

WOODLAND HABITATS



Woodland Habitats: Content Page

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The Scottish Wildlife Trust's Discovery Den




The Scottish Wildlife Trust manages a network of over 100 wildlife reserves across Scotland and is a member of the UK-wide Wildlife Trusts movement.

The Trust successfully champions the cause of wildlife through policy and campaigning work, demonstrates best practice through practical conservation and innovative partnerships, and inspires people to take positive action through its education and engagement activities, such as this pack.

For more information, visit the Scottish Wildlife Trust website [here](#).

How to Navigate the Discovery Den

- 1. Start here!** This curated pack of activities will help you discover woodland habitats and wildlife, from learning to exploring to helping.
- 2. Activity Key.** To help you find the types of activities you like in this pack, check out the [Activity Key](#). Each activity page will display its relevant icons in the top right corner.
- 3. Printable.** Activities throughout this pack have printable pages for tech-minimal delivery. Print out prior to your activity and hand out to your group (and re-use where you can!). These are denoted by the  icon at the bottom right-hand side of activity pages.
- 4. Cross-curricular.** This pack has different links to outcomes in the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence. See the [Curriculum Links page](#) at the end of the pack for details.
- 5. The web portal.** We have other packs just like this one! You can find other downloadable packs by heading over to the Discover, Learn, Play section on our website [here](#). You can also find individual activities (those included in this pack, plus more!) which you can filter through to find those that suit your needs.

We would love to see you taking part in the activities! You can share with us by using **#DiscoverLearnPlay**

Find us on social media



The Activity Key

To help you find the types of activities you like, each activity page will display its relevant key icons on the top right corner.

Each activity can be used independently, or several used together to make a longer session, depending on your children, time, space and available resources.

Length of time



Up to 15 mins



30 mins



45 mins



Over an hour

Location



Outdoor only



Indoor or outdoor

Activity Type



Mindfulness



Active



Getting science-y



Communicating



Creative



Ice Breaker



Helping nature

Welcome to the Woodland Pack

It is important to understand how everything in nature is connected – including us! As a society, we are increasingly disconnected from nature; we are spending less time in nature and often forget how much we rely on it to survive. Spending time outside and learning about how living things depend on each other is important when re-establishing our connection to nature. Plus, spending time outdoors can improve health, reduce stress, increase confidence, and many other amazing things!



This pack and its resources are designed to help children:

- Explore woodlands and start to foster a deeper connection with them
 - Investigate the life that lives in the woods
 - Understand the threats woodland habitats are facing
- Discover different actions that can be taken to help protect our woodlands

There are **three sections within this pack** and each section has corresponding resources that can be used to support nature discovery, learning and play. The suggested age range for these activities is **8 – 12 years**, although most of the activities can be adapted for older and younger learners.

Each activity can be used independently, or **several used together** to make a longer session, depending on your children, time, space, and available resources.

At the end of the pack, you can find *Additional Notes for Educators* which includes session tips, health & safety, and the *Curriculum Links*, which breaks down the **curriculum outcomes for each activity**.

Section 1
Connecting to Woodland
Section 2
Exploring Woodland Wildlife
Section 3
Key Threats and How to Help

Scottish Woodlands

Woodlands are truly amazing! Scotland's woodlands are home to **172 protected species** including pine martens, Scottish crossbills, black grouse, capercaillie and an impressive 75% of the UK's red squirrel population.

But it's not just wildlife that rely upon woodlands. Research shows that **humans are happier and healthier when surrounded by nature** – simply spending time outdoors brings a host of benefits for our physical and mental health.

8000 years ago, much of Scotland would have been forested. A great wild wood would have been home to wolves, bears, beavers and wild boar!

Learn more about woodlands on our YouTube channel by clicking the icon below



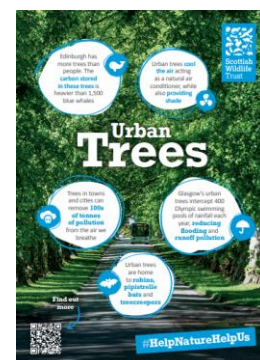
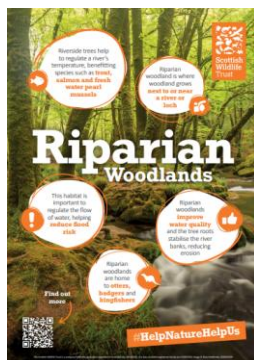
Woodland benefits

Woodlands aren't just outdoor playgrounds or refuges for humans. They provide **food and shelter** for thousands of plants and animals and support more invertebrates than any other habitat. They are great at **absorbing carbon** as they grow, keeping it locked up for hundreds of years. They also help **reduce flooding** and improve our **resilience to drought**.

Learn more about important **riparian woodland**, **temperate rainforests**, and **urban trees** through our #HelpNatureHelpUs posters.

You can download the posters (with lots of fun facts) from our website [here](#).

#HelpNatureHelpUs



What the Trust is doing to help protect our woodlands

Almost **half of our wildlife reserves** include woodland habitats. Our reserves team work hard to ensure they are managed appropriately so they can flourish. This includes tasks such as removing invasive plant species, planting the right trees in the right places, and managing grazing.

Our **Little Assynt Tree Nursery** (part of the **Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape** partnership) has been providing trees for woodland planting for over 10 years. Over the past decade we've grown over **300,000 native trees!** We collect all our seed and cuttings locally with a small team of lovely volunteers and they are grown before going out to find their forever homes in the surrounding area.

Coigach & Assynt
LIVING LANDSCAPE



Scottish Woodland

Some things to spot in Scotland!

Whatever the season, a visit to any woodland awakens your senses. There's so much to see, hear, smell, touch and even taste, no matter the weather. Trees are magic at helping you to forget your worries. Who doesn't love balancing along a fallen tree trunk, collecting a cone or smelling cherry blossom.

Here are a few things to look out for...



Ancient woodland

Ancient woods, at hundreds of years old (or more!), are one of Scotland's **richest habitats** in terms of biodiversity. Special communities of plants and animals found in these woods are not found elsewhere. With ancient woodland now **covering just 2.5% of the UK**, this important habitat is in sore need of protection. Some plants like **bluebells, primrose and wood anemone** are good indicators that a wood is old.



Changing seasons

It is quite spectacular how **woodlands change over the seasons**. From flowers and wildlife reawakening in spring, to the fall of red, orange and yellow leaves in autumn. **So why do leaves change colour? Chlorophyll** is made in leaves on sunny days (by photosynthesis) and creates the green colour. Shorter, colder days means less sunlight, which means chlorophyll stops being made and the green colour fades!



Caledonian woodland

For millennia, **Caledonian woodland** blanketed lochsides and glens in Scotland. Largely made up of **Scots pine trees**, Caledonian woodlands are home to myth, legend and rare wildlife. These woodlands are rich in biodiversity and home to species such as **red squirrels, capercaillie and various deer**. Only 16,000 hectares remains of this once vast habitat!



Bluebells

Woodlands are home to an amazing variety of plants. One of our most recognisable woodland flowers is the **bluebell**, with its deep violet-blue bell-shaped flowers. In **spring** these flowers bloom and cover woodland floors like a colourful carpet. They are also special as the UK has **half the entire world population!**

Scottish Woodland

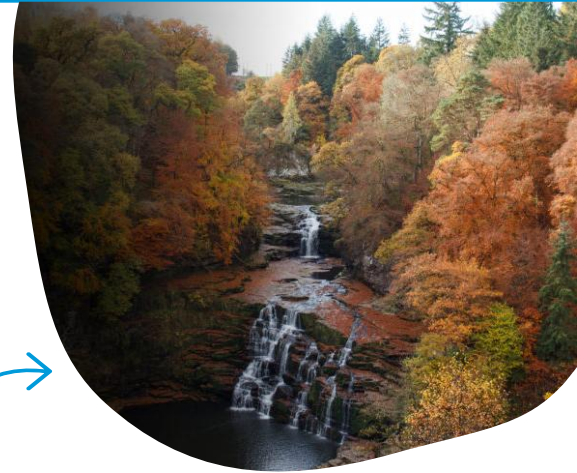
Make a day of it!

Visit our Falls of Clyde Reserve and Visitor Centre

[Falls of Clyde](#) is a beautiful reserve nestled in [New Lanark](#).

A long, narrow gorge with the River Clyde flowing through, it is bursting with wildlife and other amazing things to see!

It has three dramatic waterfalls, pictured here is [Corra Linn](#).



[Badgers](#) are a famous resident at Falls of Clyde, with between 50-60 within the reserve. Badgers are largely nocturnal so you may not see them out on a walk, but there are plenty of signs showing their activity.

The Visitor Centre staff run [Badger Watch](#) events throughout the summer. Keep your eyes peeled on our events page [here](#) to find out when.



Learn more about
badgers on our
YouTube channel by
clicking the icon below



Watch some camera
footage of the Falls of
Clyde badgers on our
YouTube channel by
clicking the icon below



Over 100 bird species have been recorded at Falls of Clyde, including [dipper](#), [raven](#) and [kingfisher](#). You may also spot [Daubenton's bats](#) feeding over the river in the evenings, as well as [otters](#) pottering along the riverbank.



Dipper



If you head out on a walk around [Falls of Clyde reserve](#), you can take part in the woodland wildlife trail along the way – how many of the species can you spot?

You can also join the reserve rangers for a host of seasonal, nature-themed family activities. Highlights include guided walks and wildlife watching events. Visit our website [here](#) for more events and to book online.

Planning a Session

This pack contains a variety of different **woodland themed activities**, from warm-up games to creative crafts to outdoor exploration. **Each activity can be used independently, or several used together to make a longer session**, depending on your children, time, space, and available resources.



Most of the activities link nicely together to create a longer session, but we have picked out a few below that you could start with. The examples below may follow the activity flow of:

Warm up game
Introduce topic



Main activity
Fostering
curiosity



Reflection activity
Discuss and solidify
learning

As leaders, it's helpful to structure outdoor education sessions, but it's important to stay flexible. **Child-led exploration and play is important**, so if your group become inquisitive around something, take longer on a certain activity they are enjoying, or ask off-topic questions, it's fine to go along with it. Your sessions may end up looking differently than planned, but that is ok!

Session Idea 1:

Activity 9:
Woodland Bird
Wizards



Activity 19:
Woodland
Warden



Activity 16:
Recycled Bottle
Bird Feeders

Session Idea 2:

Activity 5:
Woodland
Seasons



Activity 6: Tree
Huggers



Activity 7:
Beautiful Bark

Session Idea 3:

Activity 18: Pine
Marten Musical
Trees



Activity 3: Tracks
and Trails



Activity 15:
Protect our
Woodlands Poster

Section 1: Connecting to Woodland

This section is all about helping children foster a better connection with woodland habitats.

Even if you aren't near any woodland there are plenty of activities you can do!



In this section you will find **7** activities:

1. [Natural Feathers](#)
2. [Muddy Masterpieces](#)
3. [Tracks and Trails](#)
4. [Nature's Rainbow](#)
5. [Woodland Seasons](#)
6. [Tree Huggers](#)
7. [Beautiful Bark](#)

Each activity can be used independently, or combined to create a longer session, depending on your children, time, space, and available resources.

To find out the curriculum links for each activity, check out the [Curriculum Links](#) page at the end of the pack.

Activity 1: Natural Feathers

Educator Notes

Get creative and design a bird masterpiece by using natural objects you can find outside

Background:

Many birds have **evolved striking feathers**, making them some of the brightest animals on Earth. Their colours and markings have different functions from social status to attracting mates.



If you head out into woodland, a park, or garden (or even to a window), you can hopefully see an array of colours, from a blue tit's brilliant blue to a sunny yellow goldfinch to a red-bellied bullfinch!



You may have noticed that sometimes a male and female of the same species have different colourings – an example being the mallard duck. The males have their striking green head and feathers compared to the muted brown females. This is common across many bird species, where the **male has bright feathers to attract a female mate!** Can you see the difference between the male and female bullfinch in the photos above?

