



An  
Explorer's  
Guide to

the  
lost spells

AUTUMN EDITION



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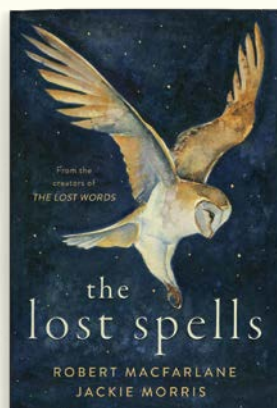
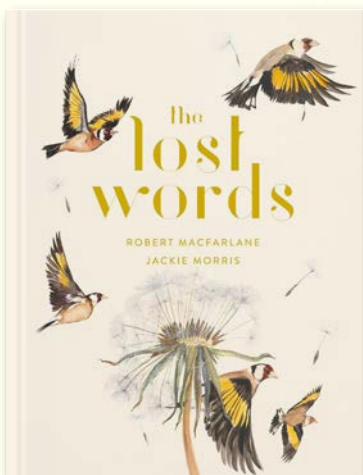
# About the book

**D**azzlingly beautiful and wonderfully inventive, discover the magical new book from the creators of bestselling, critically acclaimed literary phenomenon *The Lost Words* . . .

Kindred in spirit to *The Lost Words* but fresh in its form, *The Lost Spells* is a pocket-sized treasure that introduces a beautiful new set of natural spell-poems and artwork by beloved creative duo Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris.

As in *The Lost Words*, these ‘spells’ take their subjects from relatively commonplace, and yet underappreciated, animals, birds, trees and flowers – from Barn Owl to Red Fox, Grey Seal to Silver Birch, Jay to Jackdaw. But they break out of the triptych format of *The Lost Words*, finding new shapes, new spaces and new voices with which to conjure.

Written to be read aloud, painted in brushstrokes that call to the forest, field, riverbank and also to the heart, *The Lost Spells* summons back what is often lost from sight and care, and inspires protection and action on behalf of the natural world. Above all, it celebrates a sense of wonder, bearing witness to nature’s power to amaze, console and bring joy.



# About *The Explorer's Guide*

**T**his *Guide* is for celebrating the magic of nature and the magic of language. It is for teachers, librarians and children who want to experience the sights and sounds of autumn. It is for anyone with an interest in the natural world who wants to explore *The Lost Spells*.

This *Guide* is for use in classrooms, at home or in an outdoor space of your choosing. The various activities and challenges included can be dipped in and out of or used consecutively as a cross-curricular scheme of work.

There are limitless opportunities for learning across all subjects – from researching, writing and storytelling, to science and conservation projects. New resources will be added with each new season, and we hope you enjoy them.

Thank you  
The Hamish Hamilton Team

*The Lost Spell's Explorer's Guide*  
has been written by Eva John.



# General activities

Try to see as many of the species that feature in *The Lost Spells*. If you are unable to see them in life, examine them in images and film online.

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Create fact files for some or all of the creatures and plants that appear.

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Create a special 'Sketch and Spell Book' to record your own observations and creative responses.

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Become a 'nature detective': make fine, detailed observations; learn the charm of naming things; discover new things; make connections; keep a nature journal/sketchbook to develop your own responses to the wildlife, plants and the environment around you. Look at a copy of *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* by Edith Holden for inspiration.

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Add wonder words to your word hoard in your spell book: build up a treasure chest of words for nature, weather, plants and animals.

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Create a nature table which will change through the seasons.

Practise and perform the spells, deciding how many should be involved in each one; does it require a solo or ensemble performance? You could think about creating a soundscape to enhance the atmosphere and perhaps introduce movement as well.

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Challenge yourself to write and illuminate one or all of the following as you familiarize yourself with the book:

A spell that protects

A spell that protests

A tongue-twister

A blessing

A lullaby

A psalm

Try reading a spell or a poem (not just from this book – any poem you like, or, better still, one of your own) out loud to yourself once a day. Further overarching activities will be suggested at the end of this *Guide*, when you have explored all the spells and paintings.



# introduction



## Introduction

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

Why do you think this book is called *The Lost Spells*?

Why do spells need to be spoken aloud?

What do you think the similarities and differences are between the different types of spell that are listed:

incantations,  
summoning charms,  
spells that protect,  
spells that protest,  
tongue-twisters,  
blessings,  
lullabies,  
psalms?

Why do you think Jackie Morris chose to paint a blackbird with gold leaf to accompany this introduction? Is it a male or female?

### WONDER WORDS

What do you think Robert Macfarlane means when he says '*Here a fox might witch into your mind*'?

Which noun has he used as a verb? Why do you think he has done this?

What are your immediate imaginings when you link the word fox with witch?

Why does the image, '*flocks of moths may lift from the page to fill the air*' work so well?

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What is meant by '*Loss is the tune of our age*'?

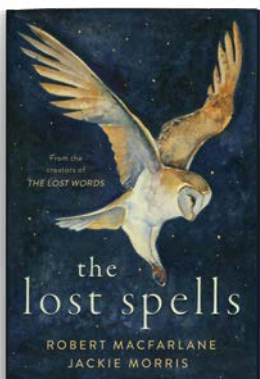
Why is '*wonder . . . needed now more than ever*'?

Just imagine . . .

It's dusk. What might you hear if you '*listen with owl ears*'?

What might you see '*with the eyes of an oak*'?

Think about the quality of light, the sense of movement, how sounds are intensified as the light dies.



# introduction

## RESEARCH AND WRITING CHALLENGE



### THE DISAPPEARING

Research either a creature, a place, or peoples that have disappeared or are in danger of disappearing.

