



Chinese ice buildings light up night sky

A spectacular ice festival is taking place in the Chinese city of Harbin until 25th February this year. 300 'ice miners' spent most of December cutting tens of thousands of blocks of ice from the nearby frozen River Songhua. The blocks were then transported by truck and stacked high to build towering castles, pagodas, bridges and even a restaurant to entertain Chinese visitors. The type of ice used from the river is important for constructing the ice sculpture because of its strength. Ice miner, Wang Qiusheng explained, 'Artificial ice isn't that thick, and isn't strong enough to stand in the wind.' The ice sculptures can be seen at night for miles around when they are lit up in an array of bright colours. The festival also hosts sporting events such as ice hockey, ice skating, speed skating and Alpine skiing competitions. This year only Chinese tourists are permitted to attend the festival because the borders are still closed due to the global pandemic.



*Pictured: The Chinese ice city of Harbin lit up at night
Source: @bbcweather on Twitter*

Starlings defend themselves against bird of prey



*Pictured: Starling murmuration over Eastbridge
Source: Airwolfhound*

The Wildlife Trust has reported a spectacular sight that can be seen in the sky during cold weather at this time of year. Known as a murmuration, thousands of starlings all swoop and dive together as they come to roost at dusk. One witness in California, USA caught this amazing natural phenomenon on camera. The large mass of starlings could be seen trying to escape a huge bird of prey by grouping together for safety because it is much more difficult to attack one bird when thousands of them are swirling around in an enormous flock. Other reasons for starlings performing murmurations are thought to be to keep warm at night or to gather together so that they can communicate useful information such as where the best feeding grounds might be. Look out for this breath-taking sight on your lockdown walks!



The Hong Kong fridge that keeps on giving

After seeing a film about someone who had done the same thing, Ahmed Khan decided to place a community fridge in the Hong Kong street where he works. He painted it blue and put a sign on the door saying, 'Give what you can give and take what you need to take.' The fridge is filled with food, anything from instant noodles to biscuits and tins of food. The idea is that those in need take what they need and then others donate what they can so the fridge is never empty. Some people have even been known to put towels and shoes in there, should anyone need them. Khan went on to explain, 'It's like a dignity, that when you go home, you open your fridge to get food. So, I want the people to just feel like that. Even if it's a street, it's their community, it's their home, so they can simply just open it and then just put food there and collect the food.'



Pictured: Jeff Rotmeyer from the charity ImpactUK has set up a similar project for the homeless in Kowloon, Hong Kong Source: @SCMPnews on Twitter

Your thoughts on last week's news...

I think that anyone who wants to have a pet should be checked first to make sure they can look after it properly.

Edwin – age 7

I think not everybody should be allowed a pet because some people are allergic, like my mum.

Jenson – age 9



What was your opinion on this week's news? Visit our discussion area, found here:

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It depends because in some religions you can't buy pets, but you can give them as a gift. It also depends on the person who wants that pet because if they can't take care of it, they shouldn't be allowed to have one.

Baishta – age 10

Yes, anyone can have a pet, so long as they have the time and money to take care of it.

Faye – age 10

/ think...



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