

PCN[®] junior

The Magazine for Budding Pest Controllers

December 2020

MERRY
Christmas

HAPPY NEW YEAR

From all at PCN[®] Junior



issue **2**

INSIDE

Page 6
**What's hiding
in your local
shopping
centre?**



Page 10
**Christmas
Crossword Puzzle**

Put your knowledge to the
test with our festive challenge



WELCOME



The Magazine for Budding Pest Controllers

Welcome to the Christmas edition of PCN® Junior, a magazine brought to you by the creators of Pest Control News®.

This edition contains stories, activities and information about some of the wildlife we get here in the United Kingdom, as well as activities that you can take part in at home to help pass those cold, dark winter evenings. PCN Junior aims to inject some extra out of the box thinking in to learning and education, this time with some Christmas-themed twists around the pests that appear in and around our homes at this festive season.

Catch up with Clara's latest adventure, find out if partridges really live in pear trees and grab your pencils to add some colour to the snowman and his feathery friends on page 11!



What is PPE?

P PE stands for personal protective equipment and it's a very broad term that includes protective gear worn by people in all different jobs including pest control officers, nurses, firefighters, factory workers and police officers!

Every time a nurse puts on their uniform, they are putting on PPE, not only to protect themselves, but to help protect patients and keep everything clean.

In the pest control industry, it's used to limit human contact with pests and the dangerous substances and chemicals that we use to tackle pest problems.

PPE is used to protect eyes, head and neck, ears, hands and arms, feet and legs and lungs and skin. Types of PPE range from face masks to stop harmful chemicals entering a pest controller's body, to full bee suits to protect from stings!



Mouse in the house



Clara woke suddenly and sat straight up in bed, looking around her into the darkness. It was Christmas Eve and she was sure she could hear jingling sleigh bells in the distance. As she looked out of the window she couldn't see anything but stars in the clear night sky. She lay back down in her bed and closed her eyes tightly, willing herself to go to sleep so that Santa could visit.

The next time Clara woke up she was certain that she could hear a noise downstairs. This is it, she thought, it must be Santa! She crept out of bed and tip-toed down the stairs, taking care to avoid the third step down which always creaked. As she reached the living room door, she crouched down and put her eye to the keyhole. As she gazed through the keyhole into the living room she could see the twinkling lights of the Christmas tree, and a huge pile of presents underneath!

All of a sudden, Clara heard the squeaking noise again, and saw the pile of presents moving.

Even though her view of the room was limited to what she could see through the keyhole, she could see enough. As she looked around she expected to see Santa adjusting the presents on the pile, the squeaking sound made by his boots squeaking on the shiny wooden floor as he moved. But Santa was nowhere to be seen.

The squeaking started again, but this time sounded more like crying. Clara opened the door a crack and peaked in. Her gaze followed the sound of the squeaking and then she saw it, a small grey mouse in a knitted jumper was frantically running in and out of the presents, looking really upset.

"Are you ok?" enquired Clara, looking at the mouse with concern, as she pushed open the door. "Oh gosh!" said the mouse, "you startled me, I wasn't expecting anyone to be awake at this time!" As Clara looked at the mouse, she noticed that he was wearing a jumper with the words "Team Santa" on it. "Are you a friend of Santa?" Clara asked. "Not for much longer if I don't find the missing present!" exclaimed the mouse.

"Well, maybe I can help you find it?" suggested Clara. "Well... I'm not really supposed to talk to anyone, but if I don't find this present then Santa is going to be very upset with me" he whimpered. "We better get to work then!" said Clara eagerly.

With those words the face of the little mouse lit up, "thank you, thank you, thank you!" he squeaked. "By the way, I'm Clara" said Clara softly, "what's your name?" "Snowy" replied the mouse, "I'm Santa's chief on-the-road rodent". "Wow, that sounds like a really fun job!" said Clara, "I'd love to do a job like that when I grow up!" she said. Snowy beamed with pride and blushed, his little cheeks turning almost as red as his jumper.



"Right, let's find this missing present so that you don't get in trouble with Santa!" declared Clara with a determined look on her face, "Just make sure we're quiet so that we don't wake my mummy and daddy up, or they'll be very cross".

They worked together, with Clara gently opening drawers and cupboards and Snowy running underneath the sofas and working his way between the different parts of the sofa and cushions in search of the present, but it was nowhere to be seen. Clara and Snowy looked at each other across the room with an equally worried look on both of their faces.

Knowing that they'd looked in every possible place in the living room, they moved on to the kitchen and split up again. Snowy went through the cupboards and checked behind the bottom cupboards drawers, and Clara did the same for the top. Snowy had been checking the same cupboard for a while, when Clara asked "Have you found it down there?" but got no reply from Snowy. Worried that he had got lost or stuck, Clara opened the cupboard and to her surprise there he was, eating Clara's cereal! Clara scowled at Snowy, until he calmly explained that cereal was one of his favourite foods and that he eats around 20 times every single day!

As Clara stood back up to continue looking, she noticed that there was a gap in the blinds on the kitchen window; as she walked towards it to close the gap, she noticed something in the garden that she hadn't seen before. Clara squinted, focussing her vision on the mystery item for a few seconds, taking in its shiny paper wrapping and blue ribbon and bow. She suddenly realised, this must be the missing present! Eagerly, she unlocked the back door so that she could dash out into the dimly lit garden and grab the present.