Choose something that you immediately connect with, gather your information to generate ideas and create a word hoard, using a thesaurus to extend your choice.

Then play with your words in order to create a spell that protests or protects.

You could use the words from the introduction as a refrain:

Loss is the tune of our age,  
Hard to miss and hard to bear . . .  
You might like to end with:  
There has always been singing in dark times.

Or:

Wonder is needed now more than ever.

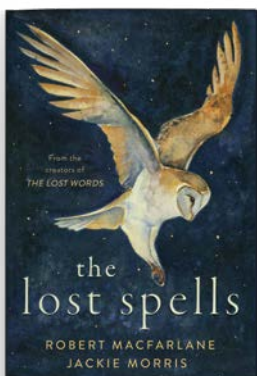
Or:

Let the wild world into your eyes, your voice,  
your heart.

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, CREATE

Consider a loss that you have felt personally and either write about it, compose a piece of music or create an image to convey your feelings.

You could create a memory box which contains items, pictures, writing, QR code links to music that act as a commemoration.



# red fox



## Red Fox 1

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

How does this painting make you feel?

How many different colours have been used in this painting?

Why do you think that Jackie Morris chose to focus on this section of the face of the red fox?



### SEEK, FIND SPEAK, WRITE

Create thought and word showers for this image, thinking about sensory vocabulary for colour, smell, sound, texture, movement.

Gather them together to fashion a collaborative piece of writing to accompany this picture.

Choose whether to write from the point of view of the fox or the observer.

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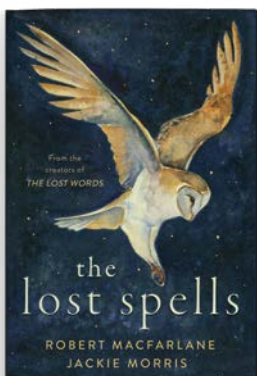
## Red Fox 2

### WONDER WORDS

Why does '*bloom of rust at your vision's edge*' work so well?

What do you notice about '*The shadow that slips through a hole in the hedge*'?

What does '*brush*' mean here?





# red fox

## SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What scene do you picture in your mind's eye when you hear:



‘My two green eyes in your headlights’ rush’?

Is it rural or urban? Does everyone have the same response?

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## Red Fox 3

### WONDER WORDS

What is meant by ‘*Dark torn from dark*’?

Why do you think Robert Macfarlane chose ‘*trash can*’ rather than ‘*rubbish bin*’?

How do you react to the words in this stanza? What sort of character do you think the fox is portrayed as having here?

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, WRITE

Listen to fox calls on the internet.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/earth/story/20150109-love-calls-of-courtting-foxes>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6NuhlibHsM#>

### THINK, PAIR, SHARE

What other words could you use to describe the sounds of the fox in the night? Think of a range of similes and metaphors.

Try reading them out loud to hear which are most effective and try rearranging them to find the best rhythms and order.

Practise and perform.

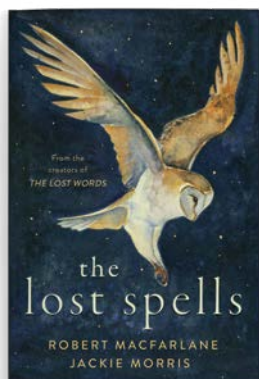
### STORYTELLING CHALLENGE

Working as a group, each taking a turn to add a sentence or paragraph, use either:

‘a scream in the night that stops you dead’  
or ‘dark torn from dark’

as a title, or as a final line, and weave a story, building up the tension and atmosphere through careful use of detail. Remember to use the ‘show, don’t tell’ technique.

You will need some thinking time before you begin the activity, so that you have a range of ideas to consider.



# red fox



## Red Fox 4

### WONDER WORDS

What do these mean? Try using them with a partner to create different sentences.

copse

spinney

ginnel

alley

Why do you think the word 'haunt' is used for both city and valley?

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

<https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/urban-fox>

<https://www.welshwildlife.org/pressreleases/urban-fox-debate/>

How has fox adapted to city life?

If you were a fox, which environment would you choose?

List the pros and cons of urban and rural life for a fox.

How do you think people should behave towards foxes?

When you have gathered your thoughts together, you could stage a class debate.

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, WRITE

Create a short piece of writing, it could be a story, poem or piece of non-fiction, detailing a night in the life of an urban or rural fox. It will help if you collect a word hoard before starting, such as vocabulary for ways of moving.

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## Red Fox 5

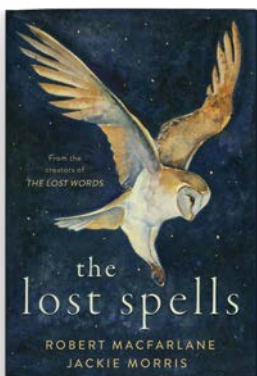
### WONDER WORDS

What does curfew mean? What sort of context can you use this word in?

Would you say the labels used for fox are generally positive or negative. Which name would you choose, and why?

### RESEARCH AND WRITING CHALLENGES

Find out about tales of foxes from different cultures. Choose a favourite and retell it using your own words and images. It could be in narrative, play, electronic or comic form.



# red fox

Choose a different animal, which you know something about, and create a riddle using kennings or two-word phrases, like those used by Robert Macfarlane for Red Fox:



‘garbage-raider . . . space-invader . . .  
curfew-breaker.’

Use these two-word phrases to form a list poem, using the more obscure ideas first, progressing to the easier ones. See who can guess which creature you have chosen.

## Red Fox 6

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What connections does the final stanza make?

