



## Making seabird and fish willow wildlife Activities for Young Seabird Ambassadors



*Looking for seabirds and fish on the beach and then make willow wildlife back in the classroom.  
Photos Lindsey Death*

### Introduction

The aim of this session is to allow children to connect with the marine environment by getting creative and having fun! This session is designed for winter time, so after a short field trip to the coast or beach to spot wildlife and other wildlife the group can return to the snug of the classroom and feel inspired to make willow fish to take home. These fish structures can also become living willow structures in their gardens or school grounds.

### Learning Objectives

- Learn about your coastal environment and which species you can see in winter time – fish and seabirds are here all year round!
- Learn how to shape willow into creative wildlife shapes
- Learn how to make a living structure which can grow in your garden
- To encourage healthy living – getting out and about if only for short blustery walks
- Have fun learning a new skills and sharing creative ideas.

### Materials Required

- Warm weather clothes and wellies for your blustery outdoor walk.
- Binoculars if you have them.
- Our 'winter wildlife spotting' form may be useful download [here](#)

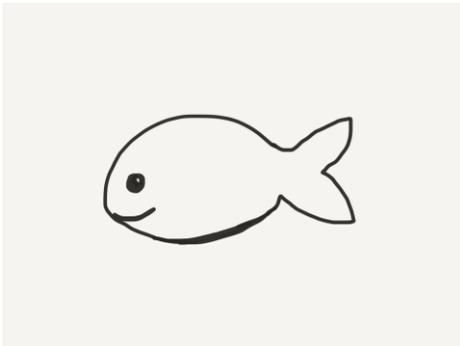


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Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

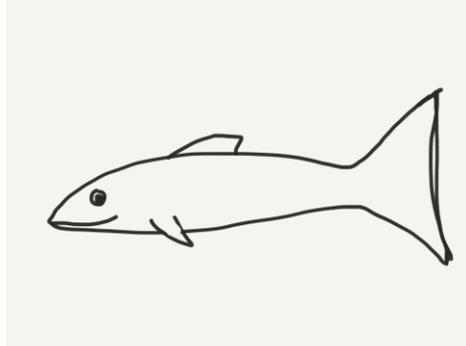


[http://ios-seabirds.org.uk/files/6414/4674/5102/Winter\\_and\\_Autumn\\_Birds.pdf](http://ios-seabirds.org.uk/files/6414/4674/5102/Winter_and_Autumn_Birds.pdf)

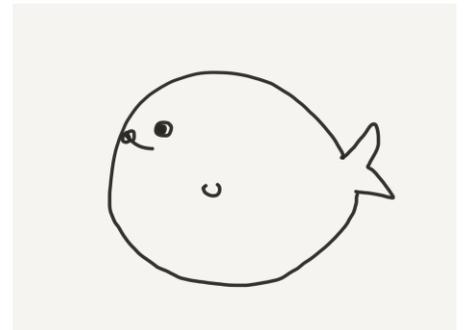
- Willow. You can often gain permission from land owners to harvest willow, or you can buy on line. The best willow is that which has been cut and dried for a few weeks, it can then be re-soaked in water for extra bendiness, but freshly harvested willow is good too.
- Secateurs
- Gloves
- Colourful string can decorate your fish.
- Here are three fish shapes to inspire your design – simple, puffer and long fish