What you will need:

- Printed activity sheet
- Container(s) to collect natural materials (e.g. Tupperware, bucket)
- Natural materials such as leaves, petals, grass
- Eco-glue (optional)
- Colouring pens/pencils (optional)



An example!

Instructions:

1. Before starting, set boundaries with your group so that they know what area to stay in. Make sure you know your area and remind children about any poisonous or prickly plants to avoid!
2. Head out to collect natural materials – these will be used to fill in the bird's body. Have your group think about their design. Do they want their bird to stand out with bright colours? Do they want its feathers to be a warning to other birds to stay away? Or do they want it to camouflage in with its surroundings?
3. Remind your group to always try to find fallen materials rather than picking directly from a living flower or tree.
4. Once finished collecting, give everyone a printed activity sheet. They can use the natural items to build the bird's body. They can simply place or glue the items to the sheet.
5. You can add some colour by either colouring in sections of the template, or by painting some of the objects collected and use them to create different prints – lots of room for creativity!



INFORMATION KEY

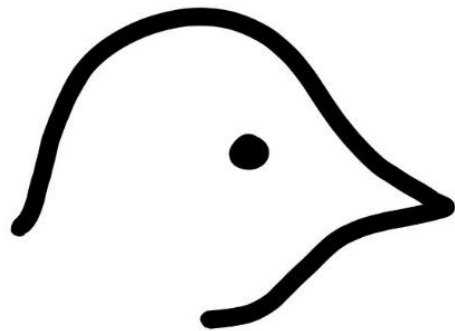
Length:

Location:

Activity Type:

Natural Feathers!

Create a piece of art using this bird template. Do you want your bird to stand out with bright colours or camouflage with its surroundings?



Activity 2: Muddy Masterpieces

Educator Notes

Give the trees some faces! This creative and messy activity can help bring the woodland alive in a whole new way

Background:

This activity allows children to **explore and connect with their environment** whilst they search for nuts for eyes, leaves for hair, or sticks for eyebrows! Squelching in mud can bring so much joy (although some coaxing may be needed at the start!) as well as having important benefits to children's cognitive development.

There is lots of room for creativity here, and hopefully you end up with a woodland full of weird and wonderful creatures like these.

What you will need:

- An outdoor space with trees
- Some fallen natural materials such as sticks, leaves, pinecones or ferns
- Soap and water
- Trowels or small spades
- Buckets

Instructions:

1. Head outside – make sure there are lots of trees. Before starting, set boundaries with your group so that they know what area to stay in. Make sure you know your area and remind children about any poisonous or prickly plants to avoid!
2. Encourage your group to talk about their ideas. Children can work on their own or in pairs/small groups. You could add a little competition and do a vote at the end. Are they going to create a face of someone they know or imagine one? Are they going to make an animal face instead? What sort of natural materials will they need to create it?
3. Head off to gather the natural materials. Remind your group to take things from the ground and avoid picking from living plants.
4. It's time for the mud! Using a trowel, dig a hole (between 5 to 20cm deep). Dig out the soil and fill the bucket. If the soil is dry, slowly add water until the mud is sticky and malleable. You can test the mud on a nearby tree – if the mud sticks, it's good to go!
5. Everyone should find a suitable tree for their muddy masterpiece. They can start taking the mud (a good few handfuls should do) and sticking it to the bark of the tree and mould it into the shape they want. Press down the edges of the mud so that it holds firmly onto the tree.
6. Using the collected natural materials, it's time to decorate the mud faces - sticks can become whiskers, pinecones can become eyes! Hopefully lots of weird and wonderful muddy creatures will emerge.
7. If children would like to talk about their creations, encourage them to do so – and listen to other people's stories too. Lastly, make sure to wash muddy hands afterwards!

INFORMATION KEY

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:   



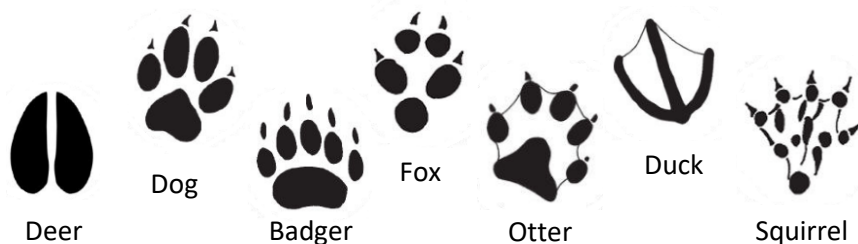
Activity 3: Tracks and Trails

Educator Notes

Go for a walk in search for signs of woodland life...

Background:

Wildlife can sometimes be hard to spot, but there are **signs** to look out for that show animals have been hanging around. Scientists often rely on these signs to help them understand animal behaviour. Signs include **calls, burrows, leftover meals, territorial markings, fur, droppings and tracks**. How many can you spot on your walk?



Length:

Location:

Activity Type:

INFORMATION KEY

Some footprints, known as tracks, you might spot!

You might even find some treasure to bring back with you, whether a nibbled nut or a left behind feather.

If you find a footprint on your walk and would like to add an extra element to this activity, follow the instructions on our activity guide for **how to plaster cast it** and take it back with you to keep and identify!



Printable activity guide

What you will need:


- Printed activity sheet
- Identification guides, e.g. for footprints (optional)
- Magnifying glasses (optional)

Instructions:

1. Before heading out on your walk, read the [Visiting Woodlands Safety](#) page.
2. Encourage everyone to think like animal detectives! Bring along your printed spotter sheet(s) to help guide what you look for. If you have any guidebooks or magnifying glasses, hand them out too. Remember to look high, low and close up in search for animal signs.
3. Look closely at the ground to see if you can find animal footprints. Soft mud, frost and snowy ground are good areas to explore as footprints show up more clearly.
4. Animal droppings (i.e. poo!) are excellent signs to find. If you find some poo, why not investigate it? Who's poo is it? What does it smell like? You could also break it apart (using a stick) to see what the animal had eaten - look for fur, tiny bones, berries and seeds in the poo.
5. Never touch animal poo with your hands as it carries bacteria and can cause illness, and always stay away from dog poo. Wash hands after you've been exploring outdoors.



Discover animal tracks and signs

 <p>Look for animal footprints in mud, sand or snow.</p>	 <p>Owls spit out bits (pellets) of their prey they can't digest.</p>	 <p>Look for pine cones that have been stripped by hungry Squirrels.</p>	 <p>Molehills are signs that moles are nearby</p>
 <p>Look under hedges and in banks for rabbit holes.</p>	 <p>Birds shed their feathers when they are damaged.</p>	 <p>If the trail is continuous, it's a slug. If broken, it's a snail.</p>	 <p>Mammals can leave flattened grass in their tracks.</p>
 <p>Animal fur can get caught on barbed wire and fences.</p>	 <p>Look for hedgehog poo with bits of beetles in it.</p>	 <p>Nests are a surefire sign that birds are breeding. Hooray!</p>	 <p>Song thrushes leave behind broken snail shells after meals.</p>

©corvine welch 09








How to go plaster casting

wildlife
watch

Scottish
Wildlife
Trust

What you need:

- plaster of paris
(from a pharmacy) 
- an old 500g margarine tub for mixing it in 
- a stick or spoon for stirring 
- water 
- strips of card, 10cm wide and long enough to fit around the footprint 
- paperclips 


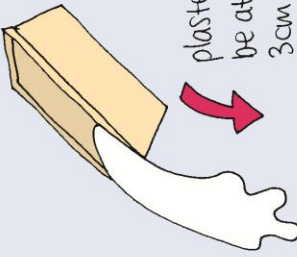
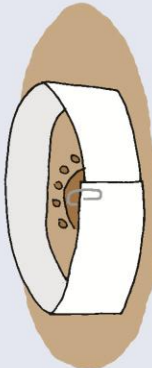


- 1 Find a footprint and clear away any twigs and leaves from the area around it 
- 2 Make a circle with the strip of card, join the ends with the paperclip, and push it into the ground around the footprint 
- 3 Mix 5 tablespoons of dry plaster with water until it is like smooth cream 
- 4 Pour the plaster into the card collar. Wait 5-10 mins for it to set then dig it out 
- 5 Take home, wash, identify and label 

Illustration: Corinne Welch © Copyright Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts 2015

Activity 4: Nature's Rainbow

Educator Notes

Head outside and try to find as many colours as you can to create a rainbow – it's super simple but super fun!

Background:

Nature is full of colour, from the yellow daffodils and purple bluebells in spring to the red, yellow and orange leaves littering woodland floors in autumn. This activity is great at helping your group **tune into nature and engage their senses**.

What you will need:

- Printed activity sheet on white card
- Outdoor space (ideally with lots of trees, bushes, plants)
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Double-sided tape

Instructions:

1. You can either pre-prepare the rainbows for your group or make them together. We have provided a rainbow template on the next page that you can print, ideally on white card.
2. Cut the rainbows out and then stick double-sided tape on one side of each rainbow, leaving the other side of the tape covered until activity time.
3. If you don't have a printer or would like the group to make their own rainbows, simply ask everyone draw a rainbow on white card and follow the same steps of cutting it out and sticking on the tape.
4. It's time to head outside for the colour hunt! Before starting, set boundaries with your group so that they know what area to stay in. Make sure you know your area and remind children about any poisonous or prickly plants to avoid!
5. Peel off the top cover of the sticky tape – remember to collect the rubbish. Encourage everyone to search for natural objects of different colours and stick them on their rainbow.
6. Remember to avoid picking living things and collect objects that have fallen on the ground. If picking something, only take a little bit from each plant – we need to leave lots for the wildlife!
7. Give your group anywhere between 5 and 10 minutes to search for their colours and create their rainbow. Bring everyone back together to show their rainbows. If children would like to talk about their creations, encourage them to do so and listen to other people's stories too.

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:   

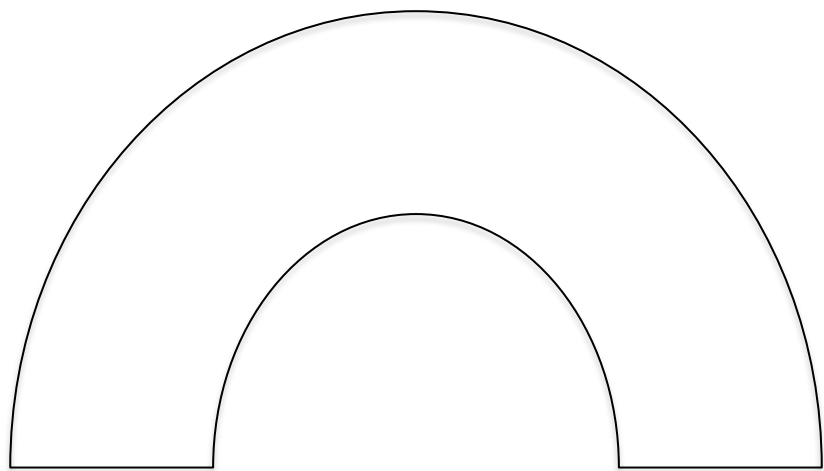
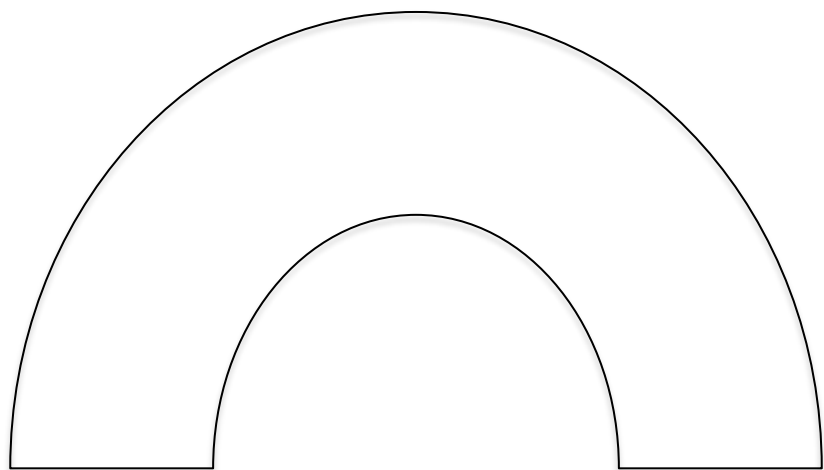
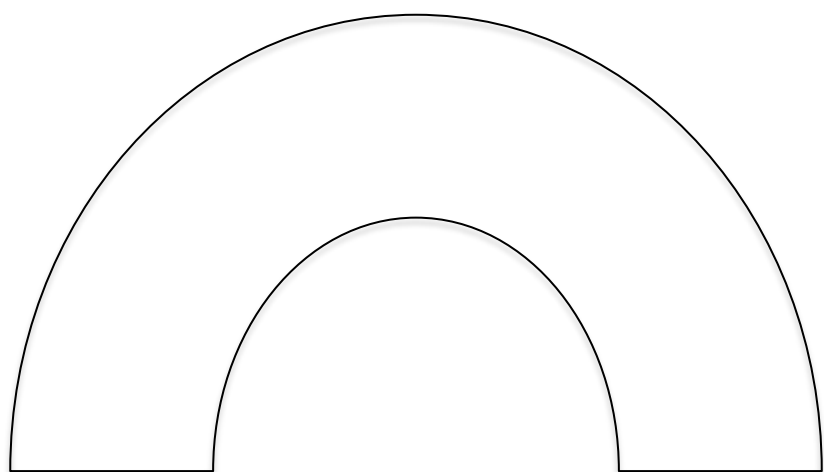
INFORMATION KEY



This activity is best in spring, summer or autumn.



