



Nature Explorers Challenge Pack

*A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO EXPLORING
THE WORLD OUTSIDE YOUR DOOR*

Working in
partnership



Girlguiding
London and
South East England



Girlguiding
North West England



Girlguiding
South West England



Contents

Introduction to the pack	4
How to earn a badge	5

Section 1: Nature Detectives

6

 1.1	Nature Scavenger Hunt	7
 1.2	Tree ID Challenge	8-9
 1.3	Sound Safari	10-11
 1.4	Texture Treasure Hunt	12-13
 1.5	PHOTOsynthesis	14
 1.6	What's on the Menu?	15-17
 1.7	Tree and Leaf Rubbing	18
 1.8	Birdsong Detectives	19
 1.9	Indoor Minibeast Safari	20
 1.10	Moon Explorers	21-23

Section 2: Changemaker

24

 2.1	Boom! Seed Bombs!	25
 2.2	Bin It to Beat It	26-27
 2.3	Trash to Treasure	28
 2.4	Food Waste Warriors	29-32
 2.5	Build your own Bird Feeder and Bird Box	33
 2.6	Check in to the Bug Hotel	34
 2.7	Write a Letter to someone in Authority	35-36
 2.8	Fundraise for a Fantastic Cause	37
 2.9	Plant Your Own Herbs	38-39
 2.10	Consumption Detox	40-41

3.1	Visit a Nature Place	43
3.2	Resilient Red Squirrels	44
3.3	Bee Brilliant!	45-46
3.4	Nature Bingo	47
3.5	Wildlife Law Detective	48-49
3.6	Countryside Code of Conduct True or False	50
3.7	British Wildlife True or False	51
3.8	Who Eats Who?	52-53
3.9	Wild Wonders: Endangered animals need your help!	54
3.10	Leaf Detectives and Nature Printing	55-56

The RSPB and Girlguiding Partnerships	57
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▼ **BLACKBIRD**



RSPB / Ben Andrew

Introduction to the pack

Welcome to our challenge pack, Nature Explorers, which aims to educate young people about all aspects of nature and especially inspire them to find their own love of the natural world.

Throughout this pack you will discover how to identify different species, what actions you can do to help, and learn about British wildlife. With fun and exciting activities, games and crafts there's something for everyone.

Some of the activities are short and will take up part of meeting, other activities are longer, have a few parts and may take more than one meeting to complete and therefore be more suitable for older sections. Alternatively, younger sections may just want to complete one or two parts of these activities.

This pack has been created by the RSPB Nature Steering Group which is a group of Girlguiding members aged 16-25 who are passionate about protecting the environment and helping young people to experience and connect with nature.

As a group, we are working with the RSPB to create activities and experiences that will help young people to get out in nature, put their phones and screens away and find their love for the outdoors.

There are two additional packs that support this pack; The Appendix Pack with supporting templates and print outs, and The Take it Further Pack which contains additional games, crafts and ideas on how to continue the fun and learning, as well as links to Girlguiding programme activities. The games and crafts can be completed just for fun or can count towards the badge.

How do we keep safe and look after nature when we're out and about?

- When running the activities, please follow the Girlguiding policies and procedures, including a risk assessment for activities away from the normal meeting place.
- Keep your distance from wild birds and animals so as not to disturb and stress them especially those that are with young and in winter when food may be scarce.
- For activities like 'Texture Treasure Hunt', ask the girls to only collect items which have fallen on the ground such as fallen leaves, twigs, seeds and fruits.
- Be mindful of where the group is walking to avoid trampling plants and flowers.
- Follow the motto - "leave only footprints" and take any litter home with you.

How to earn a badge:

TO EARN A BADGE, YOUR UNIT MUST SPEND AT LEAST 30 MINUTES DOING ACTIVITIES OUTDOORS IN NATURE.

The table outlines the minimum number of activities you need to complete to earn a badge:

	Spend at least 30 minutes doing activities outdoors in nature.	Section 1: Nature Detectives	Section 2: Change-makers	Section 3: British Wildlife	Your choice from sections 1-3 or the take it further pack	Total activities completed
Rainbows (4-7 years)	Yes	1 activity	1 activity	1 activity	Optional	3+
Brownies (7-10 years)	Yes	1 activity	1 activity	1 activity	2 activities	5+
Guides/ Rangers (10-18 years)	Yes	1 activity	1 activity	1 activity	3 activities	6+



Where to order your badges

Complete the badge order form, forms.cloud.microsoft. We'll also ask you to tell us how you got on and what your unit thought of the activities. Badges are posted by the RSPB and cost £1 plus postage and packaging.

Nature Detectives

Have you ever been curious about what an oak tree leaf looks like? Do you know what a chaffinch sounds like? What is the best food to feed birds? Can you think of some things in nature that might be soft or rough?

We are surrounded by nature; from the limpets and starfish we might see in rock pools by the coast or the Avocets and egrets that we might see at wetlands; to the deer that we might see in the countryside or the Foxes and Hedgehogs that we may see in the city.

In this section, you will have the opportunity to learn how to identify different plants and animals and see what you can identify in your local area. Hopefully, these activities will mean you will become better at identifying the animals and plants that you may see around you in your local area.

Activities from section 1 can be completed in an outdoor space such as:

- Urban green spaces, such as a local park, school field/playground, allotment or churchyard.
- Local Nature Reserve.
- Woodland.
- Girlguiding campsites or activity centres – find a list here: girlguiding.org.uk/what-we-do/adventure/adventures-in-guiding/
- RSPB Nature Reserves – find your nearest Reserve here: www.rspb.org.uk/days-out
Please contact the Reserve in advance if you are visiting as a unit.
- Riverside, or by the side of a canal, lake or pond.

▼ YOUNG FOX CUB



Nature Scavenger Hunt

**THERE IS SO MUCH TO SEE IN NATURE,
BUT CAN YOU FIND IT ALL?**

Head outside and explore the world around you. What can you see? What wildlife and plants are right under your nose? In this Nature-themed Scavenger Hunt, can you find an outdoor item or plant starting with every letter of the alphabet?

Resources:

- Paper
- Pencil or pen

Instructions:

- Head outside to a local park or green space.
- In pairs or small groups, walk around the area and explore the environment and wildlife around you.
- Find an item, plant or animal for every letter in the alphabet
- The first pair/group to find something for every letter of the alphabet (or nearly every letter) wins!

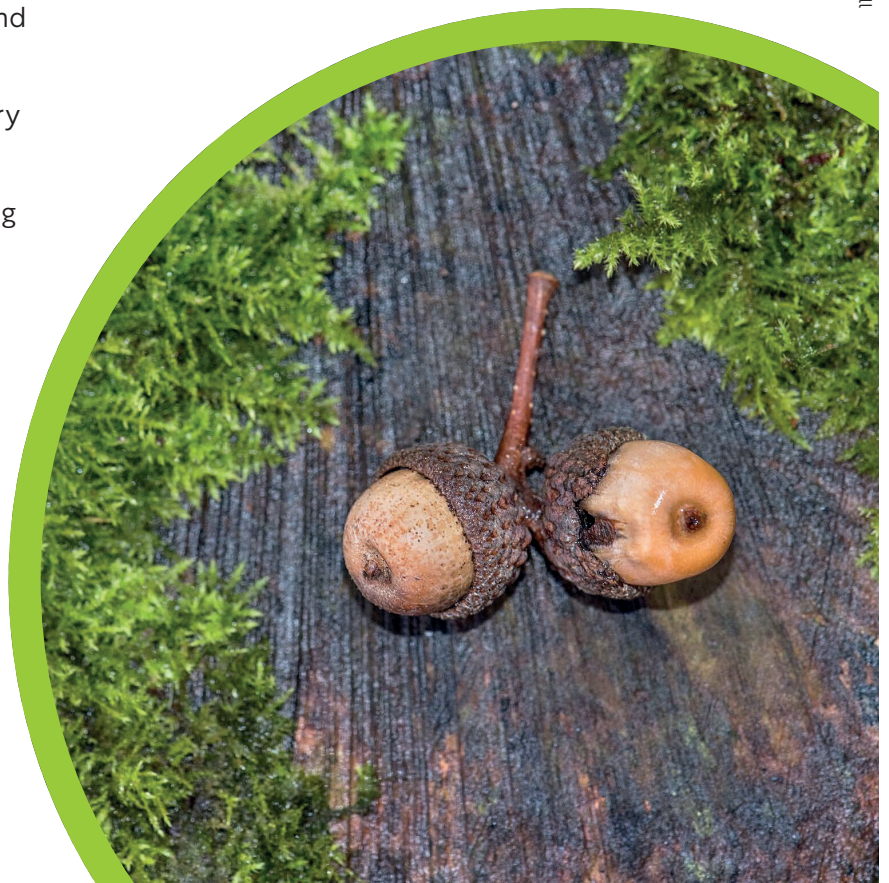
Top tips:

- When on the Scavenger Hunt, look at what is around you only. Don't pick flowers or leaves and don't disturb wildlife.



