

Spring has Sprung!

Trees and hedgerows are currently adorned with colourful blossom. Plants and trees that will go on to produce fruit, grow buds at first, which flower once warmer weather arrives in the spring. This is the blossom that we are seeing now. The flowers attract bees



Pictured: Cherry blossom. **Source:** Canva.

and other insects, which pollinate them by transferring pollen between different flowers. After pollination, the flowers will fall away, making space for fruit to form. Blossom trees are very special in some countries. In Japan, Hanami is a special festival held to celebrate its much-loved cherry blossom trees, known as Sakura, and the arrival of spring. Every year, around the end of March and beginning of April, crowds flock to enjoy the canopies of delicate pink blossom. In the UK, a number of common trees produce blossom at this time of year, including hawthorn, blackthorn, and apple trees. There is also a huge range of kept gardens and parks containing diverse collections of fruit trees.

Island Rescue

Three sailors have been rescued from a remote Pacific island after being stranded there for a week following an accident involving their fishing boat. The fishermen's boat was struck by a large wave, damaging the outboard motor. When the mariners attempted to make contact with coastguards, they found their radio had run out of battery. Luckily, the men managed to swim to a small, nearby island called Pikelot Atoll, where they cleverly fashioned a 'help' sign using palm fronds. The search for the sailors began in early



Pictured: Desert island. **Source:** Canva.

April after they had been reported missing but rescue efforts were initially hindered due to bad weather. Guam rescuers were later joined by a US Navy team and one other coastguard crew to search an area of over 100,000 miles! Navy aircraft spotted the mariners' huge 'help' sign, and the men were rescued shortly after and returned safely to their families.

Can you learn to persevere?



I think that if you keep being positive and if you don't give up, you can learn to persevere.

Ava

World's biggest 3D printer

The Advanced Structures and Composites Center (ASCC), at the University of Maine, in Orono, USA, has unveiled the world's biggest 3D printer! The printer is able to print entire homes and make completely recyclable neighbourhoods. Called 'Factory of the Future 1.0' (FoF 1.0), it is four times larger than the previous Guinness World Record holder, which is also located at the university. The FoF 1.0 is able to print objects up to 30 metres long, by about 10 metres wide, by 5 metres high, and has an impressive



production speed of 227 kilograms of material an hour. 'This new technology allows UMaine-ASCC to scale-up its research and production of its innovative biobased 3D printed home technology,' said MaineHousing's Development Director Mark Wiesendanger. 'This effort creates another means of producing quality affordable housing, while further driving costs down, and using abundant wood residuals from Maine's sawmills.'

Would you like to live in a home that has been created by a 3D printer?



Pictured (Right): Factory of the Future 1.0.
Pictured (Left): A home produced by the world's previous largest 3D printer.
Source: UMaine Advanced Structures and Composites Center Facebook page.

Sapphire Tower

Puya alpestris, commonly known as Sapphire Tower because of its turquoise-blue flowers, is a rare plant that only blooms once every 20 years! Horticulturists at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, UK, have released pictures of their plant flowering. As there were no hummingbirds around, scientists at the gardens have been trying to help the plant to reproduce by carefully hand pollinating with a paint brush. Horticulturist, Alberto Trinco said, 'Each flower only lasts a few days, giving us a limited window of time to give nature a helping hand. In the absence of its natural pollinators, we will attempt some hand pollination instead. It is very slow-growing, so to witness its spectacular blooms is both exciting and rare. Hopefully pollinating the flowers with the brush to obtain seeds will allow us to secure the

presence of this amazing species in our collection for future generations to come admire.'

Did you know that some plants only flower once every 20 years?



Pictured: The *Puya alpestris* and Alberto Trinco.
Source: Birmingham Botanical Gardens Facebook page.

Can you learn to persevere?



I think persevering is really important and if you try hard, you can reach your goals.

Patrick

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