

COOL NEWS

Inspiring stories from around the globe...

Grey seals love these marine forests



GET INVOLVED!

Big Seaweed Search



Heading to the **beach** this month? Well, while you're exploring **rock pools** on the look out for **sea creatures**, keep your eyes peeled for different types of **seaweed**, too! These **marine algae** form the **forests of the sea** – providing **shelter** and **food** for thousands of animals. Scientists from the **Marine Conservation Society** and the **Natural History Museum** want to see how **environmental change** is affecting seaweed – and they need **YOUR help!** They're asking people **all over the country** to take part in the **Big Seaweed Search**, a huge species-spotting mission aimed at recording some of the **UK's common seaweeds**.

● For more info and to get involved, head to bigseaweedsearch.org/take-part



There are over 650 different seaweeds around the UK!

Jays plant new woodlands!



Studies have shown that **over half the oak trees** in two new **Cambridgeshire** woods were planted not by **conservation groups** or **landowners** but accidentally, by birds called **Eurasian jays**!

Every **autumn** the **shy woodland crows** bury **acorns** underground – up to **3,000** of them per bird! They return to these secret stores during **winter** when **food is scarce**, but they can't always remember where the nuts are kept. As a result, some uneaten nuts eventually grow into **adult trees**.

One of the flourishing forests studied by the team from the **UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology** had originally been a **farm**, while the other had been **grassland**. This type of '**passive rewilding**' is made possible when **scrubland** is left alone to **regenerate**. Brilliant!



Jays can carry up to five acorns at once, storing most of them in their throat!

3

FAST FACTS!

SIGN LANGUAGE

It's **International Day of Sign Languages** on **23 September**, so let's find out about these amazing methods of communication...

1 Sign languages allow **deaf** people to communicate **visually**, using **hand gestures**, **facial expression** and **body movement**. More than **300 different sign languages** are used around the world, by **72 million** people!

2 Just like **spoken language**, sign language changes based on **where people live**. For example, **American Sign Language** and **British Sign Language** are very different, even though they're both based on **English**! Plus, signers can have '**regional dialects**' based on their home areas.

3 Excitingly, a team of **four British teenagers** have just won a **£20,000 prize** to develop an app called **BSL: Educate-2-Translate**, which **translates** sign language into spoken language (and vice versa) in **real time**, using **videos**. Wow!

Anyone can learn a sign language! Check out tinyurl.com/bbcsign for some top tips.



Many deaf people have '**name signs**' which are unique to them!

Snakebite apps save lives!



Four species of snake are responsible for 95% of all snake bites in India - this Russell's viper is one of them



In India, venomous snake bites kill up to six people every hour – but thanks to some amazing new apps, victims are getting life-saving treatment faster than ever before.

While in the UK we might associate mobile phone apps with ordering taxis or takeaways, people in rural India are using them to request help and even rescue after being bitten! Snake apps like *Sarpa* and *Snakepedia* connect victims to expert medical care as quickly as possible, maximising their chances of survival.

The apps also include identification guides which help witnesses report which species was responsible for the bite. This helps medics select the correct anti-venom. Ssss-super stuff!

Robotic hand plays Nintendo!

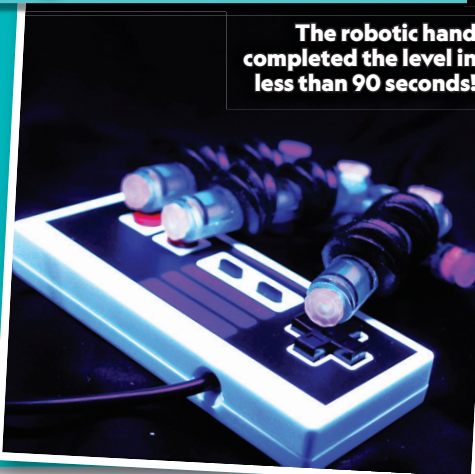


Scientists from the University of Maryland have created a 3D-printed robotic hand which can play

Nintendo's *Super Mario Bros.* – and win!

The extraordinary hand is a flexible soft robot that's powered using water and air, rather than electricity. As a result, it can bend and move in an agile way – including using its fingers to press buttons on a controller!

A special computer program controls which finger presses which button and when – and it can do so without any help from a scientist. As a result, the robotic hand was eventually able to win the first level of the original *Super Mario Bros.* game by itself. Awesome!



The robotic hand completed the level in less than 90 seconds!

HEROES
OF THE
MONTH

FRIENDSHIP BENCH GRANDMOTHERS



More than 600 grannies from Zimbabwe in Africa have volunteered to help people suffering with anxiety and depression. In Zimbabwe, these conditions are known as *kufungisisa* which translates as 'thinking too much'.

Though *kufungisisa* is a common problem, there are not enough specialist doctors to help everyone. So psychiatrist Dr. Dixon Chibanda came up with a plan – he would train grandmothers to offer support and guidance! Patients sit with the grannies on wooden 'friendship benches' for 'talk therapy'.

Since the scheme started in 2007, friendship bench grandmothers have helped over 30,000 people annually, in more than 70 communities across Zimbabwe. And the project is now run in Malawi, Zanzibar and even New York in the USA. Go, grannies!

MAKE IT A DATE

Key events for your diary!

SEP
4



International Culture Awareness Day

Shout-out to our feathered friends!



SEP
5

International Day of Charity

A great day to help others!

SEP
8



International Literacy Day

Celebrate reading and writing!



SEP
22

World Rhino Day

Find facts about these big beasts at natgeokids.com/uk/rhinos/

SEP
24



World Gorilla Day

An awesome day for apes!