RSPB / Jodie Randall

ACORNS ►



Tree ID Challenge

TURN YOUR NEXT WALK IN THE WOODS INTO AN ENGAGING ID CHALLENGE BY IDENTIFYING THE SPECIES OF TREES AROUND YOU.

The UK has around 30 to 60 native tree and shrub species. However, due to the introduction of new species over time, 3,000 non-native tree species now grow successfully in the UK. Can you be Tree Detectives and see how many different types of tree species you can identify near you?

Resources:

- Print out these ID sheets from The Woodland Trust for this challenge.
- The ID sheets cover all four seasons so your girls can discover how trees change throughout the year. Use the relevant ID sheet for when you are completing this challenge (e.g. the blossom sheet will only work in Spring).
- Leaf ID sheet: woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/48345/leaf-id-sheet.pdf
- Twig ID sheet: woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/48347/twig-id-sheet.pdf
- Blossom and Catkin ID sheet: woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/48350/blossom-and-catkin-id-sheet.pdf
- Fruit, Nut and Seed ID sheet: woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/48348/fruits-and-seeds-id-sheet.pdf
- Pencil

Instructions:

- Head outdoors to a local woodland, or somewhere with lots of trees.
- Use the ID sheets to identify different species of trees based on their features (leaves, twigs, blossom, fruits/nuts/seeds).
- Perhaps you can have a competition to see who can find the most things on the sheets.
- Remember, some trees are thorny so watch out for sharp prickles!



BLACKTHORN ►

Reflection:

Whilst on your walk or afterwards, have a think about or discuss the following:

- Look at the shape of the leaves and think about why they are different.
- Why do leaves change colour in autumn?
- What are deciduous or evergreen trees?
- Can you see buds on the twigs? What are they for?
- Talk about how different trees bloom at different times.
- Talk about why blossom is important for bees and butterflies.
- Talk about how blossom turns into fruits and seeds once they've been pollinated.
- Tree seeds come in lots of different shapes and sizes. Can you find berries, fruits, cones, nuts and helicopter (winged) seeds?
- Talk about why trees need seeds and how they are spread (seed dispersal).
- Can you see seed dispersal in action? For example, a sycamore seed spinning on the breeze.
- Talk about why fruits and seeds are important food for wildlife. Can you spot any birds nibbling berries or squirrels gathering nuts?

RSPB / Michael Harvey

SWEET CHESTNUT TREE ▼



Sound Safari

LISTEN CLOSELY AND DISCOVER THE SOUNDS OF NATURE.

Take a moment to slow down and really listen. Nature is full of sounds we often don't notice! In this activity, you'll spend time sitting quietly and discovering the world through your ears.

Resources:

- Something to write on – e.g. notebook or sheet of paper
- Pen/Pencil
- Timer

Instructions:

- Find your spot: Choose a safe, comfortable place to sit in a park or outdoor place.
- Sit quietly: Set your timer for 2 minutes. During this time stay as still and as quiet as you can, close your eyes if you like. Focus only on the sounds around you.
- Record what you hear: After the timer ends, write or draw all the sounds you noticed. Here are some ideas to help: Birds singing, leaves rustling, people talking, dogs barking, wind blowing, traffic in the distance.
- Try to remember as many sounds as you can!
- Compare with others: Share your list with your group/unit. Think about: Did you hear the same sounds? Did anyone notice something you didn't? Who heard the most sounds?

- Challenge yourself. Can you: Identify where each sound came from? Describe sounds using words like loud, quiet, high, low? Try again in a different spot and compare results?

Reflection:

Take a moment to think or discuss:

- Was it easy or tricky to stay quiet?
- What was the most surprising sound?
- How did you feel after sitting and listening?

Take it further:

- Try this activity again at different times of day.
- Listen in different places (garden, street, woodland).
- Create a "sound map" by drawing where each sound came from.



▲ SONG THRUSH

**WELL DONE – BY LISTENING CAREFULLY,
YOU HAVE DISCOVERED A WHOLE NEW
SIDE OF NATURE!**

RSPB / Ben Andrew

Texture Treasure Hunt

EXPLORE NATURE USING YOUR SENSES.

Get outdoors and discover the amazing textures all around you! On this treasure hunt, you'll visit a local park or green space and find natural items that match different texture words.

Resources:

- A list of texture words
- Pencil
- Small bag or container (optional, for collecting items)

Instructions:

- Head outside. Visit a park or green space with your group/unit.
- Go on your treasure hunt. Find something in nature that matches each texture word.
- To protect nature, only collect items which have fallen on the ground such as fallen leaves, twigs, seeds and fruits. Remember, you can touch, observe, or describe—you don't always need to pick it up! Be gentle with plants and keep your distance from wildlife.
- What did you find for each word?
- Get curious. Think about: What is the item? Where did you find it? Why does it feel that way?
- Share your discoveries. Compare with others: did you all find the same things? Which texture was the trickiest to find?

Texture Words:

Soft

Rough

Smooth

Hard

Squishy

Prickly

(look, don't touch!)

Cold

Reflection:

- Take a moment to think or chat: Which texture did you like best?
- Did anything surprise you?
- How do textures help plants and animals survive? For example, the Horse Chestnut Tree has spiky green husks, this might stop hungry birds and animals from eating the fruits (conkers) inside before they're ready to grow into a new tree.

Take it further:

- Find **two different things** for the same texture.
- Add your own texture words (e.g. bumpy, dry, fluffy).
- Describe your favourite find in detail.



▲ HORSE CHESTNUT

**GREAT JOB, EXPLORER—YOUR SENSES
HELPED YOU DISCOVER NATURE IN A
WHOLE NEW WAY!**

RSPB / Ben Andrew

PHOTOsynthesis

BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER AND TAKE SOME FUN SNAPS OF THE WILDLIFE AROUND YOU.

Wildlife photography is the art of documenting animals and nature in their natural habitats. It requires patience and fieldcraft, and professional photographers use a very big camera. Have a go at being a wildlife photographer and see if you can capture the perfect photo. Can you identify what you have photographed?

Resources:

- Cameras (the young people could bring in their own, with parents' permission. It may also be best to share cameras in small groups).
- Small bag, if you need to pick anything up.
- ID books or sheets such as this Identification Guide from Plantlife: plantlife.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/WEB-Plantlife-ID-Guide.pdf
- Guides and Rangers could take photos on their phones instead.
- Guides and Rangers could also download a Tree Identification app from The Woodland Trust instead of using the printed sheets, if they prefer: woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/how-to-identify-trees/
- Return to your meeting place or sit in a suitable area, and using the ID Sheets, books or the internet, research and identify the wildlife in your photos. For example, you might want to research:
 - What the plant/insect/animal is
 - What other wildlife is it related to?
 - Where is it native to and where is it most abundant?
 - Is this plant used for anything (e.g. in food or medicine)?
 - Where do these animals nest/make their habitats?
 - How do they choose a mate and what are their young called?

Instructions:

- Head outside to a local park or green space and choose a route to walk along.
- Take photos of the different plants and animals you encounter on your walk. Focus especially on plants with leaves and flowers as these will make them easier to identify.
- If you are trying to photograph animals, keep your distance so as not to stress them. Be patient, calm and quiet, otherwise they may get spooked and run away.
- Instead of taking photos, take some time to sit with the plants and try to draw them instead.
- Look at what areas these plants are growing in, why is this the space they're growing in?
- Guides and Rangers with phones – Try different exposures or close up 'macro photography' of plants.

Take It Further:

What's on the Menu?

