



Animals and the environment



The iceberg snapped away from the Larsen Ice Shelf.

Ancient world revealed in Antarctica

An iceberg in Antarctica has revealed a world unseen for perhaps 120,000 years. The chunk of ice, which broke away from the Larsen Ice Shelf in north-west Antarctica in July 2017, is four times the size of London. As it floated away, it uncovered an area of water never before seen by human eyes.

Now, UK scientists are heading to Antarctica to find out more about this newly revealed watery world. They will brave some of the coldest temperatures on Earth to go in search of new creatures and materials. Dr Katrin Linse, a marine biologist, is very excited to be leading the mission. "We don't know anything about it; it has been covered by an ice shelf that is several hundred metres thick."

Scientists are in a race against time to collect their data. Linse says that it is "important we get there quickly before the undersea

environment changes". This is because sunlight can allow modern bacteria and plants to grow.

The Larsen Ice Shelf has been affected by global warming several times in the past 30 years. Global warming is partly the result of the burning of fossil fuels such as coal and wood. This causes gases to be released that trap the Sun's heat in Earth's atmosphere and make the planet warm up. Huge chunks of ice split away from the Larsen Ice Shelf in 1995 and 2002, although the shelf had been stable for many thousands of years before that.

The scientists will leave in late February and spend three weeks on a research ship.



Scientists may find deep-sea oddities like this weird worm.

DID YOU KNOW?
An ice shelf is a thick floating platform of ice that is connected to land.

Amazing Antarctic creatures

Giant-scale worm

One of the South Pole's nastiest creatures, the giant-scale worm is 25 centimetres long and has sharp, pointy teeth.



Springtail

Tiny Antarctic springtails pump glycerol – a chemical like antifreeze – around their bodies so they don't end up frozen.



Emperor penguin

These colourful birds can go up to 120 days without food in freezing temperatures so they can look after their eggs.



Southern elephant seal

Don't be fooled by their funny noses, they weigh up to four tonnes and they're very aggressive and quick to fight off rivals.

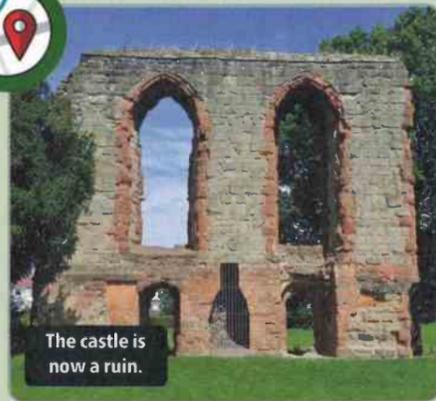
PLACE OF THE WEEK

Caludon Castle Park, Coventry, Warwickshire

Caludon Castle was never really a castle in the sense of defending the locals against invaders – it was more of a grand house with castle-like bits added later. It's now a ruin but it started out as a hunting lodge in the 13th century. Folklore claims that the castle

was home to St George, patron saint of England – although he lived many centuries before the house was built. Still, even if the legend isn't true, you can still enjoy the play area and see plenty of nature in the parkland that surrounds it.

Find out more at coventry.gov.uk/caludoncastlepark

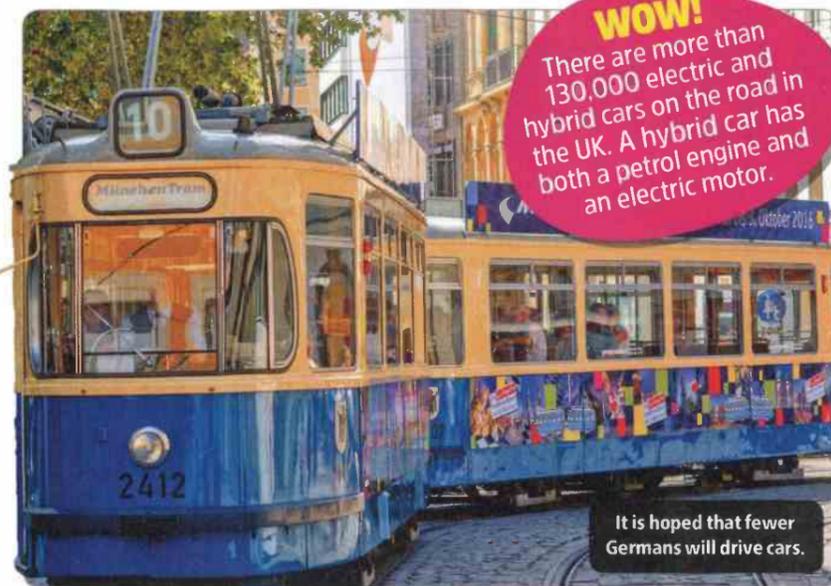


The castle is now a ruin.