What writing technique does Robert Macfarlane use to convey this?

Explain why you think the last two lines are particularly powerful.

What message do you think Robert Macfarlane is conveying?

What type of a spell do you think this is: an incantation, a summoning charm, a spell that protects, a spell that protests, a tongue-twister, a blessing, a lullaby, a psalm?

What sort of personality do you think the fox has?

How do you feel about foxes?

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, WRITE

Going back to your chosen animal in the kenning activity, extend your writing by innovating on this spell:

I am \_\_\_\_\_ – how do you see me?

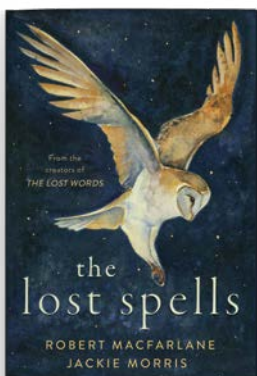
I am \_\_\_\_\_ – when do you hear me?

I am \_\_\_\_\_ – where do you find me?

I am \_\_\_\_\_ – what do you call me?

I am \_\_\_\_\_ – why do you need me?

Try and compose a strong ending to your piece.



# red fox

## Red Fox 7



### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, CREATE

Look closely at all the images of the red fox in this spell.

What do you think determined the way Jackie Morris chose to portray the fox on each particular page?

Watch this film of Jackie Morris painting a red fox as she speaks the spell:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLeRphjReqs>

Create your own set of drawings or paintings of a fox, focusing on different details. You can use your finished work in a display with your writing. Think how you would like to present it.

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, WRITE

If you could shape-shift into a fox, how do you think it would feel?

What would you smell, what would you see, what would you feel beneath your feet and with the brush of your tail?

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## Further reading

### PICTURE BOOK

*Fox* by Margaret Wild, illustrated by Ron Brooks

### NOVEL

*Pax* by Sara Pennypacker, illustrated by Jon Klassen

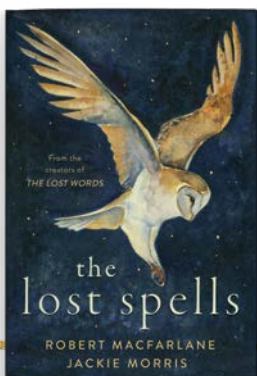
### POETRY

'The Thought-Fox' by Ted Hughes

<https://poetryarchive.org/poem/thought-fox/>

'Fox' by Alice Oswald

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/90861/fox-57ebdf5d8cd6d>



# jay

## Jay 1



### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What are the most remarkable features of this bird?

Which tree features in this illustration?



## Jay 2

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

How many characters are involved in this conversation?

What patterns can you pick out in this spell?

What type of spell is it: *protest*, *protection*, *tongue-twister*, *blessing*, *lullaby* or *psalm*?

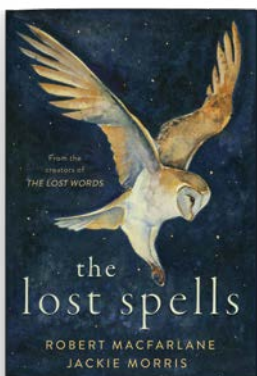
### NUMBER CRUNCHER

Create some maths questions for other people, using Year's response.

Why do you think the focus on one thousand is important?

### RESEARCH AND CREATE

Think of another cyclical pattern in nature that relies on interconnections to ensure survival and find out more about it.



# jay

Using the information you have gleaned, write a conversation spell for the continuation of this relationship.



## Jay 3

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

Which family of birds do jays belong to?

Note its scientific name, *Garrulus glandarius*, means 'chattering acorn-keeper'.

Listen to the sound of the jay:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/jay/>

Its Welsh name is Ysgrech y Coed = shrieker of the woods.

Its Gaelic name is Scréachóg choille = screecher of the woods.

It also has an ability to mimic.

Can you think of other alternative names that could be given to it?



**Dara McNulty** @naturalistdara · 10 Sep 2019

A Jay Feather, moulted amongst Blackberry brambles; found in the rain by seeking eyes, and hands, stained with "summer's blood" (Seamus Heaney). An exquisite gift from nature.



12

40

417



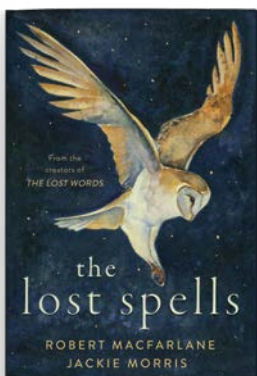
Credit: Dara McNulty @NaturalistDara via Twitter

Why is it more satisfying to find for yourself, rather than purchase something you think is beautiful?

### RESEARCH CHALLENGE

In 1880, the Duchess of Edinburgh was criticized for having a muff made entirely from the beautiful blue and black wing feathers of the jay. There was also a high demand from anglers, who used the feathers for making flies.

Find out about the history of the RSPB in the UK and the Audubon Society in the USA:



# jay

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/about-us/our-history/>  
<https://www.audubon.org/about/history-audubon-and-waterbird-conservation>



Discuss whether you think you should be able to buy bird feathers.

Find out about 'anting' by jays and other birds.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5G1DbjgyMLQ>  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKq3nR3L9\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKq3nR3L9_E)

## CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Look at a range of different feathers on the internet. Depending where they are on the bird, they have different functions: wing, tail, breast, crest.

<https://www.birdwatching-bliss.com/bird-feathers.html>

## FANTASY BIRD

Design a feather for a bird. Decide where on the bird's body the feather will be. Then create a drawing of the whole bird, writing a description of its features, habitat, diet, lifespan, predators, wingspan, weight, body length measurements and conservation status.

