

SPECIAL REPORT

PINE MARTENS ARE BACK!

ONCE threatened with extinction in England and Wales, the pine marten is on the up, up and up – thanks to a bit of help from the Vincent Wildlife Trust.

What is a pine marten?

The pine marten is a mammal that likes climbing trees, and often makes its den high up in tree holes. It eats anything – from birds and voles to fruit. It's in the same family of animals as the badger and otter, but it is much smaller than a badger – more the size of a family cat.

Here's the bad news...

Pine martens once lived happily across much of Britain, but then people spoilt it all. The martens were hunted for their rich, brown fur, to make coats. Imagine how many pine martens were needed to make one fur coat! They were also killed by Victorian gamekeepers, who wanted to protect their birds. The destruction of woodland

habitat, where they live, was another nail in the pine marten's coffin. Sadly, during the last century, pinemartens had pretty much vanished from the woodlands of England and Wales.

...and the good news

The pine marten is back! After years of scientific research, the Vincent Wildlife Trust decided the time was right to bring the pine marten back to England and Wales (luckily the pine marten is doing very well in Scotland, so no help needed there).

How it was done

Over three years, experts at the Trust transported just over 50 pine martens from Scotland to mid-Wales. The animals have settled happily and



this year we caught a pine marten kit on one of our hidden trail cameras! Great news! The kits are hard to spot as their mums keep them well-hidden and they are mostly active at night.

What about England?

Following the success in Wales, the Trust has begun a project to return the pine marten to the ancient Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. The first few pine martens were brought to the forest last autumn and are being watched carefully. We are now waiting anxiously to see if any young have been born – our fingers are crossed!

You can find out more about the pine marten at www.vwt.org.uk.

Questions on: 'Pine martens are back!'

1) Match the **facts** about pine martens.

Size of a...

anything

Belong in the same family as a...

trees

Lives in...

pet cat

Eats almost...

kit

A baby pine marten is called a...

badger

2) Find **three** reasons why pine martens became extinct in most areas.

3) Pine martens did **not** become extinct in which part of the UK?

4) Explain how pine martens were reintroduced in Wales.

5) What does the writer say is “good news”?

6) Why is it so hard to spot a baby pine marten?

7) Why do you think the writer chose to add **sub-headings** to this news report? Do you find them helpful, or would it be simpler not to have them?

8) Here is a list of native mammals that have become extinct in all, or most, parts of the UK.

When they became extinct	
Wild cats	150 years ago
Wolves	400 years ago
Beavers	500 years ago
Brown bears	1,000 years ago

Many people would like to bring them back – do you agree?

CRAZY BUT TRUE

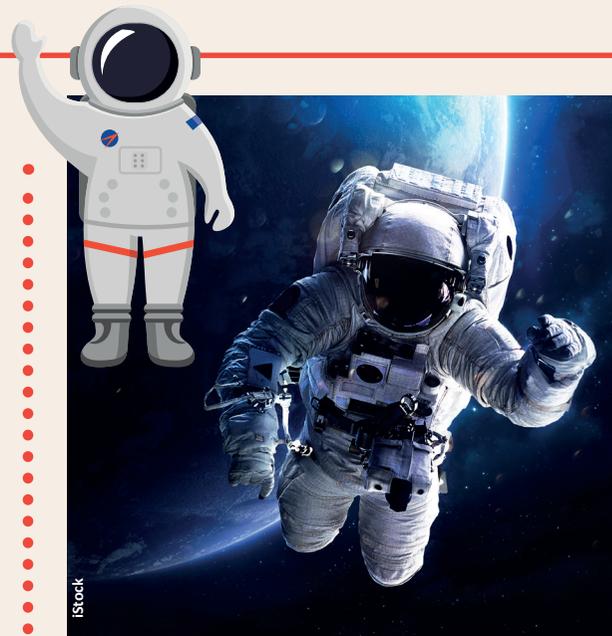


● CEREAL SUCCESS

A SPRING onion-flavoured breakfast cereal is on sale in South Korea!

The story of this strange cereal began 16 years ago. Kellogg's asked people in South Korea to vote for a new cereal flavour. It was a bit of a joke because the choices were chocolate or green onion (which we call spring onion). The company presumed everyone would choose chocolate, but no, they voted for the green onion one!

Kellogg's Korea ignored the vote and launched the chocolate one anyway. People have been asking for the onion cereal ever since! It's taken a long time, but Kellogg's Korea has finally given in and launched a green onion cereal. It has been called a "victory for democracy"!



● DO YOU WANT TO SMELL LIKE SPACE?

THE smell of space is being released as a perfume.

NASA – the American space agency – first developed the fragrance more than ten years ago to help astronauts know what to expect in outer space. They made it using descriptions from astronauts, who said the smell of space was a mix of fireworks, steak and raspberries. Wow! But now a company has got hold of NASA's recipe and raised enough money to release it as a perfume. It is called 'Eau de Space', which roughly speaking, means 'space water'!



Moo looks like he's half dachshund, half Dalmatian. Aww!

● MEET MOO, THE MISMATCHED DOG!

HOW cute is this two-tone sausage dog, who looks a little like he is half dog/half cow?!

Like many dachshunds, seven-month-old Moo has a brown and black face, but a black and white spotted body, like a Dalmatian!

His owner Victoria from Miami, USA, reveals that Moo's unique look often makes people think he is wearing a coat! She says that he loves taking naps on his back and that his fave treats are watermelon or almonds. He already has a huge following on social media thanks to his unusual appearance. Well, you'd be barking mad not to love this pretty pup!

Questions on: 'Crazy but True'

1) This week's **Crazy but True stories** are all about unusual versions of ordinary things. What are the **three** ordinary things?

Look at the story 'Do you want to smell like space?'

2) **Why** did NASA make a space perfume and **how** did they find out what space smells like?

3) What does space smell like, apparently?

Look at the story about Moo the dog.

4) Fill in the gaps.

Moo is a _____ old _____ puppy who lives in _____. His favourite snacks are _____ and _____. The writer thinks you'd be _____ mad not to love him!

5) Find the **words and descriptions** that explain Moo is a strange combination of colours and patterns.

6) Find the **words and descriptions** that show you this story is written in an informal style.

Look at the story 'Cereal success'.

7) Put the events in the correct order.

- The vote was ignored.
- Most people voted for the onion flavour.
- Sixteen years later, the onion cereal was finally launched.
- For years, people complained.
- Kellogg's asked people to vote for chocolate or onion-flavoured cereal.

8) **Democracy** is a system where something (usually a leader) is chosen by voting. Why have people said this cereal is a "victory for democracy"?

Tricky question, but have a go!