**Fruits, seeds and their dispersal**





**Horse chestnut or conker**

**(a takeaway)**

The shiny brown seeds are enclosed in a prickly case formed from the ovary wall. When ripe this splits to release the seeds. The seeds are a good food source for small mammals; some are carried away and buried as a winter food store. These often get forgotten so will have a chance to grow.

**Cleavers (a hitch-hiker)**

Pairs of small round fruits, the leaves and stems are all covered in hooked bristles. The bristles cling to animals’ fur so seeds get carried away. Long pieces of stem, with many fruits, may be seen trailing from animals’ coats.

**Sycamore**

**(wind dispersal)**

After fertilisation each of the two carpels develops a wing on one side. As the fruit ripens the two carpels separate and the off-centre wings make it spin helping to keep it in the air.

**Blackberry (a juicy fruit)**

This is a collection of individual fruits, each with a seed in the centre. It is juicy, shiny and brightly coloured to attract animals, particularly birds. The fruit is eaten but as a hard coat protects the seed it passes though the digestive system and is deposited in the animal’s faeces.





**Poppy (a pepperpot)**

The poppy capsule is full of small black seeds. When the seeds are ripe, small holes develop around the top of the capsule. As the stiff stalk is knocked by passing animals or blown by the wind, hundreds of tiny seeds are thrown out.

**Gorse (an exploder)**

As the fruit ripens, the fruit wall dries and twists until the two halves of the fruit wall are pulled violently apart and the seeds shoot out.

**Thistle (wind dispersal)**

The small single-seeded fruits are suspended beneath parachutes formed from the sepals.

**Yellow flag Iris (water dispersal)**

The elongated capsules split to release relatively large seeds into the water.