



Minibeast Hunt

Pooters

Pooters can be used to catch smaller minibeasts directly into a small pot. Demonstrate to the children how to use the pooter by holding the clear tube over the minibeast and sucking on the green tube (make sure they can remember which one to hold and which one to suck!). Demonstrate that there is filter on the bottom of the green tube to stop the minibeasts going into their mouths. Warn the children that small bits of soil or sand can sneak through the filter so they should not be used to catch minibeasts directly on the ground, but they can be used on leaves, branches or the white sheet. The leader needs to explain that this method is not good for catching larger minibeasts, worms, slugs or snails. Each child should have their own green tube and these should be disinfected at the end of the session (a solution used for sterilizing babies feed bottles works well).

Ensure that all minibeasts are returned to their natural habitat.



Good quality minibeast equipment including pooters, collecting tubs and magnifiers can be obtained from:
www.gbnets-uk.com
tel: 01208 873945
or www.alanaecology.com
tel: 01588 630173



Health and Safety Advice

- Visit the reserve before the activity to familiarise yourself with the area and check for any hazards that you will need to either remove or make the children aware of eg litter, nettles.
- Be clear with the group about their boundaries on the reserve and mark out any areas they should not enter.
- The children will need to wash their hands after the activity before eating or drinking.

Minibeast Hunt



Snail



Slug



Worm



Insect Larva



Beetle



Springtail



Shield Bug



Ant



Fly



Earwig



Spider



Mite



Harvestman



Woodlouse



Millipede



Centipede

If you discover a different minibeast
write its name or draw it here

If you discover a different
minibeast write its name or
draw it here



Pipe Cleaner Dragonflies

This is a useful craft activity which can follow up the observation of dragonflies at a nature reserve.

Suggested age of children: 4 – 14

Equipment needed: Pipe cleaners, small beads, card, scissors.

Before the event: Cut out some wing shapes

- 1) Pick two pipe cleaners – different colours usually look best.
- 2) Thread a bead on to each pipe cleaner about 3cm from the end and twist the end around to keep the bead in place. These are the eyes of the dragonfly.



- 3) Hold the two pipe cleaners with beads next to each other and twist them together a few times.



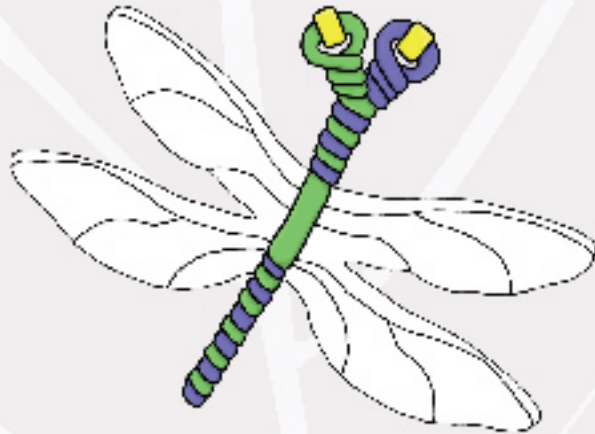
- 4) Take a set of wings and place them between the two pipe cleaners.



Pipe Cleaner Dragonflies



- 5) Finish twisting the pipe cleaners together to keep the wings in place.



- 6) Use some extra pipe cleaner pieces to make six legs for your dragonfly.
- 7) Why not see what other creatures you can make using the same materials?



Health and Safety Advice

- Younger children might need extra help with cutting wings or pipe cleaners.
- Small beads used for eyes could present a choking risk to very young children.
- Children should be warned that the ends of the pipe cleaners can be sharp.



Tree Detectives

These activities are like a mini-science project all about trees. The children get the chance to explore a woodland and become tree detectives.

Suggested age: 5 – 14

Equipment needed: leaf idial instructions and templates (enclosed in the pack), tape measure and a calculator or good mental arithmetic!

Before the session: Check the area of woodland you intend to use for any hazards.

Measuring the height of a tree

Get the children to find a tree that they think is a “giant”. Tell them to face away from the tree and look upside down between their legs. Ask them to move forwards or backwards until they can see the top of the tree between their legs. Count how many paces it takes them to get back to the trunk of the tree. The number of paces is the height of the tree. Use a tape measure to measure the distance back to the tree.



