



Amazing Animals

Divide the children into seven small groups.

What Am I?

In the bag is a selection of animal items or clues (sealed in display boxes). All of the objects were found in Forestry Commission woodlands. Ask the children to decide what they think the items are, and which creature they came from. The children may find the magnifying glasses useful.

What do the children know about these creatures? Use the animal answer pack to find your answers and aid your group discussion.

Animal Detectives

Give each group a 'Wildlife in your forest' sheet. See what you can spot as you take a short walk through the forest.

Minibeast Hunt

Explain to the children that the Forestry Commission looks after a lot of forests and that forests provide important microhabitats for minibeasts. A microhabitat is a place for minibeasts to live, e.g. a rotting log, a grassy area, a layer of dead leaves or the trunk of a tree. When trees die and fall they are sometimes left on the forest floor to rot. This is called deadwood, and is vital to the health of the forest because of the minibeasts which thrive in it.

You are now going to explore these microhabitats, to find some of the minibeasts which live in the forest.

You can use the identification keys and magnifying glasses to find out what they are.

How to collect with respect:

- Remove the lid from your bug jar and gently help the creatures into the jar using the soft brush – be careful not to damage them as some are very small and delicate.
- You can look at your minibeast through the magnifying glass on the lid of your jar.
- Do not put slugs or snails in your jar as they may stick to the other minibeasts.
- When looking under logs and stones, please remember to replace them.
- Please remember to let the minibeasts go in a suitable place.

Forest Floor Art

In your groups, using material you have collected from the forest floor, make a picture or sculpture of a minibeast or woodland animal.

Begin by clearing a space, by pushing the leaf litter aside with your feet.

Think about the materials that you are collecting, and how they might work well for each part of your animal or minibeast.

Why not take a photo of your work as a lasting record?

As an alternative try making a larger picture or sculpture as a whole class effort!