

**STOCKINGS, SNOWMEN
AND SPROUTS**

What children love and loathe
about Christmas

THE CAT'S WHISKERS

In search of the snow leopard

FOOD & HOME

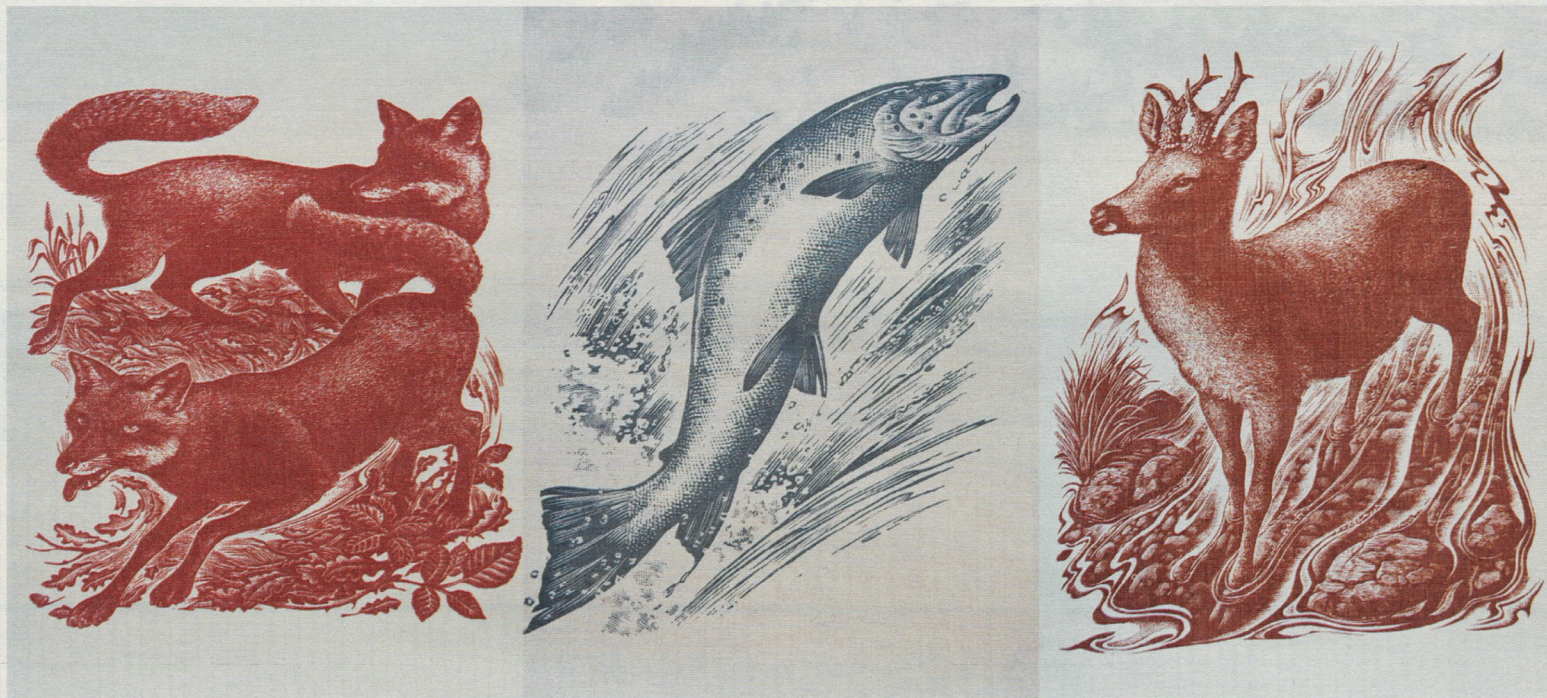
Little chefs cook up a treat; a
family's life in the Alps

Frost fair

Get yourself beautifully wrapped



Design notebook by David Nicholls



TEA TOWEL FUTURES In fashion they refer to the Lipstick Index to gauge the economic climate: lipstick sales tend to go up in a recession as women treat themselves to a relatively cheap luxury. If there is a homeware equivalent it is the tea towel. Over the past few years this humble kitchen linen has been the focus of designers using the medium as an affordable canvas for their artwork. The ones here feature images of foxes, fish and deer by the wood engraver Andrew Davidson, printed on Scottish linen by the wallpaper and textiles company Lewis & Wood. They cost £10 each or £29 for the three (01453-878517; lewisandwood.co.uk).



SHOW STOPPER The ceramics designer Kathleen Hills is known for her white tableware items featuring sections of traditional prints. This is one of her new pieces, a vintage decanter that has been given a modern ceramic stopper. The idea is simple, the effect charming. It costs £82 from Roost Living (020-7485 3455; roostliving.com).

PLENTY OF PLUCK Here's one of those things that one absolutely does not need, but might just get a thrill of satisfaction by owning: a Christmas tree made of feathers. Just because it's gorgeous. It costs £16 from Anthropologie (00800-0206 8476; anthropologie.eu).



TRUNK CALL Gallery Libby Sellers and the designer Fabien Cappello will be making the most of discarded Christmas trees by transforming them into stools. London-based clients can even arrange to have their tree collected to be made into a perch of their own. From £480 (libbysellers.com).



MADE IN BRITAIN The new All Star wallpaper by Barneby Gates features constellations whose metallic stars are given a slightly corroded finish. It creates the effect of movement as the celestial bodies leave trails of stardust in their wake. As with all of the company's papers, it is printed in the Midlands. A 10m roll costs £65 (barnebygates.com).