Nature's rainbow – Printable template



Activity 5: Woodland Seasons

Educator Notes

Let's track the seasons. Wander the woods at different times of the year and see what you can find...

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type: 

INFORMATION KEY

Background:

It's spectacular how **woodlands change over the seasons**, and seeing this first-hand is a great way for children to discover and learn more about life in the trees. There are plenty ways you can explore and play in the woods even in the winter months – just wrap up warm!



Repeating this activity over the year can give very different results and can open some interesting points for discussion.

What you will need:

- Printed activity sheet(s)
- Pens/pencils
- Binoculars and/or magnifying glasses (optional)
- Clipboards (optional)

Add a **citizen science** element to this activity by recording what you see with the Woodland Trust's [Nature's Calendar](#)

Instructions:

1. Print out the woodland wildlife spotter sheet that matches your current season. Head outside and see what you can spot! Beforehand it is good to plan out a walking route (remembering to stay on safe paths).
2. The key to spotting wildlife is to be as stealthy and quiet as you can - you don't want to scare any away! If using binoculars, remind children to stop walking before using them to avoid falls.
3. If you spot something on your sheet, tick it off! If you don't know what it is, note down some features, or take a photo, so that you can try to identify it later.

If you would like to add an extra element, here are some other things you can do:

- You could use notebooks or paper to keep a nature journal - writing, drawing and sticking things in.
- You could collect things you find to take back and create a display, or take photographs to print and compare across the seasons.
- You could stop at points along your walk to sit and listen or draw what you see. You could encourage your group to get creative and use leaves and bark to add textures to their art.



Woodland wildlife in spring



Bluebells



Chiffchaff



Bumblebee



Wood anemone



Long-tailed tit



Great spotted woodpecker



Ramsons



Hazel catkins




Brimstone butterfly



Blue tit

Woodland wildlife in summer

	<input type="checkbox"/> Speckled wood		<input type="checkbox"/> Chaffinch		<input type="checkbox"/> Wood warbler		<input type="checkbox"/> Roe deer		<input type="checkbox"/> Sparrowhawk
	<input type="checkbox"/> Grass snake		<input type="checkbox"/> Wood-sorrel		<input type="checkbox"/> Treecreeper		<input type="checkbox"/> Spotted flycatcher		<input type="checkbox"/> Common lizard

Woodland wildlife in autumn



Conker



Jay



Grey squirrel



Beech mast



Nuthatch



Cranefly



Fly agaric



Wood mouse



Acorn



Puffballs

Woodland wildlife in winter



Brambling



Robin



Coal tit



Holly



Wren



Woodcock



Jelly ear fungi



Siskin



Fox



Goldcrest

Activity 6: Tree Huggers

Educator Notes

Try this game that directly activates nature connection and allows children to build trust and empathy with others

Background:

The Japanese practice of **forest bathing** is a process of relaxation; a simple method of being calm and quiet amongst the trees, observing nature around you whilst breathing deeply. This can help both adults and children **de-stress and boost health** and wellbeing while connecting with nature!

This game is a great way of immersing children in the trees whilst giving them an active task that helps build trust with their peers.

What you will need:

- Outdoor spot with lots of trees
- Blindfold(s)

Instructions:

1. Head out into your wooded area – make sure there are a few trees to choose from.
2. Split into pairs. Ask one of the pair to wear a blindfold and the other to lead their blindfolded partner slowly towards a tree by giving directions (or they could hold hands or shoulders). It is very important that you keep the blindfolded person safe. There should be constant communication about the direction they are headed and the floor conditions – make sure that children point out uneven ground and branches to avoid.
3. Once at the tree, ask the blindfolded partner to hug the tree to get a sense of its size. You could prompt them with some questions:


“How can you tell if this tree is alive?”

How does the bark feel in different places?”

“Is there anything other than bark that you can feel – lichen, moss?”

4. After this, the blindfold is kept on and their partner leads them back via a different route to the starting point. The blindfolded partner can then remove their blindfold and go and try and find their tree.
5. Children can swap turns.

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:   


INFORMATION KEY



Activity 7: Beautiful Bark

Educator Notes

A simple and enjoyable activity that employs children's creativity whilst helping them learn common tree types through bark casting!

Length: 

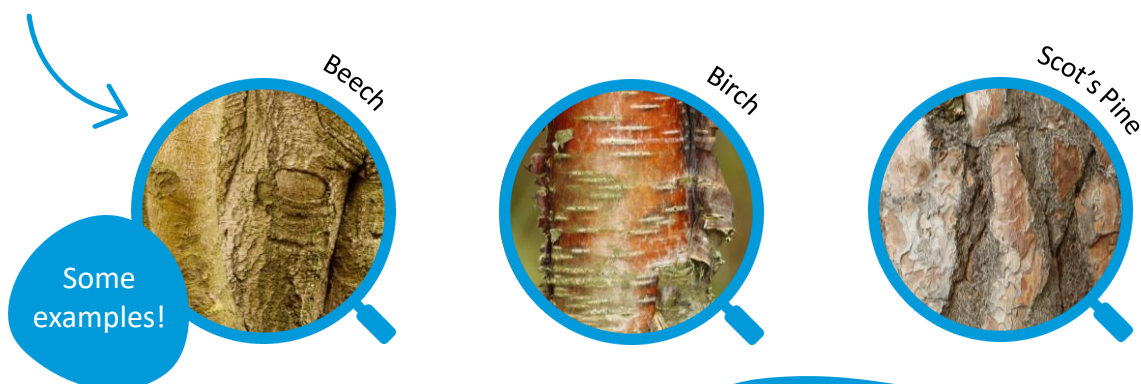
Location: 

Activity Type:  

INFORMATION KEY

Background:

There are lots of fascinating textures in nature, and **tree bark** is one of the most interesting. Not all trees are the same and the way the bark looks and feels can help you work out what kind of tree it is. The textures also mean that tree bark is great for creating natural art!



What you will need:

- Rolling pin
- Air-drying clay
- Tray or board (to roll on)
- Local trees with interesting bark
- Printable activity sheet/pencil (optional)

You could also try **bark rubbing**. Take paper, place it on the bark and rub over the paper with crayons to get a cool print of your bark.



Instructions:

1. Head out and find some interesting tree trunks. If your group split up into pairs/smaller groups, you can build a collection of bark-casts of several species of local tree.
2. Roll your modelling clay out into a small sheet. Place your sheet of clay onto the trunk of your tree and press hard enough for the bark's pattern to appear on the clay. Take care as you peel the clay off the tree to keep the pattern on it.
3. Repeat for as many trees as you like!
4. Allow all your clay imprints to dry. This may take a few days.
5. Some time left in your session? Print out the following tree-mendous wordsearch to learn even more tree species!



Trees Wordsearch

F	I	P	S	T	W	E	M	I	L	A	X	T	S	V
H	I	B	A	L	D	E	R	R	S	H	W	E	H	L
E	D	E	H	Q	G	Y	I	P	W	I	L	D	O	J
U	T	W	L	U	O	A	H	D	U	P	N	E	R	E
T	A	S	C	D	P	P	L	M	P	L	A	E	S	F
S	R	W	P	A	M	O	B	A	F	G	W	C	E	A
W	I	L	L	O	W	A	B	L	I	M	O	G	C	P
H	O	L	G	C	D	A	P	O	A	K	R	Q	H	P
Z	U	H	V	E	R	R	G	L	H	K	C	P	E	L
F	S	O	H	C	R	I	B	R	E	V	L	I	S	O
O	F	L	B	E	E	D	Y	K	E	A	V	J	T	I
U	C	L	S	A	S	H	T	N	U	T	W	E	N	Z
B	V	Y	C	L	K	G	F	D	S	E	A	P	U	O
O	I	Y	R	E	H	C	E	E	B	A	C	T	T	R

Alder

Ash

Beech

Crab Apple

Field Maple

Holly

Horse Chestnut

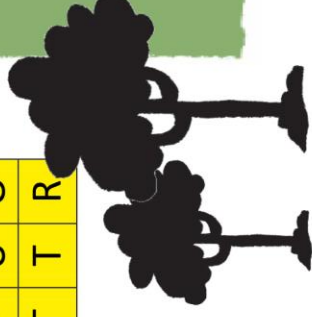
Lime

Oak

Rowan

Silver Birch

Willow



Section 2: Exploring Woodland Wildlife

This section is all about helping children learn more about the breadth of life we find in Scottish woodlands.

Even if you aren't near any woodland there are plenty of activities you can do!



In this section you will find **7** activities:

8. [The Bat and Moth](#)
9. [Woodland Bird Wizards](#)
10. [Worm Charming](#)
11. [Aerial AcroBats](#)
12. [Tumble Trapping](#)
13. [In A Rut!](#)
14. [Squirrel Olympics](#)

Each activity can be used independently, or combined to create a longer session, depending on your children, time, space, and available resources.

To find out the curriculum links for each activity, check out the [Curriculum Links](#) page at the end of the pack.

Activity 8: The Bat and Moth

Educator Notes

Try this fun game, tapping into your 'bat-senses'. Learn how echolocation works whilst having fun sneaking around as bats and moths

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:  

INFORMATION KEY

Background:

Bats can see nearly as well as humans but, because they fly at night, they navigate using sound, called '**echolocation**'. By making sounds and listening for their echoes, they can make a sound map and find their prey.

They use echolocation to hunt for their **favourite prey – insects**. Pipistrelle bats, commonly found in Scotland, love eating moths and can eat up to 3,000 insects in just one night!

Insects have evolved defences to try and avoid being a bat's dinner. For example, some moths have evolved ears to hear a bat's echolocation. This is a **perfect example of an evolutionary arms race!**

JARGON BUSTER!

An **ARMS RACE** in biology is where two (or more) species continually evolve ways of defending and counter-defending each other, but neither side 'wins'. A predator evolves to better catch its prey and its prey evolves to better escape its predator, and this cycle continues on and on!



Predator



Prey

What you will need:

- Blindfold(s)
- A clear, open space (this game is great outdoors; try it in a woodland clearing, local park, or on your own grounds)

Instructions:

1. In your space, make sure the ground is clear of any obstacles or trip hazards (e.g. sticks).
2. Have everyone stand in a circle. Choose a child to be the bat and another to be the moth. The bat wears the blindfold.
3. Have both the moth and bat stand in the middle of the circle. They both have to stay within the circle – so make sure it isn't too small.
4. The bat needs to try and find the moth by using sound only. The bat can shout 'BAT', and the moth must respond with 'MOTH'. They can repeat this calling over and over until the bat finds the moth and 'taps' them.
5. You can repeat as many times as you like, swapping who is the bat and who is the moth.
6. To add another level, you could have children in the circle clap whilst the bat and moth are communicating. This clapping would represent human-made noises (like traffic) that can make it harder for bats to hear echoes.