Create an audio file of its call.

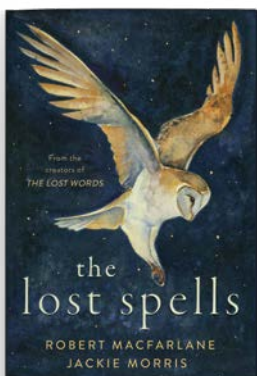
Give it a common name and a scientific name.

Using a translation app, find out your bird's name in a variety of foreign languages.

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## Further reading

*The Blue Jay* by Emily Dickinson



# moth

## Moth 1



### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, CREATE

What feeling does this painting evoke in you? Why do you think this is?

Create a night skyscape, thinking about cloud patterns, star visibility, the phase of the moon. Decide what sort of art materials will best achieve the effects you desire.

What might be silhouetted against the sky?



## Moth 2

### WONDER WORDS

Why do you think that Robert Macfarlane thinks the word 'Moth – this one soft word falls so far short of what the moth-world means'?

Why does he call the word 'soft'?

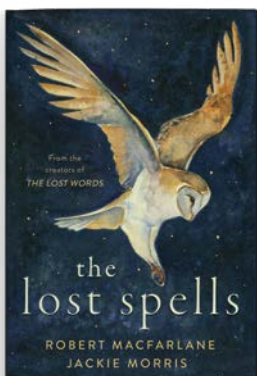
Do you think it suits the creature it names?

What is meant by 'birthed by dark'?

What images are in your mind's eye when you read :

**'thickening air to froth, then cloth, then weather'?**

And what sort of weather do you think is being referred to?





# moth

## SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, CREATE



What do you particularly notice when you look closely at this image?  
How do you think it was created?



Choose a flying creature and use a variety of images to create your own design.  
You could use a computer design app.

Try relief printing, using a flat piece of recycled polystyrene.

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/family-how-to-relief-printing>

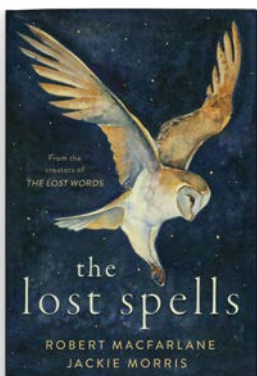
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## Moth 3

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

How is the painting on this page different, and why do you think Jackie Morris chose to do this?

What do you notice about the design of this illustration and the names of the moths?



# moth



## WONDER WORDS

What is meant by 'a broth of colours'?

## RESEARCH AND CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Allocate the moths mentioned in the spell to different groups or individuals and discover three fascinating facts about your moth.

Think about how you can display these facts most effectively – perhaps in a moth mobile?

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## Moth 4

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What does Robert Macfarlane mean by

*'Thinner and thinner wears the cloth'*?

How would you interpret the writer's thoughts about our attitude to moths?

### RESEARCH AND WRITING CHALLENGE

Look at the Identify a Moth section on <https://butterfly-conservation.org/>. Scroll through their amazing range of photographs, noting the names of any that particularly appeal to you.

Discover more about these moths:

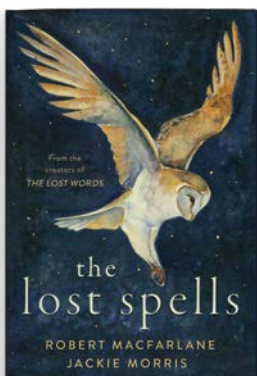
their conservation status  
size  
habitat  
their diet  
plants that they are associated with

Decide how to display your information – through an infographic, non-fiction prose, fiction, poetry, electronic presentation, drama, 3D-art composition.

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, CREATE

Draw up a Moth Manifesto, by finding out about the threats to their existence. Think of how we can counteract these effects for important pollinators. You might find it useful to look at <https://www.chrispackham.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Peoples-Manifesto-Download.pdf>.

This website also has useful ideas: <http://polli-nation.co.uk/home-3/>.



# moth

## CONSERVATION CHALLENGE



Draw up a long-term plan to create a moth-friendly habitat.  
You will need to consider:

- caterpillar diet
- nectar-rich plants that moths prefer
- conditions required by the selected plants
- area available for planting and predominant light: e.g. certain plants thrive in certain conditions such as full sun or partial shade
- sourcing and cost of plants and gardening equipment
- fund-raising activities
- responsibility for maintenance
- record of progress

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Action         |  |
| Resources      |  |
| Costings       |  |
| Time-scale     |  |
| Responsibility |  |
| Results        |  |

The RHS website has an abundance of useful information and resources, with lots of additional ideas. You might find that you qualify for one or more of their five awards.

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/school-gardening-awards>

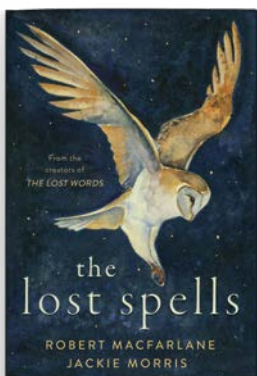
## CREATIVE CHALLENGES

Watch Austin's Butterfly:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqh1MRWZjms>

What do you think you have learned from this film?

Create a 2D or 3D representation of a moth of your choice, looking carefully at body shape and texture, wing shapes, sizes and patterns, the number of legs and the type of antennae. Decide on the scale of your work and which art materials will produce the best effects. As you are working on your design, pay attention to feedback from others, so that you produce a fine piece of work.