BECOME A BIRD CHEF AND MAKE SOME TASTY TREATS FOR YOUR FEATHERED FRIENDS.

Please see RSPB advice on feeding birds seasonally to help protect birds from disease transmission [rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/feeding-birds-near-you](https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/feeding-birds-near-you) before completing this activity.

Do you know which foods are good for birds to eat, and which aren't?

Learn about different types of birds and the correct food to feed them, then make a healthy treat using one of the recipes below.

Part 1: Good and bad bird food

Resources:

- 2 large sheets of paper
- Marker pen
- Good and bad food list (Appendix 1)

Instructions:

- Write 'good food for birds' on a sheet of paper and stick this up on the wall on one side of the room. On another sheet of paper write 'bad food for birds' and stick this on the opposite wall.
- When the leader calls out a food from the list, go to the side of the room according to whether you think it is good or bad for birds.
- The leader then reads out the answer and why the food is good or bad.
- Repeat this until you've covered all the food in the list.

- Ask yourselves: Did any of these foods that birds should, or should not, eat surprise you? Why?

Part 2: Make bird food:

Resources:

Per child:

- 1 cup of lard*
- 1 cup of uncooked rolled oats
- 2 cups of mixed seeds
- Raisins**
- Unsalted and unroasted peanuts (crushed)***
- String, and something to put the feed in (for example, washed out yogurt pots, cardboard plant pot or clean egg cartons.)

Instructions:

- Measure 1 cup of unsalted, unseasoned lard at room temperature. Add in 2 cups of mixed seeds, raisins, crushed unsalted peanuts, 1 cup of oats. Knead and mix the ingredients to form a stiff paste until everything is well coated and well mixed.
- Poke drainage holes in the bottom of whatever container you are using, and thread a string through and knot into place. Leave enough string to hang up somewhere. Put the seed mixture in.
- Put in the fridge as soon as possible for the lard to completely harden before hanging outside. Throw away after 3 days as the feed will start to go mouldy after this time and will attract bacteria and pests.
- Hang your bird feeder outside and observe which birds come to feed.

*Be aware of cultural or religious beliefs, some parents may not want their children to handle lard or suet. You can wear rubber gloves for this activity. Alternative bird feeder options can be found on the RSPB website:

[rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/food-and-water-for-wildlife](https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/food-and-water-for-wildlife)

**If children have a dog at home, be aware that raisins can be toxic for dogs.

***Check for allergies. Leave the nuts out if anyone has a nut allergy. Even if everyone's ok with nuts, no one should eat peanuts that have been sold as bird food.

▼ TREE SPARROW



RSPB / Ben Andrew

RSPB / Ray Kennedy

Top tips:

- Rainbows and Brownies will need help with making the bird feeder, especially when it comes to putting holes in the pots and knotting the string. It is also likely to get quite messy.
- The lard must be 100% pure animal fat lard, for proper nutrition and a high calorie energy boost for the birds. Vegetable fats will smear onto the bird's feathers and destroy their insulation and waterproofing properties, so don't use them.
- Because lard melts in warm weather, fat-based feeders are best reserved for late autumn and winter.
- This activity links to activity 2.5: Make your own Bird Feeder. Look at this for more ideas on feeders and what to put the bird food in afterwards.



RSPB / Ben Andrew

**GREAT SPOTTED
WOODPECKER ▼**



Tree and Leaf Rubbing

DISCOVER THE INTRICATE HIDDEN TEXTURES OF LEAF VEINS AND BARK GROOVES IN A BLEND OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION.

Resources:

- Plain paper (can be white or coloured)
- Crayons (it works best without the wrapping on them)

Instructions:

- Go to a local park or green space with lots of different trees.
- For tree rubbing, choose a tree and hold a piece of paper against the tree trunk.
- Using the side of a crayon, gently rub over the paper until you can see the texture of the bark.
- Repeat with a different type of tree, with bark that looks different from the first tree.
- For leaf rubbing: Collect three (or more) leaves which have fallen on the ground, these should be different shapes and sizes.
- Place one leaf under a piece of paper. Use stones to stop the paper from flying away and moving.
- Using the side of a crayon, gently rub over the paper where the leaf is until you see the texture of the leaf.
- Repeat for the other leaves using new pieces of paper.

Top tips:

- The tree rubbing can be done in pairs for Rainbows and Brownies with one of them holding the piece of paper on the tree and the other one using the crayon to do the tree rubbing.
- Leaf Rubbing works best on a flat, hard surface, and you can use small rocks or stones to hold the paper in place whilst doing the rubbing. You could also ask girls to bring in leaves they have collected on their own.
- Another way of doing it is by arranging all the leaves you collect under one piece of paper to create a collage of leaves.
- With both activities, you can combine them with tree identification by using the rubbings you have made to identify the trees they came from.



Birdsong Detectives

LEARN TO IDENTIFY DIFFERENT BIRDS BY THE NOISES THEY MAKE.

We live in a busy world full of sounds: car horns, trains, beeping traffic, machinery, music, people chatting and laughing.

Nature isn't quiet either, in fact it's noisy too! The natural world is full of communication and conversation.

Resources:

- Online Bird Song Identifier: rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/identifying-birds/bird-song-identifier - This web link gives you examples of the 15 most common bird songs in the UK along with the what, when and where for each bird song and is the perfect starter as a beginner resource to understand the bird song that you may hear in a garden or local park.
- Use the Merlin app to scan around you to see what birds you can hear. The Sound ID function in the app listens to the birds around you and shows real-time suggestions for who's singing. Compare your recording to the songs and calls in Merlin to confirm what you heard. The Sound ID works completely offline, so you can identify birds you hear no matter where you are.

Instructions:

- Go to a local park or green space and have a listen for different birds.
- See if you can tell the difference between them.
- How many birds can you hear?

Did you know?

- Birds sing to attract a mate and to defend their territories during the breeding season. Some birds, like Robins, will sing to defend their territories in winter.
- Bird song also helps to warn other birds of the danger of any predators that might be around.
- Baby birds make high pitched sounds asking their parents for food.
- Birds also vocalize when interacting with other birds, much like how humans talk and chat to other people they know.
- To learn more, see: rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/ask-an-rspb-expert/april - This article by expert Alex Wilkins discusses "Why do birds sing?" and contains useful information that will help with this activity.

Indoor Minibeast Safari

**PLAY THIS INDOOR BUG HUNT GAME
SO THAT WHEN YOU ARE NEXT OUTDOORS
IN NATURE YOU WILL BE A BUG
IDENTIFICATION SUPERSTAR!**

Do you know your millipedes from your centipedes? Do you know what a shield bug or a spider mite looks like?

Well, it's time to test your knowledge in your own indoor minibeast safari game.

Hopefully once you've played this game, you will become a minibeast spotting expert when you are next outside doing some bug hunting!

Resources:

- Use this link from the RSPB to download the 'Spot it! Minibeasts 1' & 'Spot it! Minibeasts 2' bug sheets for this activity (also downloadable in Welsh):
rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/go-on-a-bug-safari
- Units could be split into smaller groups and given different bugs to look for, and the fastest team wins, or all the members could look for the same bug at the same time.
- It can be played however the leaders feel it will best work for their Unit; the main aim is to have fun and to, at the end, be able to identify different bugs.
- Go outdoors into a green space and practice your minibeast identifying skills in the wild!

Instructions:

- Go through the bug activity sheet looking at the bugs as a Unit and learn what each one is called, then a leader will cut out and hide pictures around the room (either including the name or not including the name, depending on the level of difficulty you want the game to have).
- The leader will call out the name of a bug or show a picture of the bug and unit members must hunt around the room to find the correct bug.

Moon Explorers

WE LOOK UP AT THE MOON EVERY NIGHT, BUT HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT EARTH'S CLOSEST NEIGHBOUR IN SPACE?

The moon lights up our night sky, affects the oceans, and has inspired stories and legends for thousands of years. Your challenge is to become a Moon Explorer by observing and researching the moon.

Part 1: The Phases of the Moon

Resources:

- Print outs of Phases of the Moon Table (Appendix 2).
- Books or websites about the Moon's phases, such as [natgeokids.com/uk/discover/science/space/the-phases-of-the-moon/](https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/science/space/the-phases-of-the-moon/) and [bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z846p4j#zmqybqt](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z846p4j#zmqybqt) and science.nasa.gov/moon/

Instructions:

- Read and research about the different phases of the Moon, use the Phases of the Moon table (Appendix 2), and fill in the columns in the table.