She ran out, picked up the present with both hands and quickly returned to the warmth of her kitchen. As she got back inside, she opened up the cupboard to show Snowy what she had found. "Is this it?" Clara asked hopefully. "Oh Clara, thank you so much! You've made me the happiest mouse in the world!" beamed Snowy.

Relieved, Clara placed the present on the floor next to where Snowy was, but she was confused to see that he didn't move, and continued to gaze at Clara, "I think you should read the writing on the tag" said Snowy with an excited expression on his face. Clara picked the present up from the floor and read the writing on the label.

"Dear Clara,
Thanks for being
there for my
friends!
Merry Christmas!
From Santa"



"Oh wow! Thank you!" exclaimed Clara with an excited grin on her face, as she picked Snowy up and brought him in for a hug! "You're welcome" replied Snowy, "Santa said you'd been really good this year, and especially kind to his good friend Bella the bee, that's why it was so important that we found the present!"

"Anyway, I must be going now", continued Snowy, "I'll make sure I visit you again next year, and hopefully without losing your present!" he chuckled, "Merry Christmas, Clara". As he scampered out of the house, Clara quietly put the present under the Christmas tree before making her way back upstairs, the sound of sleigh bells jingling in the distance.

She tucked herself back in to bed, closing her eyes tightly and remaining determined to stay there until the morning. She was excited to enjoy Christmas with her family, but just as excited about the next time she'd see Snowy again.



What's hiding in your local shopping centre?

Usually at this time of year, shopping centres are the go to place for getting decorations and doing last minute* Christmas shopping. With all of the different kinds of shops in there selling a range of different items, a number of different pests can also be visiting too!

Sometimes when people think they have been bitten, it may not be insects. It can be something called 'Cable bugs' which are not bugs at all! These are charged fibres which are attracted to skin and can work their way in and cause a rash. Areas where there are lots of static electricity can make this worse.

Carpet beetles *Anthrenus verbasci* can feed on wool carpets and other natural fibres. Even dust (mainly made of our dead skin cells) can collect under escalators!

Lots of pests like to eat the same food that we do, with heating during the winter the insects that normally love summer can be found inside too, like fruit fly (*Drosophila melanogaster*). These can appear at any time of year and don't just like fruit but all sorts of foods. Luckily food places do loads of cleaning and can easily avoid fruit fly infestations.





Clothing moth larvae can eat their way through wool jumpers, scarves, gloves...all your winter woolies!

Christmas trees can hide lots of pests...but luckily all the trees that are imported are carefully checked as they come into the country.

Shopping centres often have special air curtains over the doors, you can't see them, but you can feel them! That warm air over your head as you walk in is keeping flying insects out!

A PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE

Partridges are non-migratory birds and are native to Europe, Asia, Africa and Middle East

- Despite the 'partridge in a pear tree' line in 12 Days of Christmas, partridges are actually ground nesting birds
- Males (cocks) can be identified by a chestnut horseshoe pattern on their chest, some females (hens) carry something similar but it's never as obvious
- Partridges lay the most eggs of any birds, with an average of 15 eggs per lay!
- Young partridges feed on insects and invertebrates, whereas adults love to eat things such as wheat, corn, barley, thistle and more!
- They're very sociable birds and live in groups known as "coveys". Most coveys consist of a pair of birds and their chicks, then as the chicks reach adulthood they form coveys of their own
- Partridges aren't great flyers, but they can take to the sky to escape predators when threatened
- Grey Partridges call with a harsh 'kerr-ik' when they are alarmed it is a rising 'rik-rik-rik-rik'





Festive Robin Strawberries dipped in...

CHOCOLATE

These festive robins are messy fun and super easy to make in just 3 simple steps.

1. Wash your strawberries and melt some baking chocolate in the microwave at 30 second intervals. **(Be careful as your bowl might become quite hot.)**
2. Allow your chocolate to cool slightly then dip your strawberries in the melted chocolate and set them on a plate, stalk side down.
3. Add edible eyes and sweets for a beak

Eat & Enjoy!

Please always ask a grown up for help



Christmas

Crossword Puzzle



Across

4. The band who sang 'Fairytale of New York'
5. Green-furred grump who lives in Whoville
6. A long sock hung up by children on Christmas Eve
7. A December calendar usually filled with chocolate
9. A bird like a large chicken traditionally eaten at Christmas
10. Jesus' mother

Down

1. Santa Claus usually enters houses by coming down this
2. Animals with large antlers that pull Santa's sleigh
3. The day after Christmas Day
8. Will Ferrell's character's name in the movie 'Elf'





FUN FACTS



Latin: *Mus musculus*



MOUSE

Awesome Facts!

- Mice seem to always be hungry and they eat up to 20 times a day!
- Mice enter homes between October and February for shelter, food and to escape the cold weather
- By flattening out their bodies, mice are able to squeeze through gaps as small as 6mm due to their hinged rib cage and flexible skull plates
- Mice' incisor teeth never stop growing, which is why they gnaw on wires to grind them down and keep them under control
- Their tails can grow as long as their bodies and can sometimes even be longer
- A mouse was cloned by scientists in 1997 and it went on to live for over 2 and a half years (equivalent to 95 human years)
- African Pygmy mice are only 1 to 3 inches long
- Mice are brilliant climbers, and use the scales on their tails to help them along!

" Mickey Mouse was the first character to be animated and used in cartoons. Mickey paved the way for other cartoon mice such as Speedy Gonzales, Stuart Little and Jerry (from Tom & Jerry) "