# moth

## Moth 5



### CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Select the names of different moths and create a summoning spell. You might want to focus on moths which have already become extinct, or those which are endangered.

You could use Robert Macfarlane's words to frame your spell:

'Hold moth-names in mouth and  
mind a while – .....

.....

.....

sing them out into the night to give moths  
back their range, their flight.'

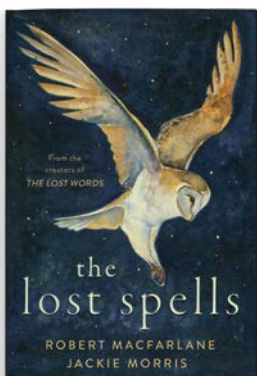
You could add a soundscape to your spell, using voices, instruments  
or electronic sounds.

## Moth 6

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

How is this painting different from the first one in the moth series?

Why do you think this is?



# moth

## CREATIVE CHALLENGE



‘Said the moth to the moon ...’

Create either:

a dialogue between moth and moon

or:

a monologue or ode addressed to the moon by the moth.

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## Further reading

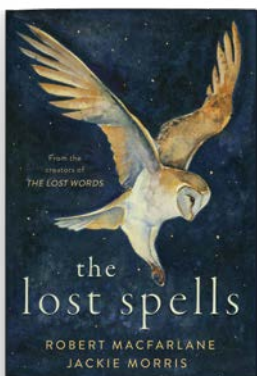
### PICTURE BOOK

*Moth* by Isabel Thomas, illustrated by Daniel Egneus

### POETRY

‘Moth’ by Anna Wigley

‘The Moths’ by Mary Oliver, [http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/mary\\_oliver/poems/15876](http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/mary_oliver/poems/15876)



# heartwood

## Heartwood 1



### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What observations can you make about this painting?



What is *dendrochronology*?

### CREATIVE CHALLENGE

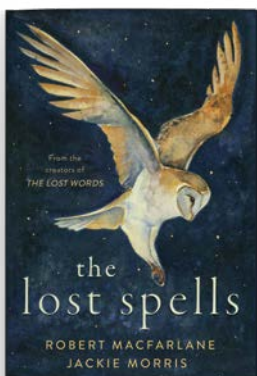
Look at different samples of cut wood from different trees. What do you notice? Create your own image of a section through a tree: photographic, drawn or painted.

### SCIENCE CHALLENGE

Using the glossary, find out what sort of moth is in the illustration. Why do you think it is so called? Check to see if you are right and find out about its life cycle.

<https://butterfly-conservation.org/moths/lime-hawk-moth>

<http://www.wildlifeinsight.com/british-moths/lime-hawkmoth-mimas-tiliae/#:~:text=Lime%20Hawkmoth%20life%20cycle%2C%20Mimas%20tiliae&text=Eggs%20hatch%20within%207%2D10,Emergence%20occurs%20i-n%20May>



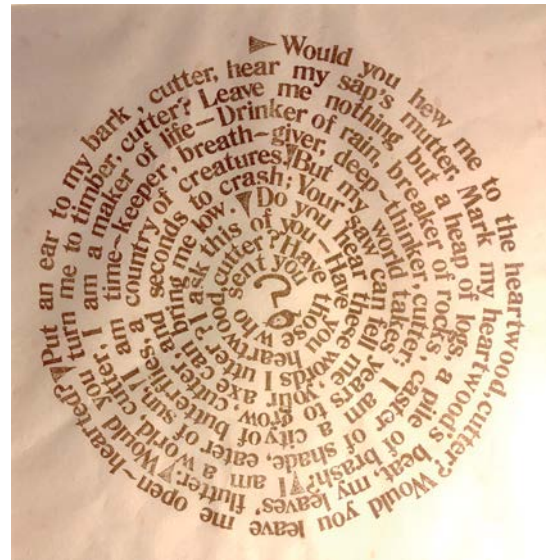
# heartwood

Robert Macfarlane wrote:



‘Heartwood: a tree’s heartwood is its innermost core. I wrote this poem (song, charm-against-harm) for any tree anywhere that faces unjust felling – and especially for the trees of Sheffield. The art is by Nick Hays and is free to use, print, speak, sing . . . Please share.’

Both of these images show the words to the spell. Which do you prefer and why?



## RESEARCH CHALLENGE

Find out why the tree cutting happened in Sheffield. Read about both sides of the argument and gather evidence for a balanced, evidence-based discussion. What do you think should have happened, and why?

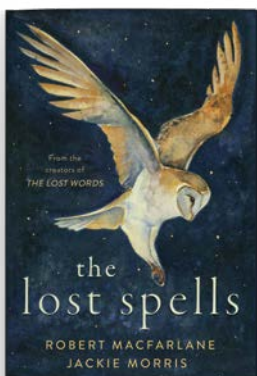
## Heartwood 2

### WONDER WORDS

What do these words mean?

- hew
- brash

What is the play on words in the first two lines?



# heartwood



## SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

Why do you think Robert Macfarlane opens the spell with a number of questions?

Who is asking them and who is being addressed?

What is meant by:

‘I am a world . . . a maker of life . . . eater of sun . . . a timekeeper . . . a breath-giver’?

Do you think trees can think?

Watch these and discuss what you find surprising:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWOqeyPIVRo>  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kHZ0a\\_6TxY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kHZ0a_6TxY)

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## Heartwood 3

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What do you think this line means?

‘Have you heartwood, Cutter?’