Take it further:

- Find out how long it takes for the Moon to complete a full cycle of phases.
- Think about which Moon phase do you enjoy seeing the most and why.

Part 2: Keep a Moon Diary

Resources:

- Paper or notebook
- Pens
- [moonphases.co.uk/](https://www.moonphases.co.uk/) which tells you when the different phases of the Moon are visible.

Instructions:

- Keep a Moon Diary for one week.
- Each evening, draw or photograph the Moon.
- Record the date, the weather, the Moon phase and anything interesting you notice.

Bonus Challenge:

- Research another Moon, such as a Harvest Moon, Wolf Moon or Pink Moon and find an interesting fact about it.

Part 3: Different Types of Moons

Resources:

- Books or websites about the Moon, such as: spaceplace.nasa.gov/full-moons/en/

Instructions:

- Research the three special types of Moons: Blood Moon, Supermoon and Blue Moon. Then answer the questions:
- What causes a Blood Moon?
- Why does a Supermoon appear larger?
- What is a Blue Moon?

Part 4: How does the Moon affect ocean tides?

Resources:

- Books or websites about the Moon such as: kids.britannica.com/kids/article/tide/390262

Instructions:

- Read and research how the Moon affects ocean tides and answer the questions:
- What causes the tides?
- What is the difference between a high tide and a low tide?
- Why are tides important for coastal wildlife and people?

Did you know?

- The Moon's gravity pulls on Earth's oceans. This pull causes the water to bulge, creating high tides. Areas with less water experience low tides.

Part 5: Why is the Moon Important?

Resources:

- Books or websites about the Moon, such as those above.

Instructions:

Research and discuss the benefits of our Moon. Decide which of these benefits the Moon brings:

- Ocean tides
- Night-time light
- Stabilising Earth's tilt
- Helping some animals navigate
- Inspiring stories, art and traditions
- Choose one benefit and explain why it is important.

Part 6: Moon Myth or Fact?

Resources:

- Print out of the list of Moon facts/myths (Appendix 3).

Instructions:

- Circle whether each statement is a MYTH or a FACT.

(Answers: 1. Myth, 2. Fact, 3. Fact, 4. Myth, 5. Fact)

Reflection:

- With your unit, share three things which you've learnt about the Moon.
- Is there something which surprised you about the Moon?
- Share your favourite Moon fact.

Take it further:

- Imagine a newly discovered moon appears in the sky! Design your new moon.
- Give your moon a name, decide what colour it is and any special features it may have. How does your moon affect the tide?
- Draw a picture of your moon.



RSPB

Section 2

Changemaker

It's important for us to know how to protect and look after the natural world. By taking action, we can make sure that the nature that we love is still around for future generations.

In this section, you have the opportunity to voice the things that are important to you and take action for nature. You will have the opportunity to become changemakers through a variety of different activities such as writing to your local MP, fundraising for a charity, or cleaning up your local area with a litter pick.

All of these activities should help you understand that, although you may be only one person (or one unit!), you can still make a difference and have an impact on protecting our world.

RSPB / Ben Andrew



Adobe Stock



Boom! Seed Bombs!

GROW YOUR OWN WILDFLOWERS WITH THESE BANGING SEED BOMBS!

The UK has lost approximately 97% of its wildflower meadows since the 1930s. This massive loss is driven by intensive post-war agricultural methods (heavy fertilizer and pesticide use), agricultural reseedling, land development, and evolving agricultural policies.

The devastating loss of these habitats has triggered a multitude of ecological impacts, especially the decline of vital pollinators like bees, butterflies, and insects that rely on them.

Create a colourful, low-maintenance ecosystem in your own gardens and encourage pollinator populations by making these seed bombs.

Resources:

- Meadow flower seeds.
- Peat-free compost
- Water
- Powdered clay (found in craft shops)
- Mixing bowl

Instructions:

- Work in small groups. In a bowl, mix 1 cup of seeds with 5 cups of compost and 2-3 cups of clay powder (you could use clay soil instead if you have it).
- Slowly mix in water with your hands until everything sticks together.
- Roll the mixture into firm balls.
- Leave the balls to dry in a sunny spot.
- Now for the fun bit! When you get home, plant your seed bombs by throwing them at bare parts of your garden and wait to see what pops up!
- If you don't have a garden, break up the seed bomb in a flowerbed or plant pot.

Top tips:

Top plants to include in your seed bombs are:

- Bulbous buttercup
- Chamomile
- Common bird's-foot-trefoil
- Common knapweed
- Common spotted orchid
- Lady's bedstraw
- Red clover
- Wild thyme

For more inspiration see: [rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/create-a-wildflower-meadow](https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/create-a-wildflower-meadow)



Bin It to Beat It

LEARN ABOUT THE DANGERS LITTER POSES TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO WILDLIFE AND GO ON A LITTER PICK TO CLEAN UP YOUR LOCAL AREA.

Part 1: Discussion and Poster

Resources:

- Paper
- Pens and pencils

Instructions:

- Hold a discussion about the threat litter poses to wildlife and nature. Use the 'Did you know?' section below to help guide your discussion.
- Afterwards, create a poster or sign about the dangers of littering for the young people to hang in their gardens/windows to warn others not to litter.



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◀ OYSTERCATCHER

Did you know?

- Turtles eat plastic bags thinking they're jellyfish.
- Microplastics in the ocean are swallowed by fish, accumulating in their bodies (which are then eaten by humans).
- Sea birds (e.g. gulls, albatrosses and Puffins) also eat plastic waste thinking it is food. Scientists have cut open the stomachs of dead birds to find large pieces of plastic debris, causing their deaths due to starvation from gut blockages. Oil spills in the ocean also harm sea birds by destroying their feathers' waterproofing and insulation, causing hypothermia, and by accidental ingestion of the toxic oil.
- Animals can be trapped and suffocated by litter. This is seen in the film 'Happy feet' where Lovelace, the Rockhopper Penguin, has a six-pack ring stuck round his neck that nearly suffocates him until it is removed. Lost or discarded fishing gear like lines, hooks and nets are also a common threat to marine wildlife.
- Broken glass causes injuries to wildlife, e.g. paws of foxes, badgers, hedgehogs, dogs etc. Smaller animals may also become trapped inside discarded glass bottles/jars and can't get out due to the smooth edges of the inside of the glass bottle/jar.
- Cigarette butts and vapes can leak poisonous chemicals into the soil.
- Littering can also attract hungry animals like Foxes and Hedgehogs into urban environments, increasing the likelihood of road accidents. It also encourages them to go looking for food in human areas instead of their natural environments, e.g. Foxes looting through bins in human settlements looking for food.

Part 2: Litter Picking

Resources:

- Bin Bags
- Gloves
- Litter Pickers (optional)

Instructions:

- Go on a litter pick around your unit meeting place.
- To make it more fun, why not have each member try to find an item of litter that begins with the first letter of their name.
- You could also divide into groups and hold a competition to see which group picks up the most litter.

Top tips:

- Make sure to stay safe when out and about for the litter pick. Keep Britain Tidy have some great tips and safety information on litter picking online.
- Things to think about on the walk or for the next meeting: What types of litter were found and how did this make the girls feel?



Trash to Treasure

INSTEAD OF THROWING AWAY OLD ITEMS IN THE BIN, CAN YOU REUSE THEM BY TURNING THEM INTO SOMETHING NEW? UPCYCLE SOMETHING OLD INTO SOMETHING NEW.

Resources:

Choose from:

- Discarded bottle caps to be turned into miniature animals or flowers.
- Empty crisp packets to be turned into a blanket or quilt: kcl.ac.uk/service/assets/crisp-packet-project-guide.pdf (note this uses an iron, so is suitable for young people)
- Empty plastic bottles or egg cartons to be turned into a plant pot.
- Old glass jars, like jam jars or pasta sauce jars to be made into vases or candle holders.
- Old tin cans to be made into herb pots.
- Old clothes that may not fit or have holes in to be cut and sewn into new garments.
- Scissors, tape, needle and thread etc.

