

# Week 4 - Wherries

## Activities



WATER, MILLS  
& MARSHES



### Activity 1 - Picture Perfect

Read the descriptions of life on board the wherries, telling of the time when hundreds of wherries sailed the waters of the Broads National Park.

Bring those words to life by creating a piece of artwork based on the scenes described. It could be a drawing, a painting, a model, a collage it's up to you! Feel free to use one, two or all three stories as the inspiration for your artwork.

#### 1. Colourful Wherries at Acle

Two wherries were moored near Acle bridge. They were remarkable for their brilliant colours. The top of the mast and the sides of the hold were painted bright nearly lime green; the square wooden chimney of the cabin was bright red, as were the rigging blocks and tabernacle; the cabin door was dark blue with yellow bands; and the top of the tiller and its handle, the gaff and the flag frame were white. The other wherry had red, white and blue bands round the top of the mast and beneath that a two foot band of gleaming brass. The flag, tabernacle, blocks and cabin roof were bright red and the tiller and cabin door painted blue and yellow.

**Activity 1 continued on the next page..**



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All these colours were reflected in the water, where they shimmered and melted one into another whenever a breath of wind or a passing boat sent ripples running towards the shore.

William Dutt, *Naturalist*, 1903

## 2. Sailing on Breydon Water

Did I ever tell you about George Harrod and Billy Thurgar? Well, around 1890 they had a wherry called “Test”. One day they were in Yarmouth with a lot of other wherries loading their hold when a strong westerly wind blew up. Well, that wind had all those boats stuck in the harbour unable to get away for three days! When the wind finally dropped the “Test” was the first boat to get out and as they sailed into Breydon Water, George asked Billy to look astern and count how many wherries were following them. It took poor Billy 10 minutes to count them all; there were so many behind them. When he’d finished he told George he could see 61 sails!

Jack Cates, *Wherryman*, 1961

**Activity 1 continued on the next page..**



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### 3. Wherries in all Seasons

In the summer the wherryman's life is an enviable one. He lounges at his tiller while he sails between sunny meadows, musical with lark's song. Wild flowers of every colour deck the banks by which he glides, leaping fish make rippling rings around his wherry. But in the winter few people would want his job. Then the whirling snow squalls hide the marshlands and heap snow drifts against the river walls; cutting hail smites the wherryman's face and ice-coated ropes numb his hands; the icy wind blears his eyes and the frost whitens his beard and fringes his eyelashes with beads of ice.

**William Dutt, Naturalist, 1903**



46 NORWICH. — River from Fye Bridge. — LL.



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## Activity 2 - Wind Vanes

Understanding the weather and especially which direction the wind was coming from was a vital skill for all wherrymen. At the top of each mast they had a wind vane to show them which way the wind was blowing, when it changed direction and, like a wind sock at an airfield, how strongly and constantly it was blowing. The wind vanes were also used to identify whose boat it was – each had a different design.

Use the PDF from the Broad's Authority Geldeston Lock Project (a link to this can be found on this week's activity page) to design the wind vane you would want to have on your wherry.



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### Activity 3 - Make your own Weather Station

Why not start recording what the weather is like at your house? Make your own wind sock and rain gauge for your weather station. Use them to monitor and record the wind's direction and strength and how much rain you get each day. You could also get a thermometer to record the temperature.

Follow the instructions provided by RSPB's Wild Challenge Activities. They even tell you how to make fog in a jar!

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/wild-weather>

Copy this URL into your search bar or follow the link



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## Activity 4 - Make a Sailing Boat

There are lots of sites out there to help you make a variety of sailing boats. Below is our favourite. You could create a whole fleet of ships with all different designs and colours. Float them in your bath tub or kitchen sink and keep them safe for when Lock Down ends and you can launch them on streams, rivers or even the sea!

[www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Cardboard-Ship](http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Cardboard-Ship)

Copy this URL into your search bar or follow the link



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We would love to see your creations from the activities we have given you.

Take photos and tag us on social media!

Instagram: **@broadsnationalpark**



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