



North Pennines National Landscape

North Pennines wildlife masks

Our North Pennines wildlife masks feature different species that you might see in the area if you look carefully. While completing this activity, you could talk about the animal on your mask. How does your animal move? What does your animal eat? What is the preferred habitat or place to live for your animal?

Does your animal have scales, feathers, fur, or permeable skin? What features might make your animal camouflage? Does your animal hibernate? Or migrate? Have you ever seen your animal when out and about in the North Pennines National Landscape? If so, how did you feel when you saw it? How can you help wildlife in your local area? What makes your animal special?

European otter (*Lutra lutra*)

- Body length: 60–80 cm
- Tail length: 35–50 cm



- Water lovers: Otters live in rivers, lakes, and canals, spending lots of time swimming and hunting in the water.
- Strong swimmers: They are excellent swimmers, using their long tails and webbed feet to swim fast and catch fish, their favourite food.
- Playful animals: Otters are very playful and love sliding down muddy riverbanks, playing with pebbles, and chasing each other in the water.
- Animal clues: They leave tell-tale signs like footprints and droppings, called spraints, near the water.
- Thick fur: Otters have thick, waterproof fur to keep them warm while swimming in cold water.
- Hidden dens: Otters make dens called holts, usually in riverbanks, tree roots, or rocky crevices. The dens have hidden entrances, and they sometimes make a 'slide' to easily get to the water.
- Shy hunters: These shy animals are mostly active at night and hard to spot, but if you're lucky you might catch a glimpse of them at dawn or dusk as they come out to feed.

Did you know that the North Pennines is one of 38 National Landscapes in England and Wales? These special places are protected and looked after for people and nature. The North Pennines National Landscape is the second largest of these areas at 2000 square kilometres, and is made up of large parts of County Durham, Northumberland and Cumbria. It's a special place with wide open moorlands, colourful hay meadows, tumbling waterfalls, ancient woodlands, and inky black night skies. And of course it's home to the animals you see on these wildlife masks.



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Making your masks

We hope you enjoy making your North Pennines wildlife masks. There are 12 designs with different animals that you can see in the North Pennines National Landscape and UNESCO Global Geopark. Choose from lapwing, European adder, fox, common frog, water vole, hen harrier (male and female), emperor moth, black grouse, otter, salmon and short-eared owl.

This activity is suitable for ages 4 to 8. Adult supervision is required for this activity.

To make the masks you will need:

- **thick elastic or string**
- **scissors or craft knife**
- **mask template (see printing instructions)**
- **card or thick paper**
- **coloured felt tips or pencils (if using black and white mask templates)**
- **stapler, or a way of making holes (hole punch, screwdriver, or sharp scissors)**



How to print and make the masks

We recommend printing the masks at “actual size” from your print settings (see image 1). For smaller masks, adjust the size by choosing “Fit”, or print the masks at a custom scale. Test print in black and white on normal printer paper to ensure that the mask will fit the child, taking special care to line up their eyes with the eye holes on the mask.

Cardstock or thicker paper will last longer and provide better colour quality, but please ensure that you check the specifications of your printer. * Please be aware of the child’s fine motor skills, as the weight of the paper may impact the child’s ability to cut safely.

Scan the QR code for more detailed instructions and more downloads



- If you are using the black and white template, colour in with felt tips or colouring pencils.
- With adult supervision, using scissors, cut carefully around the contour of the mask.
- Using scissors, make an “x” shape in the middle of the eye-hole, then carefully cut out around the shape of the eye holes. (If using a craft knife, please ensure that this is done by a responsible adult and that the cut is made on a suitable cutting surface).
- Measure the elastic around the child’s head, allowing about 3 cm for the knot on each side. As a guide, a piece of elastic about 42 cm long is recommended, but adjust the length for the individual. Alternatively, if using string, please cut two lengths so that the mask can be tied at the back of the head.
- To attach the elastic or string: Make a knot in each end of the elastic or string and use the guide marks on the front of the mask to help position each end, staple on the reverse over the ends of the tied elastic or string. Take care, as staples can pose a risk to small children. **Or** : Punch holes in the masks where indicated - this should be done by an adult using scissors or a sharp implement. Make a knot in one end of the elastic or string, thread through one of the holes and back through the other hole. Tie a knot to secure in place.



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Otter





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