Instructions:

- Decide on what you want to make for your upcycling project.
- Find instructions online.
- Collect the resources and equipment you need.
- Get upcycling!

Take it further:

- These are just a few ideas to think about to get you started, but there are many more ideas you could come up with as well. The internet has great ideas for upcycling projects along with instructions. For example, rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/upcycling-for-nature
- Feel free to turn this into a whole day event, or as part of a weekend away project. There is no need to confine this activity to just one evening.

Top tips:

- For Guides, this links to the Upcycling Interest Badge, and would be able to count towards the badge.



Food Waste Warriors

**BE A FOOD SAVING HERO AND
REDUCE FOOD WASTE.**

Food waste has harmful impacts on nature and wildlife. According to the WWF Website, in the UK, 4.7 million tonnes of edible food is thrown into the bin every year. This is 4.7 billion kilograms, or roughly to combined weight of the UK population.

Part 1: Discussion about food waste

Instructions:

- In your unit, have a discussion about why food waste is harmful to nature. The Leader could read out the 'Did you know?' section opposite and below to get the discussion started.
- Come up with ideas for how you can reduce food waste at home.

Did you know?

- Large scale production of crops uses large amounts of land and water, which can lead to habitat loss for native species as hundreds of acres of forest and grasslands are cleared to make space for agricultural land, as well as diverting water from aquatic ecosystems. This is made worse when much of this food is then wasted – e.g. supermarkets not wanting to sell 'wonky' or cosmetically imperfect fruit or veg, despite them being perfectly edible. This is a critical paradox of modern farming – we are destroying natural habitats for food that won't get eaten.

Continued on Page 30 ►

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- Food rotting in landfills produces methane gas, a potent greenhouse gas that is a major contributor to climate change and global warming.
- Food waste from kitchens and human activity further damages wildlife by altering natural behaviours, spreading disease, and unbalancing ecosystems. When animals scavenge human food scraps, they alter their natural habits and lose natural foraging skills, become dependent on unnatural food sources, and face malnutrition. Furthermore, it artificially boosts populations of opportunistic predators, leading to higher predation on threatened species.
- This is especially prevalent amongst Foxes in urban areas scavenging through human bins for food instead of their natural habitats. They then may also become too comfortable in human/urban environments, which means they will repeatedly return to a reliable, consistent food supply. This in turn leads to higher levels of malnutrition in these Foxes through eating food which isn't healthy for them as well as toxic products like plastics, mouldy or spoiled food and other non-food items found in rubbish bins. This also leads to sharp growth in Fox populations, which then leads to higher predation of more vulnerable species, like ground-nesting birds. They also spread disease and parasites to pets and become nuisances to humans.

Part 2: Keep a food waste diary

Resources:

- Paper or a notebook
- Pen or pencil

Instructions:

For a week, keep a food waste diary to identify the types and amounts of food you throw away, along with the reasons why. Record:

- **Item & Quantity:** What did you throw away, and how much was it? (e.g., 200g of spinach, 1/2 loaf of bread)
- **Reason for Waste:** Why was it discarded? (e.g., went mouldy, passed use-by date, cooked too much)
- **Disposal Method:** How was it thrown away? (e.g., food caddy, general bin, compost)
- **Estimated Cost (bonus question):** How much did that wasted food cost you?

Reflection:

- This can be done individually, as a unit, or in small groups.
- Look back at your food waste diary, were you surprised at how much, or how little you threw away?
- Which ideas from Part 1 could you put into practice to reduce your food waste? Can you think of any other ideas?

Part 3: Create a mini composter in a clear plastic bottle

Resources:

- 500ml clear plastic bottle (washed and labels removed)
- Scissors
- Push pin or needle (or similar)
- Plastic or foil tray for drainage
- Base Layer: Garden soil or topsoil (no potting soil)
- Brown Waste: Shredded newspaper, dry leaves, or torn egg cartons etc...
- Green Waste: Fruit/vegetable peelings, tea bags, or grass clippings etc.
- Tape or kitchen roll and rubber band

Instructions:

- Prepare the Bottle: Cut off the top narrow neck of the bottle (about 2-3 cm down) to give yourself a wide, easy-to-fill opening. Use a push pin to poke 5-8 small holes in the bottom for drainage. (For Rainbows and Brownies perhaps ask the parent to do this at home and bring in the pre-prepared bottle).
- Build the Foundation: Place the bottle on a shallow tray or plate to catch any moisture. Add a 2 to 3 cm layer of garden soil at the bottom of the bottle.
- Add Alternating Layers: Add a thin layer of "brown" waste, followed by a thin layer of "green" waste. Keep repeating these layers until the bottle is nearly full.

- Moisten and Aerate: Lightly spray or drizzle the contents with water so the layers are damp, but not soggy.
- Close and Wait: Tape the cut-off top upside-down back onto the bottle (or use a kitchen towel and rubber band over the opening) to trap moisture.
- Location: Place the composter on a sunny, warm windowsill to speed up the decomposition process.
- Maintenance: Check the bottle weekly. If it looks dry, spritz it with a little water. Give the bottle a daily shake or stir the contents with a small stick to introduce oxygen to the bacteria.
- When the layers have turned into crumbly dark compost, you can use this to enrich your garden soil to help plants grow! Be patient, as this takes time.

Top tips:

- Avoid: Do not add meat, bones, dairy, or oily foods, as these will rot, smell, and attract pests.
- Timeline: Decomposition usually takes 3 to 6 weeks in a small bottle.
- If Leaders don't want to do this activity in their meeting place, or feel unable to do so, why not ask the young people to do this at home with their families?



Part 4: Scraps to Snacks. Make something out of leftover food:

Resources:

- Recipes, from books or the internet.

Ingredients, choose from:

- Vegetable peelings to turn into crisps – the next time you're peeling potatoes, carrots and parsnips, add oil and salt to the peelings, then grill or bake them in the oven.
- Brown bananas to make into banana bread. You can do the same with courgettes and carrots that are starting to go soft. And you can use over-ripe banana instead of butter in biscuits recipes and use apple sauce instead of eggs in cake recipes.
- Leftover citrus peel to make marmalade or chai tea. Or dry the peel to make air fresheners or even a natural household cleaner.

Instructions:

- Decide which scraps you want to use.
- Find a recipe which uses those scraps.
- Get cooking!

Top tips:

- The internet has many more great ideas for reusing or repurposing leftover food.
- Make sure to practice proper food hygiene practices and kitchen safety with this activity.



Take it further:

You can make a big difference to the planet in the way you shop, cook and eat. Challenge yourself to do the following:

- Eat more plants: Legumes, nuts, and vegetables use significantly less water and land than livestock farming. Eating less meat uses less resources and lowers your carbon footprint.
- Buy local and seasonal: Sourcing food from regional farmers' markets reduces greenhouse gas emissions linked to transportation and ensures fresher produce.
- Reduce and repurpose food waste: Plan meals ahead and make a shopping list to reduce overbuying ingredients when shopping, utilize "nose-to-tail" or "root-to-stem" cooking, and compost unavoidable scraps to keep organic matter out of landfills.
- Support ethical certifications: Look for Fairtrade or Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) labels, ensuring the workers and fisheries adhere to safe, equitable, and sustainable operations.

Build your own Bird Feeder and Bird Box

MAKE A BIRD FEEDER FOR HUNGRY BIRDS AND BUILD YOUR OWN BIRD BOX TO GIVE THEM SOMEWHERE SNUG TO NEST.

Start by asking the unit if they know any bird facts. Can any of them do bird impressions?

You don't have to make both a Bird Box and Bird Feeder, it's up to you and what best fits your Unit. You can do just one of them or both if you would like.

Part 1: Make a bird feeder

There are many different simple bird feeders that can be made from everyday items such as an apple and a toilet roll!

Here are some ideas from the Scouts, RSPB and the Natural History Museum. Choose the one that best suits your unit and your girls:

rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/feed-the-birds

nhm.ac.uk/discover/how-to-make-a-bird-feeder.html

Please ensure to follow RSPB advice on seasonal feeding of birds to reduce disease transmission - rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/feeding-birds-near-you - before completing this activity.

Top tips:

This links to activity 1.6: What's on the Menu. Look at this one for some bird food recipes.



