

Spring Forest School Activities

As we head into Spring we can begin to see signs of new life in the natural environment. Although the weather is still very changeable, so warm and waterproof clothes are still needed, it is the time of year for exploring growth and looking and listening closely when we are outside.

I have put together a selection of activities that you can try with your children if you and they would like. They are by no means compulsory as at Forest School we plan activities that reflect the children's interests, things they ask to do and sometimes to continue learning that we might have done in class but they are allowed to choose because Forest School is child-led. I have tried to keep the ideas accessible as I know that not everyone will have access to a garden and obviously we must all **follow the guidance on exercising outside** so some of these can be done inside the home.

A note on safety – at Forest School one of the most important 'rules' that we teach the children from day one is 'No pick, no lick'. This means that we only use natural items that have fallen from trees or plants rather than picking from them when they are growing (the exception to this may be if you have a garden and you are happy for them to take a few flowers or leaves you might choose to do this). It also means that we never put anything in our mouths, including fingers. We always wash our hands when we have finished-we are all experts at this now anyway! I would also advise that if you do not know what something is then leave it alone, we tell the children that they should always check with an adult if they are not sure when collecting natural items and we never touch mushrooms, fungi or berries.

Here is a link to the Woodland Trust where they have some very good tree identification sheets that you can print out at home and take out on a walk. They have leaf, stick, blossom and bud sheets so you can choose depending on the time of year.

[Tree ID for Kids - Nature Detectives - Woodland Trust](#)

I have also included as one of the activities a spring scavenger hunt.

Stone/rock art



This activity is a creative activity that you can do with any stones or rocks that you can find in your own garden or if you are going for a walk at a beach. If you do decide to do this at a beach please make sure that you leave your stone art behind as it is not advised to remove stones from beach areas.

It would be interesting to see if you can make a similar style piece of art from other objects? All you need is a flat base and a steady hand to make them balance.

The Duplication Game

This is a variation on the classic 'Kim's Game'.

You will need:

- 5-6 natural items e.g.: pine cone, stone, stick, feather, leaf etc.
- A tea towel or covering.

1. Lay out your items and show to your children.
2. They then have to go off and find the same/similar items in the environment.

You can also play this as a memory game by covering the items and removing one item. They then have to guess which item is missing.

You can play this game in your garden, the woods, the beach or even inside if you want to use household objects/toys.

Bug Hotel



A bug hotel is a lovely activity that you can make at home and even if you only have a small garden or even a balcony or window box there is a bug hotel that you can make to fit. I have put some ideas above but there are a lot of different ideas to be found on the internet. Some bug hotels are large and contain a variety of materials, if this is the type that you are interested in making then have a look at the link below. Some bug hotels are as simple as tying a bundle of sticks together and hanging them in a tree or making some holes in the end of some old wooden branches.

A word of caution-I have included some pictures of bug hotels that have utilized some plastic or tin from the recycling bin. These are good because they are easy to make but please be mindful of where you are leaving them as we do not want to add plastics/metals into the environment. It might be that you make these and then carefully empty them out somewhere at the end of the year so that the plastic can be recycled.

[Bug Hotel Plans DIY | Build an Insect Hotel - The RSPB](#)

SPRING SCAVENGER HUNT

Can you spot these signs of Spring?

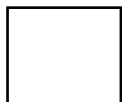
Catkin



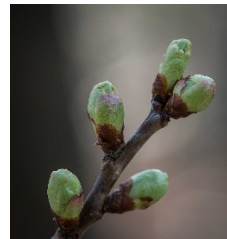
Daffodil



Bird song



Tree bud



Blossom



Lamb

