

FAMILY FUN

What's waking up in the woods?

It's the end of winter and spring is here – hurray!

In winter tree roots shut down when it is colder than 5°C. Once the temperature starts to rise again in spring the roots on a deciduous tree are the first thing to become active. The roots start taking water from the ground to supply the rest of the tree. This water helps the buds to swell and burst.

A bit about buds



In winter the new leaves are hidden away tightly inside bud cases waiting to burst in the spring.



Lots of buds are sticky, waxy or hairy to protect the inside from cold weather and hungry insects.



In spring, when the conditions are right, the leaves fill with water and burst out of the buds.



Trees that don't lose all their leaves

Evergreen trees keep their tough leaves all winter as they are adapted to the conditions.

Did you know? Evergreens do lose their leaves and grow new ones but continuously through the year rather than just in autumn.

Look out for brighter green leaves on evergreens (like in the picture above) to see how much they've grown this spring.

Trees that lose all their leaves

Deciduous trees drop their leaves in autumn and grow new ones back in spring. Can you spot any leaves on deciduous trees creeping to life?



Credit: Gina Mills

When you get home, have a go at designing and drawing your own bud that could protect a leaf over the winter from the cold and any insects that might eat it.



TRACKER MISSION

Can you spot any sticky, waxy or hairy new buds or young leaves?

REMEMBER

Don't pick things off the trees! If something is attached, the tree still needs it.