Tree Detectives



Estimating the age of a tree

The age of a tree can be estimated by measuring its girth. This is the measurement around the tree trunk. Give the children a tape measure and ask them to measure the girth by measuring 1.3 metres from the ground up the trunk of the tree. Ask the children to “hug” the tree with their tape measures to get a good reading. Trees in a woodland add around 1.25cm to their girth each year. So to calculate the age of a tree with a 250cm girth, you need to divide 250 by 1.25 to find out that the tree is 200 years old. Help the children to calculate the age of their tree from their girth measurements.



Identifying tree species

Introduce the children to an area of the woodland with a variety of species. Give each group of children the leaf idial (enclosed in the pack) and ask them to gather and identify leaves of as many different trees as they can. The leaves they gather could then be used to make a woodland collage or form part of a display.



Health and Safety Advice

- Visit the site before the activity to familiarise yourself with the area and check for any hazards that you will need to either remove or make the children aware of eg litter, nettles.
- Be clear with the group about their boundaries on the reserve and mark out any areas they should not enter.
- The children will need to wash their hands after the activity before eating or drinking.

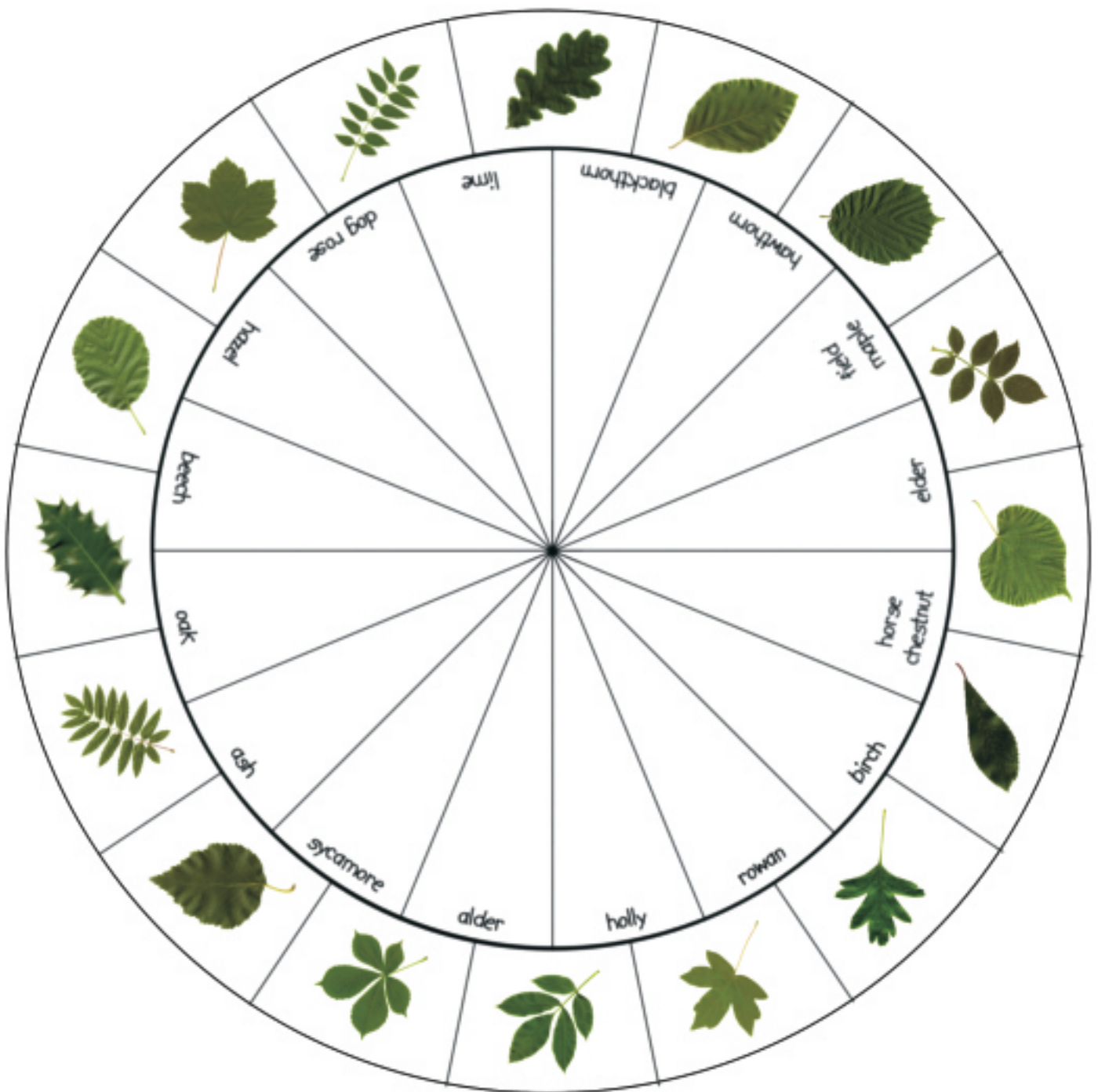


Idial Cover



Cut around the outside of this disc to make the cover for your idial
(don't forget to cut into the bottom segment - this bit shows
the answers)