Activity 9: Woodland Bird Wizards

Educator Notes

Use outdoor materials to make a wand and cast some bird spells on your woodland walk

Background:

The scientific names of birds' sound a bit like magic spells! This activity combines bird identification with some fun wizard-like imagination.

Woodlands host a wide range of bird life. You may spot some frequent faces, such as robins or blue tits, but some woodlands are home to some rarer species...

For example, **capercaillie**, the world's largest grouse, roams native pine forests in northern Scotland, munching on buds and berries. They are one of our **most vulnerable birds**, with approx. 500 capercaillie left in the wild!

Their Gaelic name is capall-coille, meaning 'horse of the forest'!



What you will need:

- Printed activity sheet
- Pencils/pens
- Elastic bands
- Sticks found outside
- Natural materials (e.g. feathers, leaves, moss)
- Binoculars (optional)

You'll need imagination too!

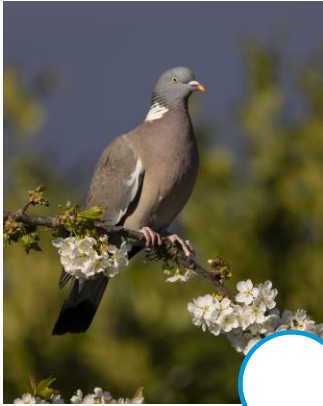
Instructions:

1. Before starting, set boundaries with your group so that they know what area to stay in. Make sure you know your area and remind children about any poisonous or prickly plants to avoid!
2. Have everyone search for a stick – this is going to be their magic wand. Wrap an elastic band around the top of the stick (an alternative is double sided tape).
3. It's time to decorate! Collect natural materials and feed them into the band. Things like feathers, leaves, flowers and moss are ideal. Remember to try and collect things from the woodland floor and avoid picking living plants.
4. Once everyone is happy with their wands (and they are successfully casting spells!) it is time to spot some birds. Hand out the printed activity sheets and pens (either to every child, or between pairs or groups). If you have binoculars, you can hand these out too.
5. The key to spotting birds is to be as stealthy and quiet as you can- you don't want to scare them away! If using binoculars, remind children to stop walking before using them to avoid any falls.
6. What species of bird can you see? If you spot one from the sheet, point your wands towards the bird and chant the magic spell for that bird – this is their scientific name (remember, every living species has their own special name). These can be found on the activity sheet. Perhaps it casts a good luck charm for the bird!
7. Some time left in your session? You can print out the bird masks, colour them in and become woodland birds! You'll need some card, pens, string and scissors.



Woodland Bird Wizards: Spotter Sheet

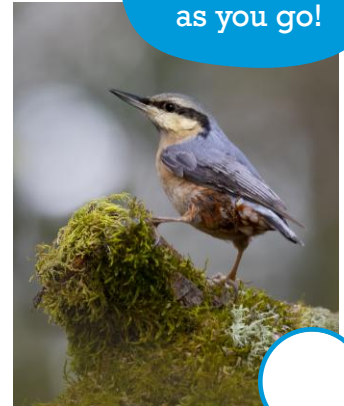
How many
can you spot?
Tick them off
as you go!



