

## Woodland activities

### Things you may need:

- Metre ruler
- Tape measure
- Quadrats
- Plastic hoops
- Squared paper
- Identification key
- Notebook and pencil
- Pooters
- Jam jars
- Washing up liquid
- Sieve
- Tweezers
- Blindfold
- Crayons
- Sticky tape
- Plasticine/modelling clay
- Plastic gloves
- Fixing spray

### How tall is a tree?

- A quick method of finding out the height of a tree used by some African and Native American tribes is to walk away from it until you can just see its top when you bend and look through your legs.
- The number of paces from the tree to the spot where you stop is the same as its height. Alternatively you could measure that distance with a ruler or stick of known length.
- Conversions of feet to metres: 5 ft = 1.5 m, 30ft = 9.1m, 50ft = 15.2m, 100ft = 30.5m

### How old is a tree?

- As trees grow, the trunk gets thicker, so the older the tree, the greater the circumference of its trunk. Tree trunks get wider by about 2.5cm every year.
- You will need: A measuring stick or metre rule and a tape measure.
- Measure 1m up the trunk from the ground, then put your tape measure round the tree at this height and record the distance round the trunk.
- Divide this measurement by 2.5cm and this will give you the rough age of your tree in years.
- For example: If your tree measures 1.5m round its trunk, change the measurement to centimetres by multiplying by 100.
- $1.5 \times 100 = 150$ , then calculate  $150 / 2.5 = 60$  - This means your tree is about 60 years old!

### Quadrats

- Place a quadrat (square frame of wood/plastic) on a suitable part of the woodland floor and look carefully at what is living in the area inside it. Make

drawings of the things you see and take photos of them. Use the identification key to find out what they are.

- Check out the minibeasts living under a rotten log. Classify where the different species are found and the conditions of their habitat, e.g. light, water, soil, shade, and temperature. How are they adapted to living in these conditions?
- Use a pooter to suck up minibeasts from the woodland floor so that you can have a close look at them. Remember to return them to their homes before you leave.

- Investigating owl pellets: Owl pellets give us clues as to what an owl has eaten because they contain the animals' bones that the owl could not digest.
- Once you have found a pellet: Half fill a jar with water and a drop of washing up liquid. Drop in the pellet, put the lid on and shake well for about 30 seconds. Leave to stand for another 5 minutes and then shake again. Once pellet has disintegrated, pour the jar contents into an old sieve and pick out the bones using tweezers. Wash the bones and let them dry and then use a hand lens to examine them. Whose bones are they?

### Trails

- A walk in the woods: Identify and name all the species found along a pre-planned pathway through a wood using the identification key.
- Tracks and signs trail: Look out for clues in the woodland which show that different species have been there, e.g. footprints, poo, food remains, homes, feathers, hair. Play 'Copse and robbers' game on Planet ARKive before you go out to give an indication of what to look for and after you return as consolidation of the fieldwork activity.
- Tree trail: Feel the largest plants whilst blindfolded, use touch and smell to gain an impression of the tree. Choose different trees - Are they the same? How are they different?
- Blindfold a child and lead them on a journey through the woodland to a specific tree. They must get to know it by feeling the bark texture, finding branches and using any other way to recognize it without looking at all. Still blindfolded, lead the child back to where you started. Now take off the blindfold let them try to find their tree using their sense of touch to confirm it. What other senses helped them.



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