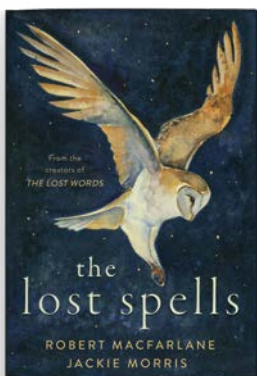
What reasons can you think of for cutting trees?

Are there rules about cutting down trees?

When replanting trees, what do you think we need to take into consideration?

Why do you think that Robert Macfarlane chose to write ‘a spell in praise of trees, not in blame of woodcutters’?

Use the glossary to identify all the creatures in this picture.





# heartwood

## RESEARCH CHALLENGE



Find out approximately how much oxygen an average tree produces.

How many trees does each person need to produce their oxygen requirements?

Which trees produce the most oxygen?

When does a tree produce most oxygen?

Find out about tropical rain forests and their importance. E.g.:

[www.sciencefocus.com/nature/protecting-the-tropicalrainforests-an-achievable-global-goal/](http://www.sciencefocus.com/nature/protecting-the-tropicalrainforests-an-achievable-global-goal/)

[www.growingairfoundation.org/facts/](http://www.growingairfoundation.org/facts/)

Working collaboratively, decide on the best way to present the information that you have discovered.

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## Heartwood 4

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

Using the glossary, identify this tree.



How does it link to the first painting in the *Heartwood* series of pictures?

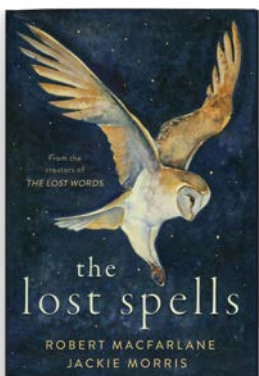
### SEEK, FIND, LISTEN

Spell Songs has a musical response to Robert Macfarlane's *Heartwood*:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xjj\\_LfKtrpM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xjj_LfKtrpM)

What differences do you notice?

How does this song make you feel?



## CONSERVATION CHALLENGE



[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/)

Plan a campaign for tree planting in your locality, with the wonderful help offered by the Woodland Trust.

Decide on the area to be planted, gain permission, and use the planning tool and planting advice on the website.

Decide on the type of planting that would best suit the selected area by researching the different species suggested for the various projects: hedge, copse, wild harvest, year-round colour, working wood, wild wood, wildlife, urban trees.

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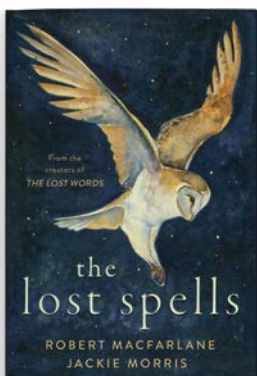
## Further reading

### PICTURE BOOK

*Memorial* by Gary Crew, illustrated by Shaun Tan

### NON-FICTION

*A Little Guide to Trees* by Charlotte Voake



# beech

## Beech 1



### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

What time of year do you think it is in this painting?  
Using the glossary, identify the tree. Which features will help you?



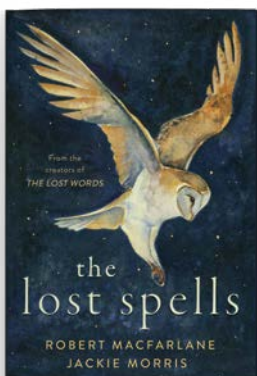
## Beech 2

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

Can you hear the wind, or can you only hear the wind when it encounters an obstacle?  
Have you listened to strong winds in the trees? How does it make you feel?  
What does the writer mean by 'Beech gives wind speech'?  
Do you think that different species of trees create different sounds in a gale?  
What metaphor does the writer use when he talks of the sounds in the trees?  
Listen to the wind blowing through forests online (there are many long examples!).  
Do you think the writer's metaphor is an accurate and evocative one?

### CREATIVE CHALLENGES

Using your voices and/or percussion instruments, try to create the sound of wind in the trees to accompany the incantation of this spell.



# beech

Create your own watercolour landscape, building up layers, so that you can see pale hills in the distance, with stronger colours and more detail in the foreground.



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## Beech 3

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK, WRITE

Beech is known as 'queen' of the trees.

It is thought the name comes from the Old English word for book, as some of the first writing in runes was carved into beech slices. Look at the trunk and see how it differs from other trees.

One superstition associated with the tree was that if you wrote a wish on a beech stick and buried it in the ground, it would come true.

In pairs, using some of these ideas and any extra information you have discovered about beech trees, create a tale, using the landscape in the illustration as your setting.

### RESEARCH AND CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Find out about beech *mast* and create a clay model of the seeds and casing.

Choose one creature that benefits from beech trees and find out more about it.  
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/a-z-of-british-trees/common-beech/>

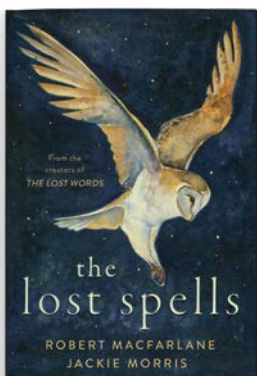
Create a large class collage of a beech tree and add associated creatures and interesting facts to your display. E.g. seventeenth- and eighteenth-century artists used to collect soot from the chimney, after burning beech wood, then mix it with water to make 'soot brown' or 'bistre'.

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## Further reading

### POETRY

'The Beech Tree's Petition' by Thomas Campbell <https://allpoetry.com/The-Beech-Tree's-Petition>



# glossary

## Glossary 1



### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

Using the glossary, find out the name of the tree and the moth.



## Glossary 2

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

Why do you think there is both a barn owl and a key on this page?