Wood Pigeon
Columba palumbus



Carrion Crow
Corvus corone



Nuthatch
Sitta europaea

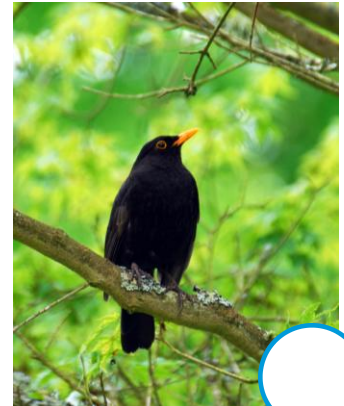


Long tailed Tit
Aegithalos caudatus

Check out
the scientific
names in
italics



Chaffinch
Fringilla coelebs



Blackbird
Turdus merula



Blue Tit
Cyanistes caeruleus

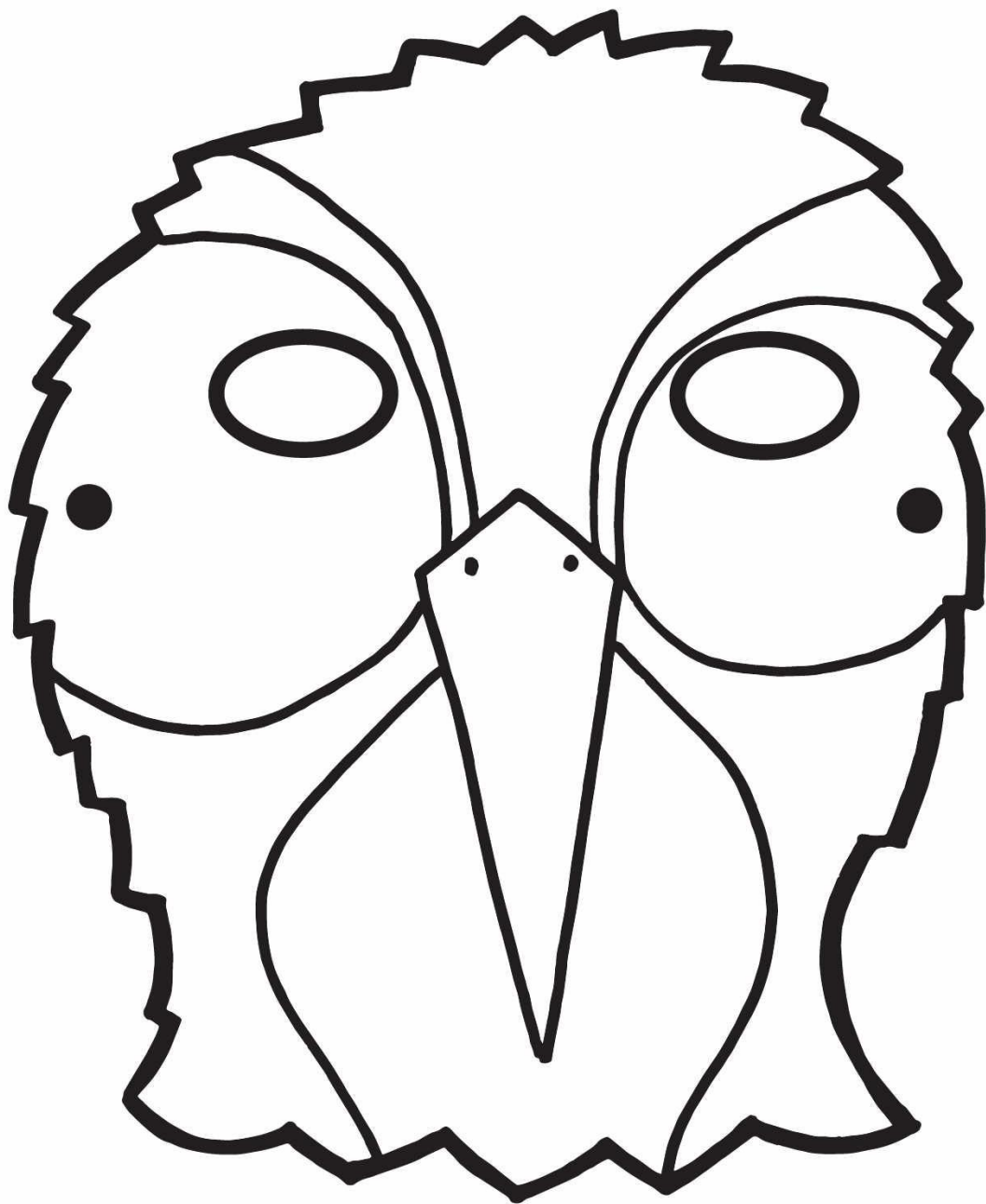


Great spotted woodpecker
Dendrocopos major

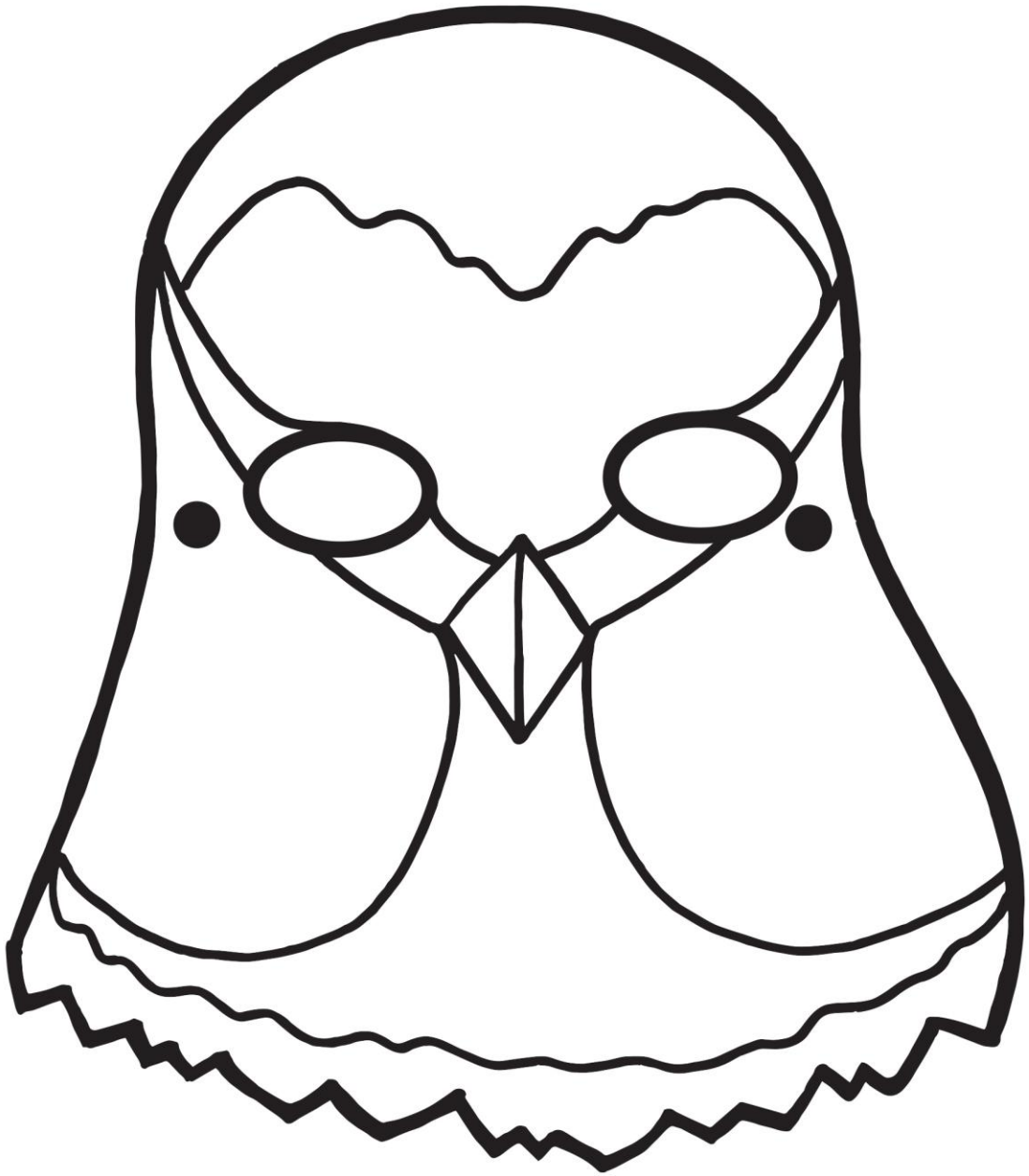


Great Tit
Parus major

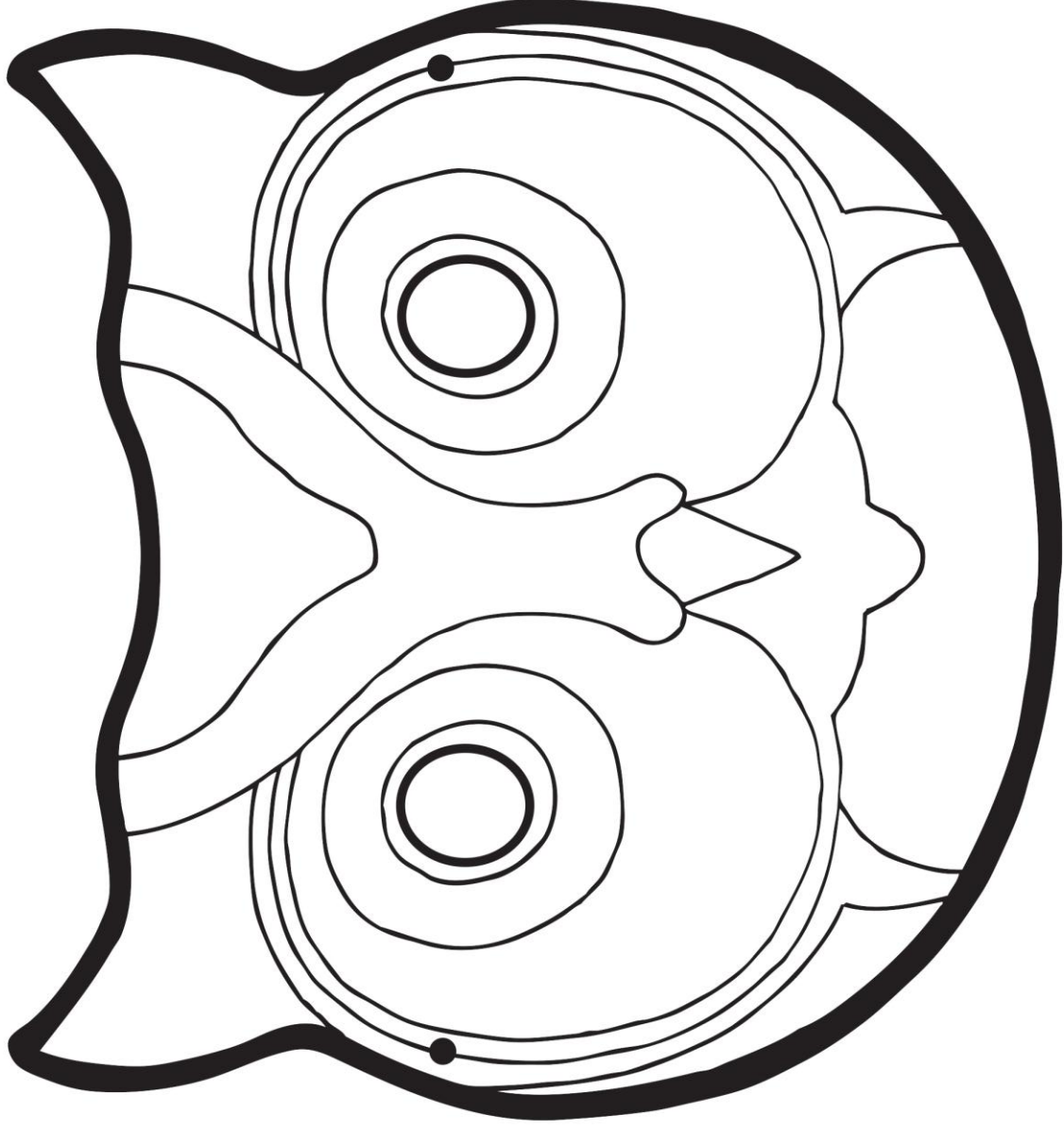
Great Spotted Woodpecker



Blue Tit



Long-eared owl



Activity 10: Worm Charming

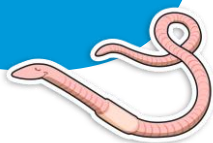
Educator Notes

Try this experimental activity to see how many worms you can charm out of the ground

Background:

We have around **30 species of earthworms in the UK**. At first glance they may not seem very special, but they are **essential for creating good soil** structure and fertility, which enables plants to grow. It is really thanks to worms passing out poo (called 'casts'), which are high in nutrients, that we have fertile soils.

Not all earthworms are brown or pink. Here in Scotland, some are deep red, grey or green!



Worms respond to **sound vibrations** in their soil tunnels by coming to the surface, so by banging or stamping on the same bit of ground for long enough you're sure to meet some wrigglers!

When looking at worms, you could try to identify if you have caught an **adult or a juvenile** (a young worm). Adults can be distinguished by the thick band wrapping round their body like a **saddle or a belt** (like in this photo). Juveniles don't have this.



You can learn more about worms and how to help them by visiting [Wild About Gardens](#) and downloading their [Go wild for worms](#) booklet.



It's a **myth** that cutting a worm will give you two worms. It just gives you either a dead worm, or a very unhappy one!

What you will need:

- Water (1 litre) in pourable container
- Mustard powder (15g) or mustard (30g)
- Spoon
- Watering can full of water
- Something to make out your worm charming area - string, tape, hula hoop

Instructions:

See next page.

INFORMATION KEY

Length:

Location:

Activity Type:



Worm Charming Instruction Sheet

Game Instructions:

Choose a spot for your worm charming – this could be a patch of soil or a patch of grass. Make your circle with your hula hoop, tape or string.

You could ask your group to guess what experiment they think will get the most worms or give it a competitive element by splitting into pairs/groups to see who can get the most. Remember – no digging!

Experiment 1: Mustard mixture

The reason worms come to the surface is because the mustard makes them feel itchy – but don't worry it doesn't harm them! This is a technique scientists use to study worms.

- Mix your mustard with your 1 litre of water. Pour onto your worm charming area and watch it closely for 5 minutes to see what wriggles up!

Experiment 2: Foot paddling

This replicates the foot tapping gulls do to catch their worm prey. Some think it replicates the noise of a worm predator, like a mole, so they move to the surface to escape (but there is a gull waiting for them!), or some think it is because the paddling vibrations are similar to rain.

- Stand in your worm charming area and gently stamp your feet (tippy tap!) for 1 minute. Watch the space closely for 5 minutes and see what wriggles up!

Experiment 3: Making it rain

When it rains, worms find it easier to move across the surface between patches of soil, so they are more likely to come up to the surface.

- Stand over your worm charming area and pour the water from the watering can over it (ideally for about a minute). Watch the space closely and see what wriggles up!

After each experiment have a look at what comes up – how many did you get? Can you identify them as adult or juvenile? Once you have had a look at them, make sure to put them back in the same place. What experiment was the most successful?

Important tips!

- Cover any cuts on hands
- Cup your hands when holding worms – remember they like to wriggle!
- Don't let worms dry out (don't keep them for more than 10 minutes)
- Make sure to return worms to where you found them

Activity 11: Aerial AcroBats

Educator Notes

Batty for crafts? This activity includes a template for making paper flying and roosting bats

Background:

Woodlands can provide places for bats to dine, roost (their home), and travel, with trees acting as bat highways! **Nine species of bat call Scotland home**, each protected by law (including their feeding and roosting habitats).

Bats are **nocturnal** mammals, so you're unlikely to see them during the day, but as you walk through woodlands you may pass a tree hollow that is harbouring a colony.



The **noctule bat** is our largest species, but it can still fit in the palm of your hand! It is also the noisiest bat we find in Scotland.



The **common pipistrelle** is our smallest and most common species in Scotland. It can fit inside a matchbox and weighs the same as a 20p coin!

Bats leave droppings where they roost, so they can often be found stuck to walls or on the ground under holes or trees. They have a rough appearance and are filled with chewed-up bits of insect – keep your eyes peeled for them if you're out for a woodland walk!



What you will need:

- Printed activity sheet
- Scissors
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Glue
- String
- Sticky tape

Instructions:

1. Hand out the printed activity sheets so children can start colouring in their bats with pens/pencils.
2. Using scissors, carefully cut the bat out (you may need to help young children).
3. Crease the paper bat along folds 1 and 2. Glue the two halves of the body together.
4. Your group have two options for their bat – they can make a **flying bat** or a **roosting bat**. For a **flying bat**, do not fold the wings. For a **roosting bat**, fold wings as indicated.
5. Cut some string to the length you want and attach to the bat with some sticky tape – this is for hanging your bat. For a **flying bat**, hang from top of its back. For a **roosting bat**, hang from the 'tail'. The bats can be hung on their own, or several can be brought together to make a mobile.

Length:

Location:

Activity Type:

INFORMATION KEY

Learn more about bats on our YouTube channel by clicking the icon below



Aerial AcroBats – Activity sheet

Make a flying bat or a roosting bat!

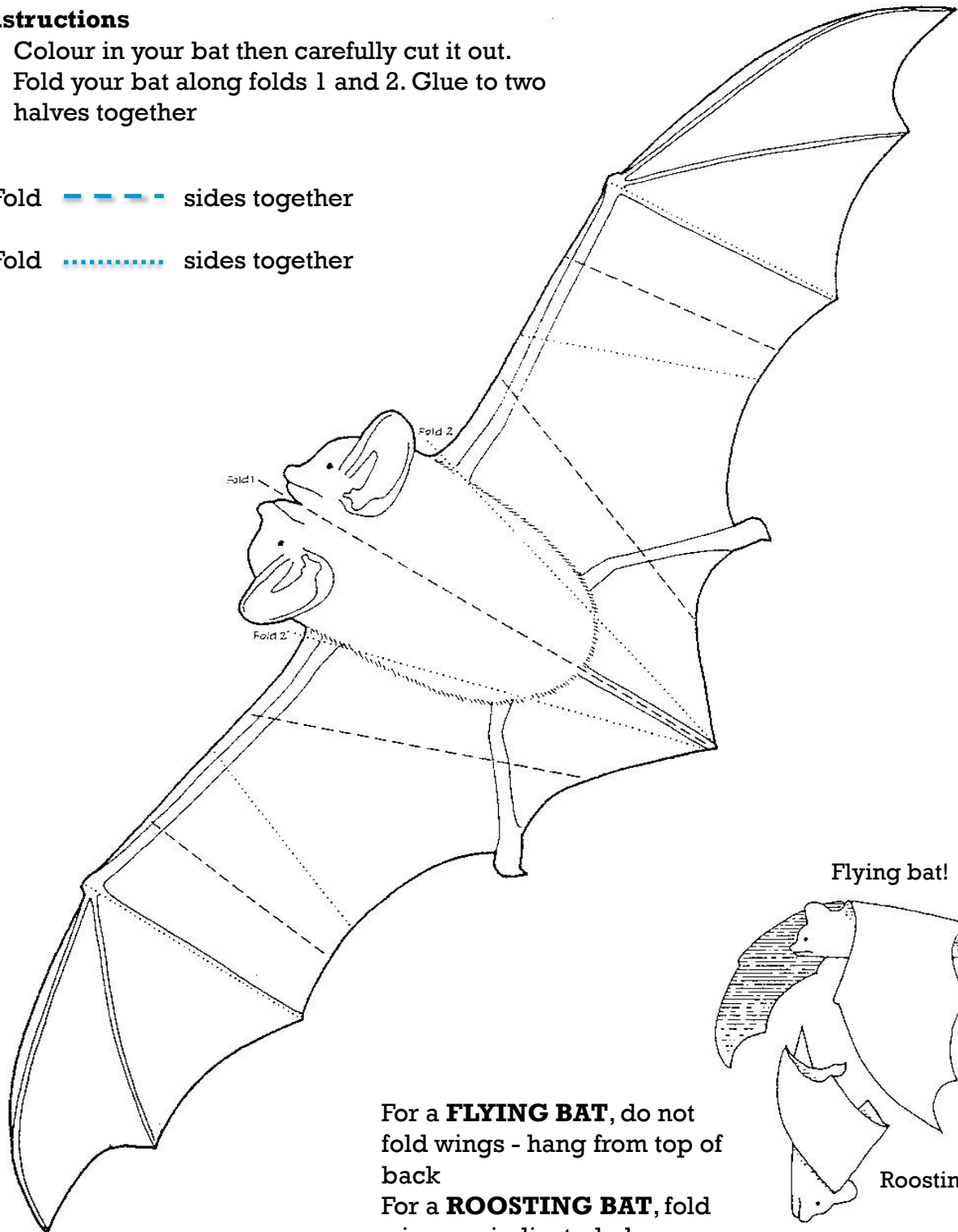


Instructions

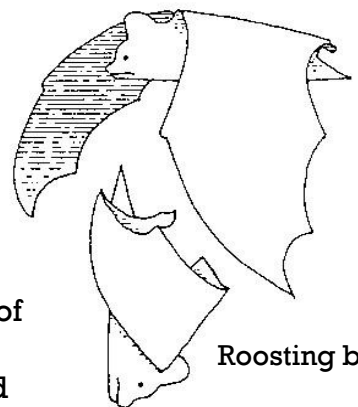
1. Colour in your bat then carefully cut it out.
2. Fold your bat along folds 1 and 2. Glue to two halves together

Fold  sides together

Fold  sides together



Flying bat!



