

Pond Explorers

Pond dipping to find out what creatures live there and how they interact together. Children use a simple recording sheet, differentiated for key stages. Choose to focus on:

Survivors—looking at adaptations that enable animals to survive in water with the option of building their own creature from natural materials or playing the adaptation parachute game.

OR

Dinner time—find out who eats who in the pond and make food chains or play the food web game. Younger children can play the dinner time parachute game.

Mini-beast hunt

Collecting and comparing mini-beasts living on trees, under logs, in leaf litter and in the meadow. Other activities can include the 'bugs-eye-view' – exploring the habitats low down with mirrors, creating a micro-trail adventure playground for mini-beasts or playing the popular woolly caterpillar camouflage game.

Time traveller

Learning about the ways plants were used in the past including dyes, making fire, basket weaving, shelters and forest foods. Willow and its properties are discussed and dream catchers or willow frame pictures can be made. Activities are dependent on the season.

Trees of life

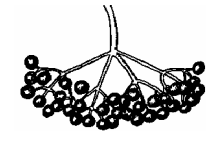
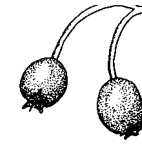
Identifying trees from their leaves (using a branch key), investigating methods of estimating tree height, identifying mini-beasts living on trees and creating the 'human tree'. 'Meet a tree' blind fold game can also be played.

Leaf Squares

Comparing meadow plants and where they grow by sampling long and short grass swards. Plants can either be identified or the number of different leaf shapes counted and compared. Mini-beasts can also be collected from the long and short grass, and compared.

Super Seeds (Autumn term only)

Following a seed trail, using clues to identify different seeds and work out how they are dispersed. Optional blindfold challenge to work out the seeds in buckets along a rope trail. Combine with a sculpture using autumn leaves and seeds to complete the half day.



Sensory Selections

Investigating the variety of colours, sounds, smells and textures that can be found in nature. Many activities and games can be chosen from, including tree rubbings, colour palettes, colour match, touch collections, smelly perfumes and woolly caterpillar, meet a tree, and parachute games. This session can also be used to develop language and written skills.

Survival

Discovering what an animal needs to survive. Children identify these resources in a given habitat, and find out what happens if they disappear. The session can involve storytelling and discussions can be the starting point for a written piece of work or drama. Ideas are reinforced by playing the 'shrinking habitat' parachute game.