Simple fish



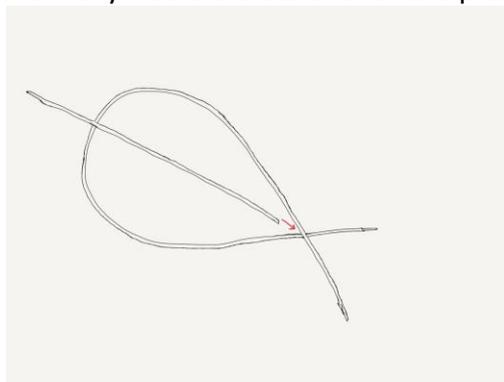
Long fish



Puffer fish

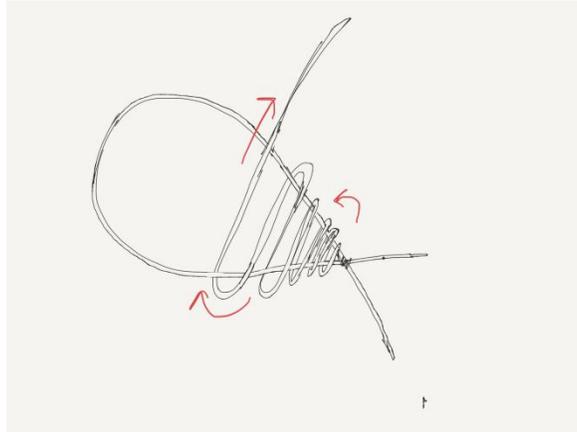
## How to make a fish

1. A willow rod is called a withy and has a 'tip' (thin top), 'belly' (inner curve), and 'but' (the fatter end) Before using willow it is better to 'work' the willow either across your knee or through your fingers depending on the size of the withy or rod.
2. Insert the tip end of the withy into the cross over of the pre-made fish shape.



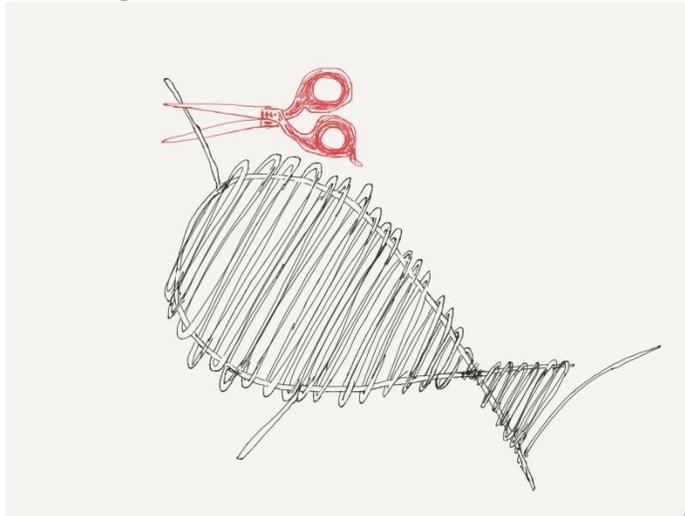
Step one

3. Carefully thread the 'but' end through the centre of the fish shape, around the outside, and back through the centre. Keep your work tight with your left hand if you are right handed, your right hand if you are left handed



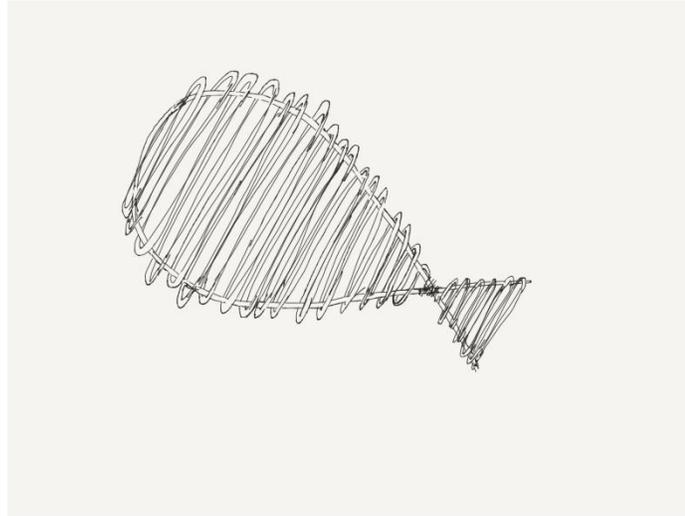
Step two

4. As you run out of willow replace it with a new piece. Start with the 'but' end if you finished the last piece with a but end, leaving the ends resting against the main frame. Try to leave the ends on the same side of the fish (front or back).
5. You can use string wrapped around the willow to make it more colourful.
6. Weave to the end.
7. Trim any willow sticking out



Step 3

8. Finish!



Step four

Ta da!

## Stay safe

- Only an adult to use secateurs
- When bending the willow, careful that the end of your willow isn't sticking into someone else!
- Stay safe when out and about in blustery weather – your teacher will know when and where is safe.

## Feedback

October 2014. We asked "What one word describes you experience or what you have learnt today?"