Part 2: Make a bird box

A bird box is a place in which birds can nest and breed safely away from predators. Also, different birds like nesting in different sized bird boxes.

Follow this link from the RSPB for resources and instructions on how to make a bird box from scratch:

rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-birdbox

Check in to the Bug Hotel

BUILD A BUG HOTEL FOR THE SMALL CRITTERS AROUND YOU.

A Bug Hotel is a manmade structure that provides shelter for insects and other minibeasts to protect them from predators allowing them to breed. This easy-to-make Bug Hotel uses either an empty can or empty plastic bottle.

Resources:

- Clean empty plastic bottle or clean empty tin can with labels removed.
- Lots of different natural materials: twigs/sticks, pinecones, leaves, moss, bamboo, stones/pebbles
- Scissors
- String or garden twine
- Hole punch or drill

Instructions:

- If using a plastic bottle cut off the ends so you have a hollow tube or if using a tin can remove the outer packaging and ensure one side is open (ensure that there are no sharp edges).
- Collect materials to go inside the bug hotel e.g. twigs, bamboo canes, pinecones and moss.
- Stuff the twigs, pinecones, moss, bamboo canes and other natural materials inside to make the bug hotel.
- If you want to hang your bug hotel (it can be laid on the floor instead), make a handle using cotton string or garden twine (you could use a hole punch or drill to make holes to tie the string through).

Top tips:

- The Bug Hotels can be made in groups or individually depending on the size and type of bug hotel you are making.
- You could collect items to go inside the bug hotel one week at the local park. You could then build the bug hotel at your normal unit meeting place the following week.



Take it further:

If your unit meeting place has a garden, you could build a large bug hotel for it. Bug Hotel design ideas are available from these links:

- rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-bug-hotel
- featherdown.co.uk/blogs/summer-bug-hotel
- natgeokids.com/uk/home-is-good/make-a-bug-hotel/
- whimsicalmumblings.co.uk/2017/05/diy-bug-hotel.html
- woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2026/02/how-to-make-a-bug-hotel/

Write a Letter to Someone in Authority

PERSUADE SOMEONE IN AUTHORITY TO TAKE ACTION FOR NATURE TOO.

It's always good to have someone in authority on your side; they have a powerful presence and wider influence to raise awareness about problems in your community. Having an influential ally can turn a local issue into a top priority and command public attention. They also possess the power and knowledge to turn a small idea into a bigger project.

Write a letter to someone in authority about problems with nature, the environment or local wildlife, and ways they can help support your cause.

Part 1: Action for Nature Flashcards

Resources:

- Action for Nature Flashcards (see Appendix 4)

Instructions:

- Read the flashcards. Each has an action to help/improve nature and the environment.
- Organise the cards into three groups: actions which the local council could do (e.g. planting wildflowers in local parks), actions which a business could do (e.g. large -scale tree planting) and actions which you could do individually or with your unit (e.g. litter picking).

Part 2: Invite someone in authority to your unit meeting

Instructions:

- If possible, invite a representative of the local council or a local business to come in and talk to you about what they do for the environment, and how this helps nature.

Part 3: Write a letter to someone in authority

Resources:

- Lined paper
- Pens

Instructions:

- As a unit, think about an environmental issue that you're worried about. For example, you might be worried that bumblebees are struggling in heat waves. Next, come up with actions which could be taken to help. For example, planting trees or wildflowers to increase food for pollinators, making and installing bug hotels in parks, doing a litter pick, or working with a community group to remove an invasive plant species. You can use the flashcards from earlier to help you with ideas.
- Vote on the issue and actions which matter to you most.

- Decide on someone in authority who you want to write to about the issue. For example, this could be a representative of your City Council or County Council, your MP, Local Utilities (Water or Electricity Company) or a Community Leader (Faith Leader, School Head, Local Big Business Chair, who carry lots of power and social weight).
- Write a letter (either individually, in small groups or as a Unit) to your chosen authority about the issue and action(s) you voted on. In your letter, you could ask them to raise awareness about the issue amongst the local community, to help tackle this problem and/or to give the unit permission to do something for the environment (e.g. finding locations to install bat boxes).
- Don't forget to send the letter(s)! Remember to add a return address- you might get a reply!

Top tips:

- Check the Girlguiding website for more information and help for writing your letters. For example, [girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/programme-and-activities/adventuresathome/guides-shape-the-future-activity.pdf](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/programme-and-activities/adventuresathome/guides-shape-the-future-activity.pdf)



Fundraise for a Fantastic Cause

HELP A NATURE CHARITY BY FUNDRAISING TO SUPPORT THEIR WORK.

Instructions:

Choose a charity you'd like to support. Some examples to consider are:

- RSPB – Dedicated to protecting wild birds, conserving wildlife and preserving natural habitats across the UK.
- WWF – International animal/wildlife protection and conservation charity.
- Wildlife Trusts – A movement of 47 independent charities working across the UK. Wherever you are, they protect, restore, and stand up for nature.
- The Woodland Trusts – Largest woodland conservation charity in the UK.
- Butterfly Conservation – Focuses on protecting butterflies and moths.

Discuss what you'd like to do to raise money and plan your event. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Sponsored Silence
- Sponsored Walk/Run/Dance
- Bake Sale
- Host a Quiz Night
- Jumble Sale/Craft Sale

- Host a Community Scavenger Hunt/Competition
- Host Division or District Film Night/Talent Show/Party/Event

Run your fundraising event & send or take your donation to your charity.

Take it Further:

Other ways to help could be by getting involved in a project run by a charity. For example:

- The Big Butterfly Count
- The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch
- WWF's Adopt an Animal



Plant Your Own Herbs

HERBS ARE USED IN A VARIETY OF RECIPES TO ADD FRESH FLAVOURS TO YOUR DISHES. PLANT YOUR OWN AT HOME TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE FRESH SUPPLY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS.

Resources:

- Small plant pot per young person
- Compost
- Seeds for herbs (whichever ones you fancy, perhaps offer the young people a selection to choose from?). Some easy herbs to grow are; Parsley, Thyme, Basil, Oregano, Mint, Lemon Balm and Chives.

Instructions:

- In your Unit, discuss what herbs are and what they are used for. Discuss what herbs you know and give examples of different herbs. Use the 'Did you know?' section below to help you.
- Have a go at planting some herbs. Start by putting some compost in the pots.
- Make a small hole in the centre of the compost, place your seeds in there can cover with a little more compost.
- Place the pot in the sun for the seeds to grow and water regularly.

Top tips:

- If you have time, decorate the pots that you are planting the seeds in and/or decorate lolly sticks with what herb it is and put that in the pot once the seeds are planted.
- Young people could decorate the sticks while waiting to plant their seeds, which would mean there is less waiting around for the compost.
- If there is an outdoor area at your unit meeting place, then it might be better to do the planting outside so as not to get compost everywhere!

These websites have extra information that may be useful:

- thrive.org.uk/get-gardening/creating-a-herb-garden-indoors
- rhs.org.uk/herbs/containers



Did you know?

- Herbs are plants that do not grow a hard woody stem. It usually refers to the green, leafy flowering parts of the plant.
- They have savoury or aromatic properties and are commonly used for cooking, medicine and scents.
- They can also be used either fresh or dried.
- For cooking, herbs add flavour to food.
- For medicine, herbs in teas or natural remedies treat sickness. In Roman and Medieval times, a range of herbs could be found in monastery gardens and infirmaries for medicinal uses in a world before antibiotics.
- For scents, the oils and flowers of herbs are used in perfumes and soaps.
- Some herbs have multiple uses. E.g. Lavender can be used as a flavouring in cakes or desserts, as an essential oil in aromatherapy, as an ingredient in soaps, shampoos, body lotions/creams and perfumes.