When you read this introduction to the glossary aloud, what do you hear?

Why do you think the creators of this book call the glossary both 'a puzzle and a key'?

Why do you think they feel it is important that you look, name and see things in the natural world?

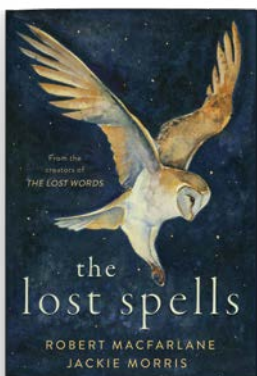
## Glossary 3

### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

How is the glossary organized?

Why are some names in black and some in yellow?

Which is your favourite page of the glossary, and why?



# glossary

## CLASSICS CHALLENGE



What are the italicized words?

Using a search engine, see if you can find the meanings of the Greek and Latin elements of some of these names.

## SCIENCE CHALLENGE

Looking at all the living things listed in the glossary, think of and list how many different ways you could group them.

Which living things occur in more than one of your chosen categories?

## IT CHALLENGE

Create a database to show common names, scientific names, habitat, etc.

## TREASURE-HUNT CHALLENGE

Each person can take it in turn to find everything listed in the glossary within the pages of the book. Note your times and see who is the most observant.

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## Glossary 4

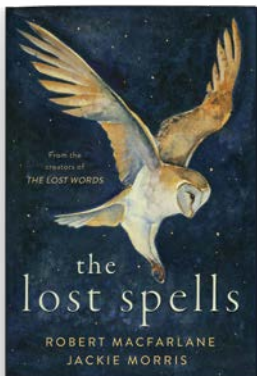
### SEEK, FIND, SPEAK

The painting at the end of the glossary shows the owl again. Why do you think this is? What else could you infer from this painting?

### CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Conjure up a story, revolving around the idea of the owl and the key, featuring many elements found within the pages of this book.

You will need time to think about this . . .



## RESEARCH CHALLENGE – FAUNA

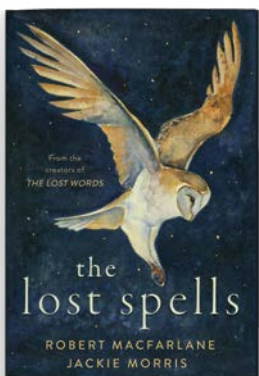


Create a fact file for a selection of creatures that are in *The Lost Spells*. Ideally, these could be completed electronically to enable import of photographs.

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Name of animal            |  |
| Features                  |  |
| Habitat                   |  |
| Diet                      |  |
| Family                    |  |
| Predators/threats         |  |
| Life span                 |  |
| Conservation status       |  |
| Further interesting facts | (e.g. folklore, myths, legends, superstitions) |

## RESEARCH CHALLENGE – TREES

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Name of tree            |   |
| Scientific name         |   |
| Deciduous/evergreen     |   |
| Height                  |   |
| Leaf shape              | (photograph, drawing, rubbing or print) |
| Bark                    | (photograph, drawing or rubbing)        |
| Seeds and how dispersed | (photograph or drawing)                 |
| Uses                    |   |





Adopt a tree: over time, keep observations of one particular tree, getting to know it really well as it progresses through the seasons. Document any changes you note in a tree journal, adding sketches, rubbings, photos, pressed leaves and seeds. Note the creatures that visit the tree too.

Create a tree spirit for your tree, thinking of their special qualities and powers.

Grow a tree from seeds that you have collected.

Create a tree identification quiz, looking at tree shape, leaf type, shape, appearance, texture and colour, seeds.

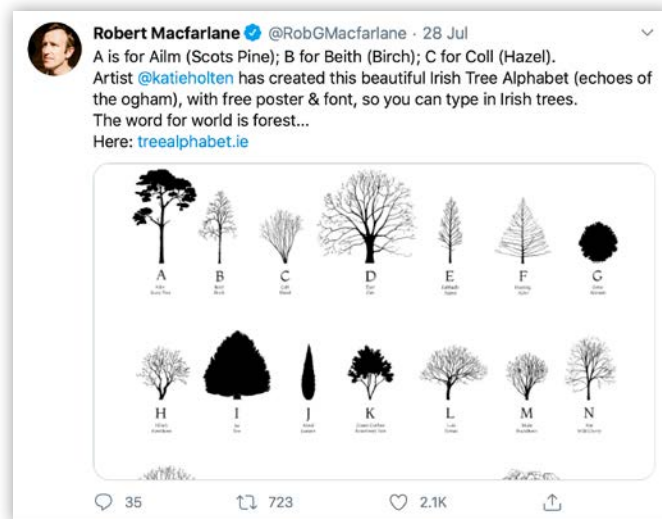
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app/>

Find out about the Ogham alphabet.

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/saintpatrick/common/pdf/activity\\_sheet6\\_en.pdf](https://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/saintpatrick/common/pdf/activity_sheet6_en.pdf)

There is a transliterator that you can use which will convert words from your alphabet: <https://ogham.co/?q=>

Look at how the Ogham alphabet has been adapted by Katie Holten in her *Irish Tree Alphabet*:



<http://www.treealphabet.ie/>

You can now write secret messages using this coding system!

## WRITING CHALLENGE: CENTO OR PATCHWORK SPELL

Create a cento, collage or patchwork spell (in Latin *cento* means *patchwork*).

This style of poem has been in use since the third or fourth century and was used by Virgil and Homer.

To do this, you need to dip into the text of *The Lost Spells*, steal some of the words and lines, and create something new.

However, you must take no more than two lines from each Spell.