The park offers lots of beautiful walks.

Animals and the environment



WOW!
There are more than 130,000 electric and hybrid cars on the road in the UK. A hybrid car has both a petrol engine and an electric motor.

It is hoped that fewer Germans will drive cars.

Germany's plan to reduce pollution

Germany is considering a free public-transport plan to help cut air pollution.

The government hopes that if more people use trams, buses and trains, there will be fewer polluting cars on the roads. Petrol and diesel-powered cars release gases and particles that can damage the environment and people's lungs.

The European Union (EU) has set air-pollution targets for countries across Europe, including the UK. Germany and other countries including France and Spain failed to meet these targets. The UK also breaks the EU air-pollution rules in 16 cities.

The proposed plans also involve low-emission zones. Petrol and diesel-powered

cars emit exhaust fumes that contain polluting gases and dangerous particles, so they will not be allowed in these areas. However, drivers will be allowed to enter these areas if they drive an electric vehicle (these don't produce toxic fumes) or have a special device fitted to their car to reduce the pollution it creates.

The plan is that five cities across Germany will try out the new transport scheme before it is applied to the rest of the country.

Germany is home to some of the world's best known car companies including BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen. The German government hopes that a free public-transport scheme would make the country well known for being environmentally friendly.

Animal of the week Northern hairy-nosed wombat



WOW!
After wombats give birth, the babies live in their mother's pouch until they are fully developed.

The territory of the northern hairy-nosed wombat in Queensland, Australia, has shrunk so much that the animals are critically endangered. Although they may be mistaken for funny-looking dogs, these marsupials are closely related to koalas and kangaroos.

- **LIFESPAN IN THE WILD:** 20 years
- **HABITAT:** Sandy soil in central and northern Australia
- **DIET:** Grass and leaves
- **FAVOURITE THING TO DO:** Dig burrows with their strong, spade-shaped claws to stay out of the sun
- **FUN FACT:** These furry creatures can reach speeds up to 25mph.

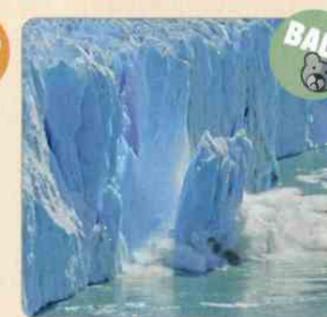
Good week / Bad week



GOOD

Butterflies

The rare white-letter hairstreak butterfly has been found breeding in Scotland for the first time in more than 130 years. Their eggs haven't been seen in Scotland since 1884. Butterfly spotters should look out for the distinctive white W on the white-letter hairstreak's wing.



BAD

Sea levels

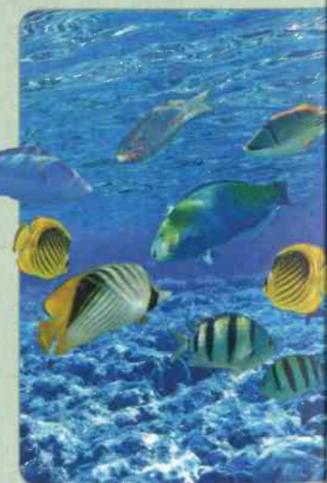
By 2100, sea levels could be rising by nearly a centimetre every year, warn scientists. As Earth's climate gets hotter, the polar ice caps are melting at an alarming rate, plus, as the sea warms up, it expands. These effects combined mean sea levels could rise by 65 centimetres in the next 80 years.



Do fish sweat?

Charles Fusari, Aquarium team leader, ZSL London Zoo

Unlike humans, who sweat or shiver to regulate our temperature, fish don't need to – they just adapt to the temperature of the water they're in. That doesn't mean they don't have a preference. This is why at our aquarium we make sure all the tanks are the right temperature.



Do you love animals? ZSL London Zoo's Junior Zoo Academy is a great way about creatures from all over the world. Find out more at zsl.org/experiences