

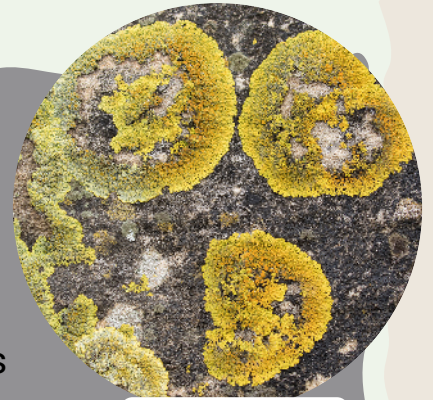
LICHEN

Lichens might look like plants but they are not! They are a combination of fungi and algae (and sometimes bacteria as well). The fungus and algae work together to survive, the fungus gives the structure and the algae produces food (through photosynthesis).

Lichens are generally found growing on trees, rocks, stone walls and other hard surfaces like outdoor window sills.

Lichens can live for hundreds of years! There are lots and lots of different kinds. We can divide them into three different types- bushy, leafy and crustose (flat against the tree etc).

They are very sensitive to the atmosphere and they can help us work out in there is air pollution in an area.



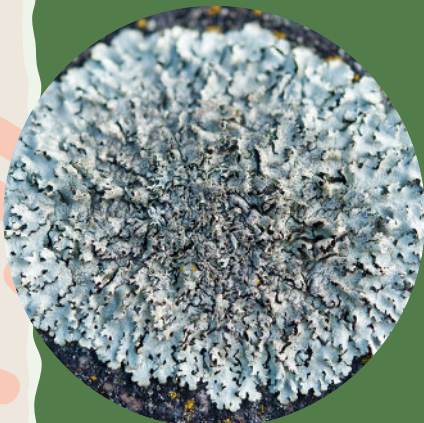
Crustose Lichen



Bushy Lichen



Leafy Lichen



Activities you can try:

- Explore a stone wall! Bring some magnifying glasses if you have them and investigate what living things you can find growing on the wall.
- Draw a lichen. Once you have found a lichen, take a closer look. Draw the branching structures!
- Notice the different colours- try a colour scavenger hunt for natural items.