Examples of herbs:

- **Basil** – A sweet, peppery herb essential in Italian and Thai cooking. Also is a natural pest repellent for mosquitoes and aphids.
- **Coriander** – The citrusy leaves of the coriander plant are used in Indian and Eastern cooking. Used in natural remedies to help soothe stomach discomfort and skin irritations.
- **Mint** – A refreshing, cooling herb used globally in savoury and sweet dishes and teas. Used medicinally to clear stuffy noses and sore throats; relieves gas, bloating and indigestion; and refreshes the mouth due to its antibacterial properties. Also used in aromatherapy and is a great natural insect repellent.
- **Oregano** – A slightly bitter and earthy herb commonly used in Mediterranean cuisine. Also used to soothe coughs and aid digestion in traditional folk remedies and is a natural repellent.
- **Rosemary** – An aromatic, pine-like herb used for roasting meats and potatoes. Used medicinally to ease upset stomachs and in skincare products to soothe skin irritation.
- **Thyme** – An earthy leaf often added to soups and stews. It is used to soothe respiratory issues and coughs and sore throats, and digestive issues. Also has antimicrobial properties to fight bacteria and fungi.
- **Sage** – An intense, earthy and peppery herb often paired with meats and stuffings. Used medicinally in teas to treat sore throats and oral conditions. Was also a very common herb in Medieval gardens and was used by Medieval physicians in all manner of remedies.

Consumption Detox

EVER DISCOVERED YOU OWN THREE OF ONE ITEM WITHOUT NEEDING THEM? GO ON A DETOX TO CUT DOWN ON SPENDING AND OVERCONSUMPTION OF PRODUCTS.

Overconsumption is a big problem. When lots of people are using too many resources it can result in lots of unnecessary waste, but there are ways to try and reduce how much goes into landfill.

Resources:

- Clean, unwanted plastic items (have the young people bring in things)
- Pieces of clothing (have each young person bring in an items of clothing)

Instructions:

Part 1: Plastic waste

- Have the young people and leaders bring in enough plastic items (clean) to add up to about 60 pieces. This is the average amount wasted by a family in a week.
- Discuss the impacts of overconsumption on the environment. If possible, why not visit a recycling centre or have someone come in to talk about how much ends up landfills.
- Put all the plastic brought in into a pile together. This is from one family in one week, imagine how much it would be if it was from every young people's family in one week, and how much goes to landfill.

Part 2: Clothes recycling

- Next, line the young people up by shoe size, smallest to largest. This represents one young person growing up and out of clothes over three years. Have the young people take their shoes off and pass the smallest shoes along to next person. Do they fit? Can they wear them? Keep passing them along to the next young person. Once they no longer fit, put them in a 'bin pile' at the end. If the shoes get to the last young person and still fit, put them in a 'keep pile'. Make sure that everyone has socks on!
- Repeat with the next smallest pair of shoes until all the shoes have been passed along.
- When you get to the last young person, ask them where their shoes will go when they grow out of them.
- This often happens with clothing when we grow out of it or in fast fashion when fashion trend changes. Often trendy water bottles and seasonal decorations are thrown away when they are not wanted. See how much waste has been produced if people do not use second-hand.

Part 3: Fast Fashion (For Guides and Rangers):

- Get everyone to bring in a piece of clothing they don't like or want to get rid of, and put it in a pile. See how much waste would have been produced if it had just gone in the bin and then to landfill. The pile represents the amount of waste, if they had perhaps just thrown it away.
 - How many natural resources went into making the clothes?
 - What can they do instead of throwing them away?
 - How else can waste be reduced? If you buy a lot, do you really need all of it?
- Have a For and Against debate on whether you need the latest trendy item. Think about
 - How many trends have you noticed?
 - How long have they lasted?
 - How much waste do you think was produced during them.

Reflection:

- Consider the amount of water and resources needed to have made these shoes and clothes. Many are made from cotton which needs a lot of water to grow or use other limited natural resources. Think of the habitats destroyed for this and for landfill. Landfill also produces methane which contributes to climate change.
- It's okay to grow out of clothes and to have to get rid of them, but is putting it in the rubbish the best way? What other ways can you think of that reduces what is sent to landfill? If you have lots of toys already, do you really need that next cuddly toy?

Take it further:

- Organise a swap shop! As a unit organise a day or meeting for a swap shop where you can swap out clothing and/or toys/games/puzzles/books.
- You can make invites for parents and families and even include some upcycling activities (or use leftovers for upcycling activities).

British Wildlife

Britain has a large number of different habitats that are home to lots of different plants and animals, and many of these are protected by law to help ensure their survival.

In this section you will discover the laws for protecting British wildlife, get up to speed with the countryside code as well as spotting the true British wildlife facts from the false facts. These activities should help you realise the importance of protecting nature and appreciating all the amazing animals and plants we have here in Britain.

▼ RED SQUIRREL



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Visit a Nature Place

THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO OUTSIDE IN NATURE, SO GET OUT THERE, GO EXPLORING AND HAVE FUN!

There are many different areas of nature and plants all around us, from rivers to coasts, wetlands, woodlands, moorlands, to your local park. All these areas are habitats for plants and animals (also known as flora and fauna).

Instructions:

- Research the green spaces in your local area which are good for seeing wildlife. For example, there might be a local wildlife centre, nature reserve, country park or conservation area.
- Plan a visit. If there are park rangers, staff members, or volunteers at the place you're visiting, you could ask them:
 - Is there a pond where you could do some pond dipping?
 - Could you do some tree identification or plant identification?
 - Could you listen to the birds and work out the birds that are singing?
- There are a variety of different activities within this pack that would lend themselves perfectly to being completed at a local nature area.

Top tips:

- gov.uk/government/collections/national-nature-reserves-in-england
 - Whilst you do not have to specifically choose a nature reserve or nature space from this it may highlight to you some in your local area.



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LAPWING ►



Resilient Red Squirrels

RED SQUIRRELS ARE THE NATIVE BUT RARER BREED OF SQUIRREL IN THE UK. THIS ACTIVITY WILL HELP YOU TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS FASCINATING SPECIES.

Red Squirrels are the native breed of squirrel in the UK, however, after the American Grey Squirrel was introduced, their population has drastically decreased (thought to be only 160,000 now left in the whole of the UK). 75% of their population now live in Scotland.

This is due to the Grey Squirrel outcompeting Reds for food and habitats and carrying the squirrelpox disease.

Resources:

- British Red Squirrel website: britishredsquirrel.org/squirrel-organisations/
- Saving Scottish Red Squirrels website: scottishsquirrels.org.uk/get-involved/activities

Instructions:

- Learn about Red Squirrels and efforts going into the protection of the Red Squirrel population.
- The British Red Squirrel website lists multiple regional, national and international Red Squirrel charities which you can learn about, as well as information about Red Squirrels and conservation efforts.
- Complete at least one of the activities on the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels website. Choose from:
 - Make your own Red Squirrel
 - Build your own binoculars
 - Make a Red Squirrel mask
 - Make salt dough Red Squirrels
 - Build a window wildlife hide
 - Go on a Scavenger Hunt
 - Fill in the Blanks

Bee Brilliant!

EXPLORE, LEARN AND GET CREATIVE WITH BEES

Bees are amazing little creatures that help our planet in big ways. In this activity, you'll create your own bee diagram filled with fun facts and discover why bees are so important.

Resources:

- Paper
- Pencils
- Colouring pens and pencils
- Books or websites about bees, such as bumblebeeconservation.org/
- Bee Outline (Appendix 5)
- Colour your bee and decorate your page with flowers, sunshine, or a buzzing background! Make it bright and bold!
- Challenge yourself by finding 3 new bee facts you didn't know before or by drawing types of bees (e.g. bumblebee, honeybee)?
- Add a slogan to your bee like "Save the Bees!"

Instructions:

- Draw a large outline of a bee in the centre of your page. (It doesn't have to be perfect – just have fun!)
- Inside your bee write or draw fun facts about bees. Here are some ideas to get you started: bees communicate by dancing, Bees have five eyes and worker bees are all female. Use the books or websites to research more facts to fill the space
- Around the outside of your bee, write or draw ways bees help our planet. Think about: How they help plants grow, what foods depend on bees and their role in nature. For example, pollinating flowers and helping fruits and vegetables grow. Research more facts to fill the space

Top tips:

- Leaders can print the outline of a bee to make the activity more accessible (Appendix 5)



Reflection:

- Why are bees important?
- What would happen if there were no bees?
- How can we help to protect them?



▲ RED-TAILED BUMBLEBEE

Take it further

- Plant bee-friendly flowers.
- Leave a small patch of garden wild.
- Share what you've learned with friends or family.

**WELL DONE—
YOU'RE HELPING
THE BEES AND
THE PLANET!**

RSPB / Ben Andrew

Nature Bingo

IMPROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE WILDLIFE AROUND YOU WITH NATURE THEMED BINGO.

