

Barn owl (*Tyto alba*)

Interesting fact:

Barn owls are able to fly silently and have an incredible sense of hearing, which means they are able to pinpoint their prey from a great distance and swoop in for the kill.

What do I eat?

Barn owls are master predators that usually hunt at night, feeding on small rodents, such as mice and voles, as well as frogs and insects.

Threatened?

Intensification of agriculture, traffic deaths, pesticide use and a loss of hunting and nesting sites all cause problems for barn owl survival.

Badger (*Meles meles*)

Interesting fact:

Badgers have thick skin and long claws, making them one of the only animals able to kill and eat hedgehogs!

What do I eat?

Badgers are omnivorous; their main source of food is earthworms, of which they may eat several hundred a night. They also eat other invertebrates, nuts, fruit, small vertebrates, bulbs and cereals.

Threatened?

Badgers are known to carry a disease that can be passed to cows called bovine tuberculosis, so they are culled in an attempt to stop the disease spreading. Many badgers are also killed on roads by traffic each year.

Earthworm (*Lumbricus terrestris*)

Interesting fact:

Moisture is very important for earthworms to survive as they breathe through their skin. It is vital they don't dry out as oxygen can only pass through their skin when it is moist, which is why you only ever see worms above ground on wet days.

What do I eat?

Earthworms eat soil and organic material such as decomposing sycamore leaves. Once they have digested the material a small pile of soil it is excreted, known as a 'worm cast'.

Threatened?

The earthworm is not currently threatened.

Bank vole (*Myodes glareolus*)

Interesting fact:

Bank voles are active during both the day and night, although they tend to become more nocturnal in the summer months.

What do I eat?

Bank voles have a broad, mainly herbivorous diet, which includes fruit, soft seeds, leaves, fungi, roots, grass and moss. They may also occasionally take invertebrate food such as snails, worms and insects, as well as the occasional bird egg.

Threatened?

Habitat destruction causes major problems for bank voles; the removal of hedgerows and fragmentation of woodland cause particular threats to the bank voles' survival.

Grass snake (*Natrix natrix*)

Interesting fact:

The grass snake is a good swimmer, and is able to stay submerged for over half an hour. Relying on wariness for protection, the grass snake often 'plays dead' when threatened, which may put off some predators.

What do I eat?

The grass snake is an active predator of frogs, toads and newts, although fish, small mammals and young birds may also be eaten. Prey is grabbed, then swallowed alive.

Threatened?

The grass snake is not currently threatened.

Common frog (*Rana temporaria*)

Interesting fact:

Probably Britain's most well-known amphibian, the common frog hibernates during the winter, often at the bottom of garden ponds or in compost heaps.

What do I eat?

The common frog hunts on damp nights, to prevent it drying out, and feeds on snails, slugs, worms and a range of insects.

Threatened?

Pollution of freshwater, such as ponds and lakes, is a major threat to the survival of the common frog.

Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)

Interesting fact:

The sycamore is not actually a native British species; it was introduced from Europe in the 15th Century and has since become naturalised here. Its paired, winged fruits fall like propellers and as such are known to children as 'helicopters'.

What do I eat?

The sycamore obtains the energy it needs by absorbing sunlight, water and carbon dioxide and turning it into sugars and oxygen - a process known as photosynthesis.

Threatened?

The sycamore is not currently threatened.