Roosting bat!

For a **FLYING BAT**, do not fold wings - hang from top of back

For a **ROOSTING BAT**, fold wings as indicated - hang from 'tail'

Activity 12: Tumble Trapping

Educator Notes

Become mini scientists by surveying some of your local woodland invertebrates.

Background:

Have you taken a magnifying glass to a woodland? You could find **many species** of invertebrate, from snails to woodlice to beetles to butterflies!

Despite their small size, invertebrates **play a huge role in the woodland ecosystem** from keeping our soils healthy to feeding birds and mammals.

Scientists study insects using a number of methods, including one called a **pitfall trap (or 'tumble' trap)**.

This method helps them gather important data which can then help them protect the habitat and the invertebrate species that live there.

What you will need:

- An empty yoghurt pot, tub or jar
- Piece of wood or old slate/tile
- Bait – such as cheese, bread or fruit



- A trowel
- Paper and pen
- Insect identification guides (optional)
- Magnifying glasses (optional)



Printable activity guide!

Instructions:

Note this activity requires you to **leave the tumble trap for an hour or so**. Make sure you have a safe space to leave it, and some activities to keep everyone busy in the meantime!

1. Dig a small hole and place the tub in the hole so that the rim is level with the ground. Fill any gaps around the edge with soil.
2. Place the bait in the tub and prop up a piece of old wood or slate, using stones or twigs, so that it covers the tub. This will stop rain from getting in and harming anything that's fallen into the trap.
3. After an hour, return to check the trap and see what you have found. You could record in different ways, from identifying and tallying species found, to taking photos or by drawing what you find.
4. Once you've finished recording, carefully release everything in the trap and pack it away.
5. Some time left in your session? Print out the minibeast colouring in sheet to keep everyone busy.

Watch how to make and use a tumble trap on our YouTube channel by clicking the icon below



INFORMATION KEY

Length:

Location:

Activity Type:

JARGON BUSTER!

An **INVERTEBRATE** is the term used to describe any animal without a backbone. Examples of invertebrates include insects, snails, worms and crabs.



How to make a tumble trap

wildlife
watch



What you need:

- an old yoghurt pot, jam jar or tub 
- a cover - an old slate, tile or bit of flat wood 
- bait - try cheese, bacon rind, bread or fruit 
- trowel - for digging 

- 1 Dig a hole in the ground with the trowel
- 2 Put the pot, jar or tub into the hole and fill the gaps around the edge with soil
- 3 Bait your trap with your food to attract tiny visitors
- 4 Use the slate, tile or bit of wood to stop the rain getting in - prop up with twigs or stones
- 5 Go away and wait
- 6 Inspect your tumble trap for minibeasts
- 7 Pack your trap away when you've finished



Release all your new friends carefully after each check

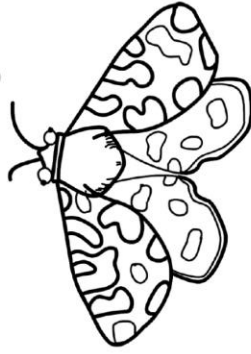
Remember to check your trap every few hours as minibeasts can't escape



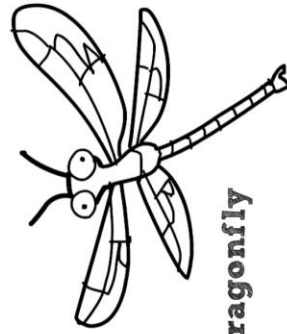
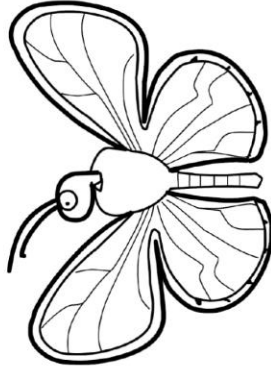
Illustration: Corinne Welch © Copyright Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts 2015

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Garden Tiger Moth



Common Blue Butterfly



Dragonfly

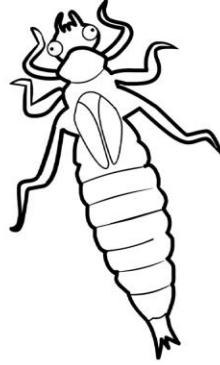


Bumblebee

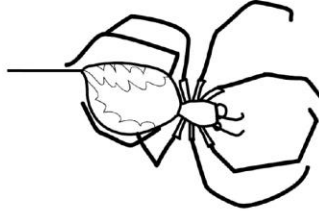
Brimstone
Butterfly



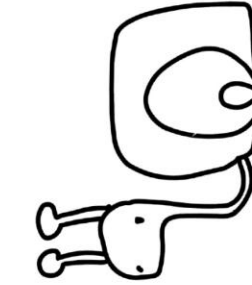
Ladybird



Dragonfly Nymph



Garden Spider



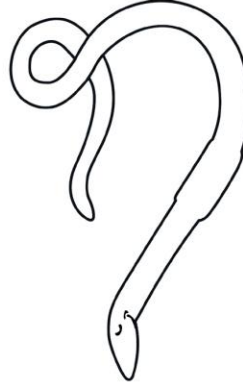
Snail



Privet
Hawkmoth



Red Admiral
Butterfly



Earthworm



Grasshopper



Caterpillar



Shieldbug

Activity 13: In a Rut!

Educator Notes

Have a go at this fun, two-player game and see who can successfully challenge the Dominant Stag, winning control of the harem!

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:  

INFORMATION KEY

Background:

The **red deer** is our biggest land mammal here in Scotland. Autumn is their breeding season, known as **the rut**.

A **male (stag)** tries to attract the attention of a group of **females (hinds)**. If he succeeds, he has to defend **his group (called a harem)** from other stags who want the same thing.



Rut-a-tut-tut!

Stags will size each other up by **walking parallel** to each other. They show strength by **roaring**, which also attracts the females. They use their **huge antlers** as weapons to battle – but this is only a last resort!



Stag



Hind

What you will need:

- Printed activity sheet (on white card is best)
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Dice
- Scissors

To win you must have two powers and defeat the Dominant Stag!

Instructions:

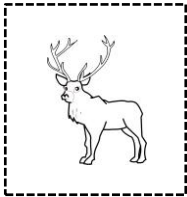
1. Print off the board game template. Cut out the game board and playing pieces and colour them in if you like.
2. Each player starts at opposing ends of the board on the square marked "start". Using a die, move along towards the Green Fields area of the board and then clockwise around the field.
3. The aim of the game is to collect two of the four powers, by landing on the power squares. Your stag will then have enough power to fight the Dominant Stag, giving you a chance to win the game.
4. To fight the Dominant Stag, you must land on the Dominant Stag square by the exact number on your die. To win the fight – and the game – you must then throw a four, five or six on your next turn. If you throw a lower number, you lose the fight and play continues; use the number on the die to continue round the board.
5. If you land on the Dominant Stag square before you have two powers, treat it as a blank square.

Looking for some more deer fun? Print out our **finger puppet template**, cut and colour it in, and re-enact some deer rutting action!

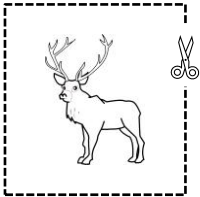


In a Rut! Board Game


Cut out the board game and playing pieces below by following the dotted lines.
You can also colour everything in !




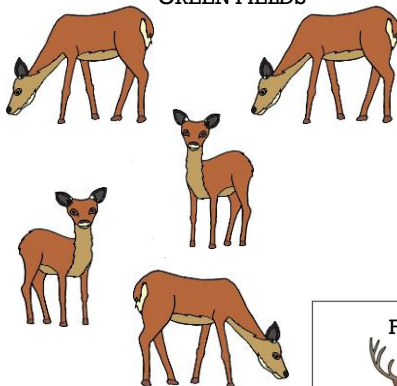








Player 1



Player 2



					START	
					Wallow in your own urine and smell attractive. Move forward 2	
					Win at a parallel walk – move forward 2	
					A huge stag arrives on scene. Go back to start.	
	Old injury is playing up. Move back 2	Power! You now have the loudest roar of all the stags!		Getting hungry. Move back 1		
Power! You can fight off weaker males	GREEN FIELDS				Your harem has disappeared. Go back to the start	
You drape vegetation on antlers and look bigger. Move forward 2					Power! You have eaten well before the rut and you're in great condition	
						
					FIGHT!  DOMINANT STAG	
START	Eat some tree bark for energy. Move forward 2			Sharpen antlers on a tree. Move forward 2	You shy away from a parallel walk challenge. Return to the start	
		You are getting tired. Move back 2	Power! You have antlers with 12 points – you're a "Royal Stag"			



Red Deer Finger Puppet

**Wildlife
Watch**



Cut out the dotted circles to make holes for your fingers

Colour in the picture then cut it out. You might need to ask a grown up to help you cut round any tricky bits.

Red Deer - facts

Red deer are our largest deer, standing more than 1 metre tall at the shoulder. Males have large, branching antlers, increasing in size as the male gets older. Red Deer are dark russet-brown in colour, with a paler buff rump patch and a pale tail.

In the autumn breeding season, known as the rut, males bellow to proclaim their territory and will fight over the females, sometimes injuring each other with their sharp antlers.

The Red Deer lives on moorland and mountainsides as well as grasslands near to woodland. They can also be seen in many deer parks throughout the country.

Activity 14: Squirrel Olympics

Educator Notes

Create a tree-mendous adventure course using natural materials from woodlands!

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:   

INFORMATION KEY

Background:

Can you run, jump and squat like a squirrel?

Squirrels are amazing **arboreal** acrobats. Their hind legs are longer than their forelegs and they even have double-jointed ankles so they can turn their back feet around when coming down tree trunks. Their tails are useful for helping them keep warm, but they also help them balance.

Squirrels can also squat so their front paws so they can manoeuvre cones and other seeds.

Essentially, they are incredibly agile!



JARGON BUSTER!

An **ARBOREAL** animal is one that lives and/or moves in the trees. Squirrels are arboreal— you may have spotted them dashing up a tree trunk or through the treetops. Red squirrels nest in the branches and feed off different parts of the tree (such as its seeds).

What you will need:

- Outdoor space (ideally somewhere with trees)
- If you don't have access to a wooded outdoor area, you can recreate this game with sports equipment (like bean bags, balls and hoops)

Instructions:

1. Depending on your group size, you can split up into smaller groups or work as a larger one.
2. It is important to set boundaries with your group, so they know what area to stay in. If you have string, flags, or some tape you can mark out a physical boundary too.
3. In their groups, children should work together to map out their woodland obstacle course. It's great to let them use their imagination here! What natural materials can they find to include? Here are some prompts:

- Hop on shadows
- Zig zag through some trees
- Leap across a tree stump or logs
- Relay race with sticks
- Egg and spoon type section with pinecones
- Crawl under low branches

4. Once they have set up their obstacle course, each group can demonstrate their course to everyone else and then everyone can have a go!

Section 3: Key Threats and How To Help

This section is all about helping children understand some of the key threats our woodlands are facing and empowering them to take their own action to help protect them.