Cut out this disc and place the cover over it. Insert a split pin through the centre so the dial can turn. Turn the dial so that the arrow points to the leaf you wish to identify. The name of the species will be shown at the bottom of the dial.





Tracks and Trails

Whilst mammal sightings can be few and far between, this tracks and trails activity introduces children to the idea that mammals are using the reserve too.

Suggested age of children: 7 - 14

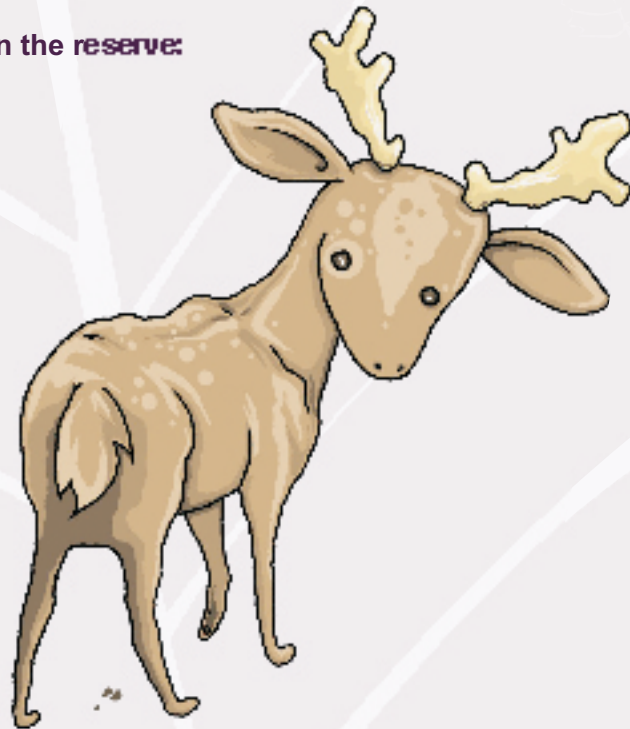
Equipment needed: Trail cards, string, scissors, answer sheets.

Before the event: Set the trail cards around the reserve

Talk to the group about watching wildlife. Introduce the idea that although wildlife can be hard to spot, there are often signs of it around if you know what to look for. After setting enough animal track pictures (enclosed in the pack) for a circuit, send the children around the reserve to look for them. They complete the worksheet (enclosed in the pack) to say which animal they think made the track.

List of wild mammals seen in the reserve:

Roe deer
Badger
Fox
Otter
Mink
Red squirrel
Hedgehog
Rabbit
Stoat
Weasel
Mole
Field vole
Wood mouse
Common shrew



Health and Safety Advice

- Visit the park before the activity to familiarise yourself with the area and check for any hazards that you will need to either remove or make the children aware of eg litter, nettles.
- Be clear with the group about their boundaries on the reserve and mark out any areas they should not enter. Younger children will need to be accompanied by an adult whilst on the trail.
- The children will need to wash their hands after the activity before eating or drinking.