

EXPLORE: URBAN NATURE



THE ACTION

Here at the Natural History Museum we are planning our next big scientific research project to help us learn how nature is changing and how best to support it in towns and cities. But we want to hear from young people - **what is the most important scientific question about human impacts on nature in the U.K. that we should be investigating?**

THE ISSUE

Protecting biodiversity is just as important as combating climate change when it comes to building a sustainable future for our planet. As towns and cities grow, we need to understand how environmental impacts affect the other species living alongside humans, so that we can make positive changes that allow people and nature to thrive together.

THE RESULT

We're going to take all the questions and interests submitted to us and work with young people all around the U.K., to design a research project that seeks answers to the questions that are most important to them, and we will be inviting them to contribute every step of the way!

WHAT MAKES A GOOD SCIENTIFIC QUESTION?

The most important feature of a scientific question is that no one already knows the answer, i.e., you can't look it up online! Other criteria are that it's possible to collect real world evidence to answer the question and that it's a fair test.

STEPS

1. Ask students to decide on an environmental issue that they think is most important to solve or understand. Perhaps they've learnt about some global issues at school or heard about problems affecting your local area in the news.
2. Have students write down how that issue could impact different local plants, wildlife or other factors. Which are they most interested in? Is it plants, invertebrates, birds, mammals, habitats, air quality, soil quality? Or anything else they can think of...
3. Scientists use questions to frame their interests so that they can do investigations. Use our resources on the Eco-schools website to help students come up with and refine a **scientific question** that links their answers to step 1 and 2. Ask students to think about what they could measure to collect evidence to answer their question.
4. Finally, register your school or class with us [here](#) and then ask students to submit their scientific questions to us [here on the NHM website!](#)

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