Even if you aren't near any woodland there are plenty of activities you can do!



In this section you will find 6 activities:

- 15. [Protect our Woodlands Poster](#)
- 16. [Recycled Bottle Bird Feeders](#)
- 17. [Grow Your Own Oak Tree](#)
- 18. [Pine Marten Musical Trees](#)
- 19. [Woodland Wardens](#)
- 20. [Citizen Scientists](#)

Each activity can be used independently, or combined to create a longer session, depending on your children, time, space, and available resources.

To find out the curriculum links for each activity, check out the [Curriculum Links](#) page at the end of the pack.

Activity 15: Protect our Woodlands Poster

Educator Notes

Raise awareness around how we can help protect our local woodlands by colouring in this poster and sharing it around!

Background:

Our trees and woods face a challenging combination of threats, from climate change to tree diseases to human impact.

Less than 20% of Scotland's land now supports woodland. Of this woodland cover, most is made up of **non-native plantations** which do not support the same wealth of wildlife as native woodlands.

Non-native plantations were established to supply us **timber**. They are now widespread, and some have been established on existing native woodland sites. Protecting and creating **native** woodland is the best way to secure the future of our woodlands.

There are various ways children can play an important role in protecting woodlands. You can start by printing out the poster provided to spread the word!

What you will need:

- Printed activity sheet
- Pens/pencils

Instructions:

1. Start with a discussion... what threats do we think our woodlands are facing? How could we help?
2. Colour in the poster, which aims to help spread awareness about what we can do to help protect our woodland habitats.
3. As you are colouring in, why not discuss, as a group, the different actions highlighted on the poster. Are there any you could do as a group/class?
4. Once finished, decide who you would like to share the poster with. Should it be displayed somewhere, or given to someone for them to learn from?
5. Remember to be responsible when putting up posters outdoors – they can easily become litter. Does your local woodland have a billboard you can display it in?
6. Who could your group/class talk to about actions to help woodlands? Think about audiences, e.g., friends, family, school, local community groups and businesses.
7. Why not take a video or picture of your posters, or you taking action, and share it with us!

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:   

INFORMATION KEY

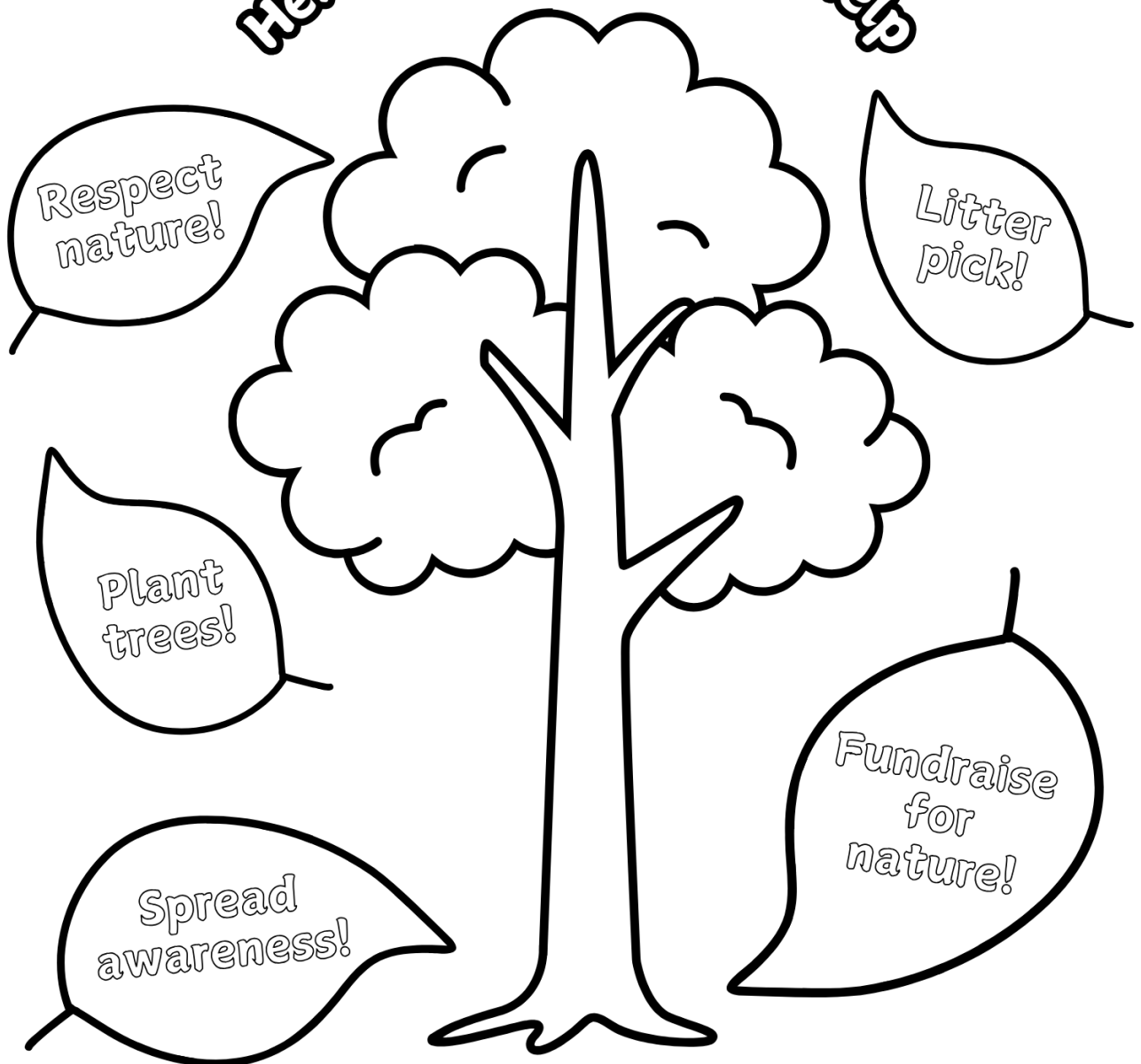
JARGON BUSTER!

NATIVE trees are naturally found in the UK. **NON-NATIVE** trees have been transported to the UK by people. Native woodlands are much better at supporting wildlife than non-native plantations.



Let's Protect Our Woodlands!

Here are some ways to help



Activity 16: Recycled Bottle Bird Feeders

Educator Notes

Make a bird feeder by upcycling an old plastic bottle!

Background:

Single-use plastic items are used once and thrown away, but last forever in our environment. We can all 'do our bit' to reduce our impact on the environment by reducing the number of single use items we buy, or by **trying to upcycle them**.

This bottle bird feeder is a great way to help our feathered friends as well as a great way to upcycle an old plastic bottle. This is just one idea – can you think of any other ways of upcycling old plastic?

What you will need:

- An empty plastic bottle with a lid
- Two small sticks approximately 12 – 14cm in length (or lolly pop sticks)
- Drawing pin
- Scissors
- Piece of string
- Some bird seed



Instructions:

1. Use a drawing pin to make two holes on opposite sides of your bottle at the same height. Cutting plastic can create jagged edges so be careful and supervise any younger children.
2. Using scissors, carefully widen the holes until they are just smaller than the width of your sticks.
3. Push one of your sticks through both holes to form your first perch for the birds.
4. Make two more holes in the same way, but higher up the bottle, so that they are at 90 degrees from your first set of holes.
5. When you insert your second stick, it should form a cross-shape when looked at from below.
6. Use your drawing pin and scissors to make some small drainage holes in the bottom of your bottle.
7. About 4cm above each perch, use your drawing pin to make a hole and widen it using the scissors (these will be the feeding holes).
8. At the neck of the bottle, make two holes opposite each other and thread through your string and tie a knot.
9. Pour your bird seed into the bottle, screw on your lid and hang up your bird feeder!

INFORMATION KEY

Length:

Location:

Activity Type:

JARGON BUSTER!

UPCYCLING involves taking an unwanted object or material and reusing it to create something new and more valuable. This helps minimise waste and allows us to get creative too!

Watch how to make the bird feeder on our YouTube channel by clicking the icon below



Activity 17: Grow Your Own Oak Tree

Educator Notes

Develop your green fingers by collecting acorns and growing your own oak tree. This activity can only take place in autumn

Background:

This activity is a wonderful way to directly **explore the growing process of an oak tree**, and provides **a project that can be worked on all year round**. Your tree could support hundreds of species in the future!

Oak trees are not only large in size but also huge in their value to wildlife. They can **support hundreds of species of insect** – which of course provides food for hungry birds and mammals too.

A good starting point is asking children what trees need to grow...
Water, sunlight, air and nutrients!

What you will need:

- A plant pot (or a clean, used, large yoghurt pot or ice cream tub)
- Stones or gravel

- Acorns
- A bowl
- Water
- Soil or **peat-free** compost

Instructions:

It will take a couple years before you can plant your oak tree in the wild, so make sure you have somewhere safe you can keep and water it over this time. When you're ready to plant the oak tree, make sure you have the landowner's permission first.

1. Head out where you know there are oak trees and collect a few acorns – remember it needs to be autumn time.
2. You want to make sure your acorns are healthy. Place the acorns in a bowl of water – healthy ones will sink!
3. Put a layer of stones or gravel into the bottom of the plant pot. Fill the plant pot with soil.
4. Plant an acorn by pushing it into the soil with your finger.
5. Water your pot over the winter. The first leaves should appear in the spring. Keep looking after your plant over the next year and by the second spring, it should be ready to plant out in the wild!

INFORMATION KEY

Length: 

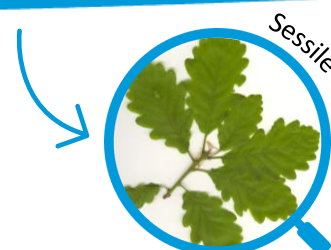
Location: 

Activity Type:   

What oak are you growing?

There are two types of oak found in Scotland, which can be identified by their subtle opposites...

- **Pedunculate (or common) oak**: have leaves with almost no stem and acorns with long stalks
- **Sessile oak**: have leaves with a long stem, but acorns without any stalk at all



"Mighty oaks from little acorns grow!"





How to grow your own oak tree


wildlife
watch



What you need:

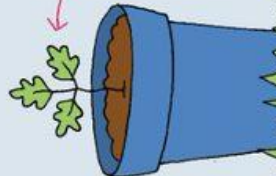
- Some acorns 
- a plant pot (or big yoghurt pot/ice cream tub) 
- Some stones or gravel 
- Soil or peat-free Compost 

remember to
water it regularly
during summer

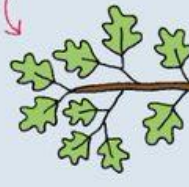
- 1 Collect acorns in the autumn. Sort them out - healthy acorns will sink to the bottom of a bowl of water 
- 2 Layer stones/gravel in the pot, then fill with soil/compost
- 3 Plant an acorn by pushing it into the soil with your finger



acorn out of cup
pointed end up



the first leaves
should appear in
the first spring



plant out
in the
second
spring

minibeasts love oak
trees... one adult oak
tree can be home to
284 different species
of insect

Illustration: Corinne Welch © Copyright Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts 2015

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Activity 18: Pine Marten Musical Trees

Educator Notes

Try this game with your group to get them thinking about pine martens and the effect habitat loss can have on them.



Background:

Pine martens, the iconic woodland species, are an agile, **arboreal mammal** about the size of a cat. They may look cute and cuddly, but they are fast with fierce teeth and an appetite for small mammals, so they are anything but! They have a varied diet, from insects to bird eggs to small mammals to berries.

They are notoriously difficult to spot as they are **shy and mainly nocturnal**. Visit woods in summer for the best chance of spotting them, as females and their young can forage during the day at this time of year.

Through both **habitat loss** and the fur industry back in the late 1800s, we have seen a **dramatic decline** in pine martens. Once common throughout the UK, they are now mostly **restricted to Scotland** – but there is hope for their future!

Today pine martens are protected by law and although rare, numbers in Scotland **are growing**. One of the best things we can do for them is protect their habitat.