Either choose text at random or choose favourite lines.

Reconstruct, by mixing the order.

When you revise and edit, make sure tenses match and the point of view is consistently either first or third person.





# glossary

Your verse will be like a quilt of discrete lines stitched together to make a whole. E.g.:



Night grows stronger, sleet falls sharp.  
A gleam, a glint,  
a shadow that slips.  
Unearthly song of an eerie singer,  
the watching tree with ancient ears  
hears,  
wears the cold;  
a time-keeper,  
birthed by dark,  
the spirit of the wild.

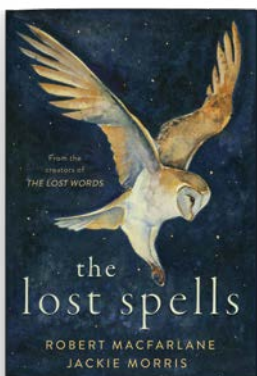
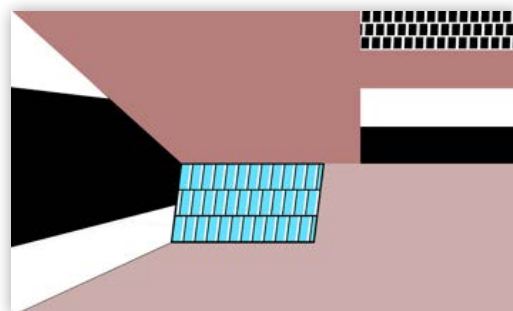
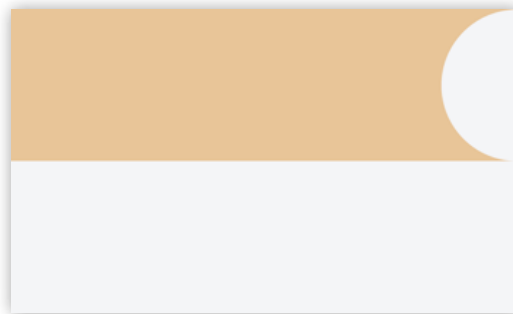
## BIRDS' ART AND DESIGN CHALLENGE

Create a triptych.

A series of three panels of a bird chosen from *The Lost Spells* (listed below), or another endangered bird that you particularly like: jackdaw, jay, swift, goldfinch, barn owl, curlew, egret, gannet, woodpecker, swallow

### CREATE

1. a representational image, in the way Jackie Morris portrays birds.
2. a stylized image – look online at the bird pictures created by Charley Harper for ideas: <https://www.charleyharperartstudio.com/catalogsearch/result/?q=bird+prints>
3. an abstract image in the digital style of Phil Barnett. Try the quiz below to see if you can identify three of his abstract birds which feature in *The Lost Spells*.





Display your work on three hinged panels and mount an art exhibition, where you can also showcase the other creative work you have undertaken on *The Lost Spells*.

Extension activity: design a mask or costume based on your abstract design.

## LOCAL SAFARI CHALLENGE

Select an area that you can familiarize yourself with in detail; it could be a playground, a road, a beach, a hedgerow, a garden, a park, a wasteland, a common, a hillside . . . whatever you choose.

You might choose to observe over a short or extended timescale.

Armed with notebook, pencil, magnifier, camera and, if possible, a bug pooter, bug viewer and binoculars, venture forth and observe. Don't forget identification guides; the Seek App is very useful for identifying plants, flowers, insects, fungi, birds and animals.

Creatures can be hidden in nooks and crannies and under stones and wood. Remember to disturb them as little as possible.

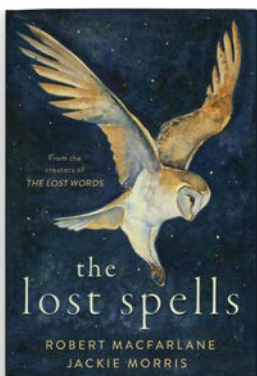
Make sure you know the rules about picking plants: <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk>. It is advisable to use samples that you find on the ground.

Annotate any sketches and make notes of what you observe.

Take photographs.

When you have collected and sorted your observations and added to them with further research, decide how you are going to present them: digitally, a multi-media presentation; in hard format, such as a book display, artwork; a safari stick (elements and observations from your study area attached artistically to a stick).

One striking example is Phil Barnett's *Patch Portrait* – collage of patch wildlife with the perimeter and contour lines picked out with the names of species that live there.



# bibliography

## Further reading



### NON-FICTION

*Red Sixty-Seven*, anthology from British Trust for Ornithology.

*Diary of a Young Naturalist* by Dara McAnulty

*Birdsong* by Madeleine Floyd

*A Bad Birdwatcher's Companion* by Simon Barnes

*Sketches of Bird Life* by C. F. Tunnicliffe

*Field Guide to the Wild Flowers of Great Britain*, Readers Digest

### PICTURE BOOKS

*The Forest* by Riccardo Bozzi, illustrated by Violeta Lopiz and Valerio Vivaldi

*The Promise* by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Laura Carlin

### POETRY

*The Lost Words* by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris

*An Explorer's Guide to The Lost Words*:

[https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/assets/000/002/837/LOST\\_WORDS\\_Explorers-Guide\\_original.pdf?1515059070](https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/assets/000/002/837/LOST_WORDS_Explorers-Guide_original.pdf?1515059070)

*Spell Songs* musicians with Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris

*An Explorer's Guide to Spell Songs*:

<https://www.thelostwords.org/uploads/The%20Lost%20Words%20Spell%20Songs%20Explorer%20Pack.pdf>

*The Bird Hospital* by Anna Wigley

