A helping hand
Trees are planted close together so they still grow up tall. Sometimes some of them are cut down to leave room and help the others to grow. The stumps and logs left behind make great homes for lots of creatures like woodlice, beetles, centipedes and ants. They recycle leaves and dead wood into new soil, and they're food for bigger animals.

Where to next?
Follow the trail until you come to the pond. Make sure you wait for the adults. You could play hide and seek as you go along. Look! The trees are big enough to hide behind!

Pond life
At the pond look out for some beautiful dragonflies darting about on a sunny summer's day.

Where to next?
Try jumping about like a frog or holding out your arms and flying round the pond like a dragonfly.

No ordinary tree!
Look for the funny old chestnut tree on the left of the path. He has branches like arms and 'eyes' looking in all directions. He sees everything and can tell you all about what happens in the forest when people aren't around.

Where to next?
Tree round and carry on along the path. Notice the cleared-out area on your left as you go. New trees will be planted in a while.

7 Ripe old age
Look out for a giant log. It must be very old! Do you think it could tell you stories about the forest and all the things that have gone on here?

Where to next?
Get up on the log and see how well you can balance! Get an adult to help, and be extra careful if the log is wet.

8 No ordinary tree!
Look for the funny old chestnut tree on the left of the path. He has branches like arms and 'eyes' looking in all directions. He sees everything and can tell you all about what happens in the forest when people aren't around.

Where to next?
Put your ear to his trunk, ask a question, listen to his answers. What does he say?

You've done it!
Well done for completing the trail.

4 How trees & plants grow
There are small trees growing up between the big trees where sunlight reaches the ground. The wind blows the seeds off the trees to the ground where they grow.

Where to next?
Run up the trail and make sure you stop where another path goes off to your left. Wait for the adults if they can't keep up with you.

5 Ripe old age
Look out for a giant log. It must be very old! Do you think it could tell you stories about the forest and all the things that have gone on here?

Where to next?
Get up on the log and see how well you can balance! Get an adult to help, and be extra careful if the log is wet.

Roasting chestnuts on a bright fire and listening to stories around the fire are always better when people aren't around.

3 Pond life
At the pond look out for some beautiful dragonflies darting about on a sunny summer's day.

Where to next?
Try jumping about like a frog or holding out your arms and flying round the pond like a dragonfly.

The New Forest
Discovery Trail at the Reptile Centre
Come & discover some amazing facts about trees, plants and amazing plants in the forest all year round.

forestry.gov.uk/visit
Explore the Discovery Trail & Reptile Centre

Let’s get started!

1 Forest textures
Start your trail at the picnic area. You’ll see lots of spruce trees as you start the trail. They stay green all year. Their dark needle leaves are really spiky but the new shoots are bright green and soft. Rub some in your fingers. What do they smell like?

Where to next?
Walk up towards the top of the slope. Past the small path on your right, and look across the big ditch to your left.

2 Dead & alive!
Look at that big tree stump on the bank! Some of it has rotted down into soil with the help of minibeasts and plants are growing on it. How many plants can you count? Can you see the rabbit hole underneath?

Where to next?
Follow the trail to where there are lots of tall trees together. Just beyond a path on your left.

3 Reaching the sky
Most of these tall trees are called Douglas Fir and they’re really old. Did you know this kind of tree can live for hundreds of years? Can you reach right round one of the trees? How many people do you need? On a warm day and after rain the trees give off a wonderful scent that’s a bit like lemon and a bit like pine. Can you smell it?

Where to next?
Keep going along the trail, where there are lots of tall trees together. Just beyond a path on your left.

We hope you have fun!

Trail map & stops

Start your trail at the Reptile Centre.

This leaflet shows the best places to stop as you walk the trail. It also shows activities that you can do between the stops.

Open
For opening times for The Reptile Centre, visit: forestry.gov.uk/newforest and click on places to go - New Forest Reptile Centre.

Facilities & parking
Toilets and parking is available at the Reptile Centre. Parking and entry is free. However, a donation is welcome by use of the car park ticket machine.

Contact
Forestry Commission, Queens House, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7NH
Tel: 023 8028 3141

How to find us
By car or bike the New Forest Reptile Centre is 2 miles south west of Lyndhurst off the A35.

Contact
Forestry Commission, Queens House, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7NH
Tel: 023 8028 3141

Find us on Facebook at: New Forest Reptile Centre

We will consider all requests to make publication content available in alternative formats.

Call 0131 314 6575 or email diversity@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

The New Forest is cared for by Forestry Commission England

FSC® C011771
Woodlands have been certified in accordance with the rules of the Forest Stewardship Council.

forestry.gov.uk/newforest