What you will need:

- This game works best for a larger group, we recommend a minimum of eleven children (**odd number** of participants is better)

- A clear, open space (this game is great outdoors; try it in the woods, local park, or on your own grounds).
- Instruction sheet (can be digital or paper copy)

Instructions:

See next page.

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:  

INFORMATION KEY

Watch some footage of pine martens at Loch of the Lowes on our YouTube channel by clicking the icon below



JARGON BUSTER!

An **ARBOREAL** animal is one that lives and/or moves in the trees. Pine martens are arboreal – they even have semi-retractable claws to help them run quickly up trees! They use mature trees with holes and cavities to shelter and raise their young.



Pine Marten Musical Trees Instruction Sheet

Game Instructions:

1. Find a big, open space to run around in as a group. Get outside if you can! Your local park is a great choice, or your school grounds or a gym hall will do.
2. Have everyone pair up and stand in a circle. In each pair assign someone to be a **tree** and the other to be a **pine marten**. Each pair should link arms – the tree is the home for the pine marten.
3. The trees have to stay in the circle with their arm on their hip, ready to be linked. The pine martens have to go off looking for food and run round the circle of trees.
4. Shout 'DANGER!'. When you do this all the pine martens should run to find a tree and link arms – they are going to the safety of their homes to escape any predators!
5. The pine martens should unlink again and run round the trees. But this time, some trees have been cut down! Choose a couple of trees to be cut down – they must put their arms down.
6. Shout 'DANGER!' again. Pine martens should again try and find a tree to link arms with. If a pine marten can't find a tree then they are 'out' (assign an area for those who are out the game).
7. Continue this over a few rounds so more trees are cut down (i.e., they put their arms down) and therefore more pine martens can't find a tree, so they are 'out' of the game.
8. Now the community have come in and planted more trees. Everyone who was a cut down tree can now put their hands on their hips, ready to be linked. Can the pine martens come back now that there are more trees for them?

If there are not enough trees in the area it can't support as many pine martens so many have to go off and try to find another home... As more trees have been planted, more pine martens can live here!

Activity 19: Woodland Wardens

Educator Notes

Whilst on a woodland walk, bring a bucket and some gloves and pick up any litter you find.

Background:

Litter can cause harm to local wildlife- animals can get tangled in it or ingest it, thinking it is food. It can also create an **unsafe environment for us humans** too.



Plus, **80% of the litter on our beaches has come from land**, finding its way from rivers and streams to the ocean.

The good news is that litter-picking is a simple action that we can do. Straight away it makes a visible difference to the environment, and it can stop rubbish from reaching our oceans too!

See our **Citizen Scientists** activity to find out how to get involved in some litter surveys

What you will need:

- Strong binbags (or buckets)
- Gloves
- Suitable footwear
- Litter picker (optional – you can ask your local council if you can borrow some)

Instructions:

1. You could start with a little interactive quiz about litter, asking your group how long they think these items take to break down in the environment. Remember, plastic never fully goes away – it just breaks into little pieces.

Packet of
Crisps
100 years

Plastic bottle
450 years

Tyres
Up to 2,000
years

Plastic straw
200 years

2. Avoid picking up any broken glass or sharp objects, anything very large or heavy, and anything that appears dangerous. Try not to overfill bags to avoid splitting.
3. Here are some prompts for discussion along the way...
 1. What types of litter are you finding and where do you think it comes from?
 2. Why do you think there is litter here?
 3. What can we do to stop litter ending up in the environment?

Length: 

Location: 

Activity
Type:   


INFORMATION KEY

Activity 20: Citizen Scientists

Educator Notes

This activity combines children getting outdoors and connecting with nature, whilst also engaging with the scientific community through data collection

Length: 

Location: 

Activity Type:    

INFORMATION KEY

Background:

Citizen science can help children **foster more curiosity and critical thinking**, with them helping the environment on a small scale (e.g. recording litter found) but contributing on a large scale (e.g. the data being used to help inform single-use plastic policies).

It can seem daunting (“but I’m not a scientist!”) but **citizen science is for everyone!** You don’t need to be able identify different species of seaweed or recognise a seabird by its call – if you can observe, count and take photographs, you can be a citizen scientist!

What you will need:

Here are a few basic items that can help you with your recording, but they may vary depending on the campaign you choose.

- Paper, pen, clipboard
- Mobile phone/camera
- Binoculars
- Net, magnifying glass, bug pot

JARGON BUSTER!

CITIZEN SCIENCE is the opportunity for members of the public to volunteer to observe and record the natural world around them and submit their findings, which then help scientists and experts inform conservation efforts and decisions.



Instructions:

We have created a **Woodland Citizen Science Guide** (next page) with lots of different projects you can get involved in. Click on the links to take you to the organisations websites and find out how to record. There are lots of options from recording litter to butterflies to red squirrels.

Here are some key tips when it comes to being a citizen scientist:

- Always be mindful of woodland habitats and wildlife
- Read over our [Visiting Woodlands Safely](#) page before heading out
- Take your time, closely observing the world around you
- If you have access to them, identification guides can be useful
- Have fun with it!

Seek by iNaturalist is an **identification app**, great for using with young people. All you need is a smartphone – download the app, take a photo of your find and it will identify it for you – plus the data gets recorded so it is **even more citizen science**



Woodland Citizen Science Guide

[Nature's Calendar](#)



Record the changing seasons and climate change effects with *The Woodland Trust*

[Big Butterfly Count](#)



Record your butterfly sightings with *The Butterfly Conservation Society*

[Great British Spring Clean](#)



Be a #LitterHero and help clean up outside during the annual *Great British Spring Clean*

[Living with Mammals](#)



Help protect our mammals by recording sightings with *PTES*

[BirdTrack](#)



Record your bird sightings with the *British Trust for Ornithology*

[Squirrel Sightings](#)



Record your red and grey squirrel sightings with *Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels*

[UK Ladybird Survey](#)



Help record ladybirds with the *UK Ladybird Survey*

[Bumble bee Count](#)



Record the bumblebees you spot with *The Bumblebee Conservation Society*

[Badger Surveying](#)



Record signs of badgers with *Badger Scotland*

Additional Notes for Educators

This section includes extra information to help you plan and lead your outdoor sessions.

For more activities, head over to the **Discover. Learn. Play** section of our website!



In this section you will find the following:

- [Follow up Opportunities](#)
- [Visiting Woodlands Safely](#)
 - [Curriculum Links](#)

Have you used some of this pack? We would love your feedback!

This is one of our first Discovery Den activity packs. We are developing a series of packs, just like this one, and so your feedback will help us improve them for your use.

After using some of the activities, we would greatly appreciate you taking a few minutes to fill out our short feedback form [here](#).

Follow up Opportunities

Discover Scotland through our reserves

The Scottish Wildlife Trust manages **over 100 wildlife reserves across Scotland**, covering more than 17,000 hectares. With 90% of the population living within just 10 miles of a Scottish Wildlife Trust reserve, you're never far away from your next wildlife encounter!

Cumbernauld Glen, in Cumbernauld, is a beautiful ancient woodland and wildlife haven – if you visit in spring, you can spot the purple carpet of bluebells covering the woodland floor!



You can find your nearest reserve and start planning your trip by visiting our website [here](#).



Our **Falls of Clyde Visitor Centre** offers spectacular walks, with a fun woodland wildlife trail along the way too. The centre also runs educational/group visits where you can learn all about the local habitats and wildlife. You can find out more by visiting our website [here](#).

Explore our other activities



We have other fun activities about different topics! To find a host of other activities, visit the Discover, Learn, Play section on our website [here](#). You can filter through activities to find those that suit your needs.

Join our Wildlife Watch Network



Wildlife Watch groups are the Scottish Wildlife Trust's **nature clubs for children**. We have a **network of them across Scotland**, from the borders to the Highlands and islands! You can find out about all our different groups [here](#).

Setting up a group is a fun way to help connect children in your community with the nature at your doorstep. They can be set up by adults in the community, other organisations, or schools. You can find out more [here](#).



Watch our wildlife videos

Watching our **wildlife clips online** is a great way to connect with nature whilst indoors. You can watch footage of ospreys on our nest cam or clips of badgers roaming around Falls of Clyde. Head over to our YouTube [here](#) to get watching!

Watch the wildlife clips our YouTube channel by clicking the icon below



Visiting Woodlands Safely

If you are taking your group out to visit the woods, it is important to do so safely! Before your trip, it is important to assess the site you are visiting and complete a comprehensive [risk assessment](#). We have included some things to keep in mind below.

Take a read of the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) before you go. These guidelines are there for your safety and the protection of nature. They also have resources and activities on their website that you can use with your group.



Things to keep in mind before and during your trip:

- It is important to [check the weather forecast](#) before setting off and keep an eye on it whilst you are out – you can find this by visiting the MET office website [here](#). Remember it is not safe to visit woods during high winds.
- Always [dress appropriately](#) for your visit and the weather. Many layers if it's cold, alternatively, sun cream and hats if it's warm. Always check for weather warnings before heading out. We recommend sturdy shoes too.
- Look up your [nearest public toilet](#) before heading out. You could contact cafe/leisure facilities ahead of time to ask if your group can use their toilets too.
- Be aware of limited [phone reception](#) in remote places. Keep a mobile to hand. Know your nearest landline (a nearby café?).
- Keep to [designated paths](#). This helps us avoid disturbing wildlife and keeps us safe. Beware of uneven, unstable or slippery ground (rocks can end up particularly slippery!)
- Don't [touch or taste anything](#) you aren't sure of when exploring the woods.
- Stick together. Having your group wear brighter clothing can help. A great way to [set boundaries](#) with children is to get them to identify the boundaries themselves. Explain what the activity is and then ask them to suggest where is on limits and where is off limits.
- Pack a bottle of [hand sanitiser](#) to clean hands, especially before touching eyes, noses or mouths.
- Treat [woodland wildlife with care](#). Don't take any creatures home with you – they need to stay in their habitat to survive and thrive!
- Take [your rubbish home](#) (and any rubbish you can see and pick up safely). Bring a rubbish bag with you.

Curriculum Links

All activities included in this pack are listed below with their links the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence highlighted. Outcomes for only first and second levels are shown. This list is not definitive and can be adapted.

Activity	Curriculum Links
Section 1: Connecting to Woodland	
Activity 1: Natural Feathers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)
Activity 2: Muddy Masterpieces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)
Activity 3: Tracks and Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing; Physical sport and activity)Sciences (Planet Earth)
Activity 4: Nature’s Rainbow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)
Activity 5: Woodland Seasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing; Physical sport and activity)Sciences (Planet Earth)
Activity 6: Tree Huggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)
Activity 7: Beautiful Bark	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Sciences (Planet Earth)



Curriculum Links

Activity	Curriculum Links
Section 2: Exploring Woodland Wildlife	
Activity 8: The Bat and Moth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Physical activity and sport)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 9: Woodland Bird Wizards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing; Physical activity and sport)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 10: Worm Charming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)Technologies (Craft, Design, Engineering and Graphics)
Activity 11: Aerial AcroBats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Sciences (Planet Earth)
Activity 12: Tumble Trapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)Mathematics (Information handling)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 13: In a Rut!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 14: Squirrel Olympics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing; Physical activity and sport)Sciences (Planet Earth)



Curriculum Links

Activity	Curriculum Links
Section 3: Key Threats and How to Help	
Activity 15: Protect our Woodlands Poster	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 16: Recycled Bottle Bird Feeders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Expressive Arts (Art and design)Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)Technologies (Craft, Design, Engineering and Graphics)
Activity 17: Grow Your Own Oak Tree	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 18: Pine Marten Musical Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Physical activity and sport)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 19: Woodland Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing; Physical activity and sport)Social Studies (People, place and environment)
Activity 20: Citizen Scientists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Health and Wellbeing (Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing)Literacy and English (Listening and talking)Mathematics (Information handling)Sciences (Planet Earth)Social Studies (People, place and environment)



Scottish Wildlife Trust Harbourside House 110 Commercial St Edinburgh EH6 6NF
T 0131 312 7765 F 0131 312 8705 E enquiries@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk W scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk

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