few wild mammals that have successfully colonised cities — urban foxes now outnumber rural foxes in some parts of Britain. You might spot one if you go for an early morning walk.

a little space to
DRAW A FOX 

LEARNING SUMMARY – FOLKLORE & LEGEND

A quick guide to the learning in this study, for your records, LA report or setting's planning. Adapt it to describe your own child's learning.

SUBJECTS COVERED

Science · English · History ·
Art & Design · Wellbeing ·
Outdoor learning

WHAT WE EXPLORED

We discovered how people long ago learned about nature by watching it closely, and how their observations became folklore and legends passed down through generations. We identified six British trees (rowan, hazel, oak, elder, willow and birch) and learned the old stories told about them. We met four animals from British folklore (the crow, fox, hare and robin) and compared the legends with real scientific facts about how they live. We also learned about October's Hunter's Moon.

SCIENCE SKILLS PRACTISED

Observing closely · identifying and naming trees and animals · comparing folklore with scientific fact · noticing seasonal changes · recording through drawing

OTHER LEARNING

English: Reading poetry and traditional stories, and exploring how myths and legends are passed down. History: Learning how people lived and understood the natural world before books and science.

Art & Design: Making a rowan charm, a crow mobile and a hare mask using natural and found materials. Wellbeing: Slowing down to notice nature, through moon bathing and listening to birdsong.