Resources:

- Printed blank bingo cards (Appendix 6)
- Pencils or pens

Instructions:

Before the activity:

- **Brownies** – As a group, create a list of things you might find in your local park – animals, bugs, birds and trees and let each six choose which to include in their sheet.
- **Guides** – Each patrol chooses what they would like to include on their bingo sheet, the leader can provide help if needed.
- **Rangers** – Let each patrol research the wildlife in your area and create their bingo sheet.
- Visit a green space, walk around it in your six/patrol and try and tick off as many items on your bingo card as possible.
- If a row or line is completed, you must shout bingo and let the leader know; you are the winning group!
- If no row or line is completed, then the group with the most crossed off is the winner.

Top tips:

- Before the activity, Leaders will need to do some basic research of the type of things they expect to find in their space to be able to help their unit generate ideas of what to include in their sheet.
- Different environments have different wildlife so choose things to include on the bingo sheets accordingly (e.g. urban areas, rural areas, coastal places or places near water).
- If a line wasn't completed, the Leaders can talk about why this might be. For example, threats to British wildlife which might make some plants and wildlife less common.



Wildlife Law Detective

DISCOVER HOW LAWS HELP PROTECT BRITISH WILDLIFE.

Become a Wildlife Law Detective and solve nature-themed challenges to learn about the laws that protect animals, plants, and habitats across the UK. Work as a team to earn "Conservation Points" and become Wildlife Champions!

Learn about why wildlife protection laws exist, how people can help to protect nature, which actions that affect wildlife are legal or illegal and how to make responsible choices outdoors.

Part 1: Legal or not?

Resources:

- Scenario cards (Appendix 7)
- Red and green cards (or paper)
- Wildlife champion score sheet (Appendix 8)
- Pens

Instructions:

- Get into small teams, each team to take a red and a green card
- The leader reads out a scenario from the scenario cards (Appendix 7)
- Each team to hold up either a green card for 'allowed' or a red card for 'not allowed'
- The leader reads out the correct answer and explanation.
- Teams earn one point per correct answer and record this on their score sheet (Appendix 8)

Part 2: Wildlife Mystery Challenge

Resources:

- Mystery cards (Appendix 9)
- Wildlife champion score sheet (Appendix 8)
- Pens

Instructions:

- Each team to take a different mystery card (Appendix 9)
- Teams discuss the mystery and questions on the card and share their ideas.
- All teams take turns to feedback to the whole group.
- The leader award points for thoughtful wildlife-friendly solutions.

Part 3: Animal Rescue Relay

Resources:

- Pictures of British wildlife (Appendix 10)
- Pens
- Wildlife champion score sheet (Appendix 8)

Instructions:

- Place wildlife picture cards on the walls around the room (Appendix 10).

The leader reads a situation from the list below:

- Someone disturbs a nesting site (answer: bird)
 - A sett is dug up (answer: Badger)
 - A pond is polluted (answer: amphibian)
 - Wildflowers are removed (answer: pollinating insects)
 - Any other scenarios the Leader's may want to include
- Teams must run to the picture of the animal which is affected by this situation.
 - The leader calls out the correct answer.
 - Each team score one point for each correct answer.

Part 4: Rules for visiting nature

Instructions:

- Teams to come up with their own rule for people visiting a nature reserve or other green space. For example: leave no litter, keep dogs under control near wildlife or observe animals quietly.
- Teams share their rule with the whole unit and explain how it helps nature.

Reflection:

Discuss:

- Which wildlife law surprised you most?
- Why do animals need protection?
- How can we help wildlife in our everyday lives?

Did you know?

- Many wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected by law.
- Badger setts are protected.
- Certain rare plants and animals have special protection.
- Nature reserves help protect habitats for wildlife.

The aim of these laws is to help wildlife thrive and ensure future generations can enjoy nature too.

Countryside Code of Conduct True or False

LEARN ABOUT THE CORRECT WAY TO BEHAVE WHEN OUT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.

The Countryside Code is a set of guidelines for visiting parks, waterways, coasts, and rural areas in England and Wales. It is built on three main ideas: Respect other people, Protect the natural environment, and Enjoy the outdoors safely and responsibly.

Resources:

- The Countryside Code: gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
- Countryside Code True or False statements (Appendix 11)
- Paper
- Marker pens
- Tape or blu-tac

Instructions:

- Label one area in your meeting place 'true' and one 'false'.
- Everyone stands in the middle.
- Read out the statements from the 'Countryside Code true or false' sheet, the young people decide whether they believe it is true or false and run to the side they think it is.
- The leader reads out the correct answer.

RSPB / Andy Hay



▼ LITTLE TERN



RSPB / Ben Andrew

British Wildlife True or False

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE WILDLIFE ON YOUR DOORSTEP?

British Wildlife is fascinating, but do you know these fun facts about the wildlife around you?

Resources:

- British Wildlife True or False statements (Appendix 12)
- Paper
- Marker pens
- Tape or blue-tac

Instructions:

- Label one area in your meeting place 'true' and one 'false'.
- Everyone stands in the middle.
- Read out the statements from the 'British Wildlife true or false' sheet, the young people decide whether they believe it is true or false and run to the side they think it is.

RSPB / Ben Andrew

HEDGEHOG ▼



Who Eats Who?

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF PREDATORS AND PREY, BUT DO YOU KNOW WHO EATS WHO IN THE WILD?

Food chains show how different animals rely on plants and other animals for food. The UK has many food chains for different ecosystems.

Part 1: Top of the Food Chain Game

Resources:

- Pictures of different types of UK plants, bugs, prey and predator animals, with labels of what they eat (Appendix 13).

Instructions:

- The leader hides the bug and animal picture cards around the room.
- Take a picture card of a UK plant. When the leader says go, find an animal that eats that plant (e.g. grass is eaten by grasshoppers).
- Once you've found that card, find the next card in the food chain (e.g. grasshoppers are eaten by birds).
- Continue until you reach the top of the local food chain.
- Alternatively, you could turn this into a relay race in small groups, and each young person in the group has to find the next card in their food chain.
- The first girl/group with a complete food chain wins.

Part 2: Food Chain Mobile

Resources:

- Pictures of different types of UK plants, bugs, prey and predator animals, with labels of what they eat (you can reuse the same cards from the previous activity, although may need to print more if doing a group relay)

- String
- Hole punch

Instructions:

- Set out the string in a line and holepunch a hole on each of the picture cards (if you don't have a holepunch, blue tac and a pencil will do).
- Thread through the picture cards in the order that they appear in the food chain, with the apex predator at the top and the plant at the bottom.
- For an extra challenge, you can draw and label your own plants and animals on blank cards, instead of using printed picture cards.

Did you know?

- Producers are organisms that produce their own food. E.g. plants that make food through photosynthesis.
- Primary Consumers (Herbivores/Prey) are organisms that can't produce their own food so must eat other organisms. E.g. insects, Rabbits and other animals that eat plants.
- Secondary Consumers (Omnivores and Carnivores) are organisms that eat the Primary Consumers. E.g. frogs, small fish and Foxes.
- Tertiary Consumers (Carnivores) are larger organisms that eat Secondary Consumers. E.g. snakes, wolves and large predatory fish.
- Quaternary Consumers (Apex Predators) are the top carnivores at the end of the chain with no natural predators. E.g. eagles, Lions and sharks.
- Decomposers and Detritivores are organisms that break down dead plants, animals and waste, returning vital nutrients to the soil so the Producers can grow again. E.g. fungi, bacteria, Earthworms and Dung Beetles.

RSPB / Ben Andrew



◀ COMMON FROG

▼ MEADOW GRASSHOPPER



RSPB / Ben Andrew

Wild Wonders: Endangered animals need your help!

LEARN ABOUT ENDANGERED AND EXTINCT ANIMALS IN THE UK, EXPLORE WHY THEY ARE THREATENED, WHAT CONSERVATION EFFORTS CAN HELP THEM AND WHETHER SOME ANIMALS COULD BE REINTRODUCED INTO THE WILD.

Resources:

- Paper
- Coloured pens and pencils
- Other craft supplies, such as scissors, stapler and sellotape.
- Factsheet about endangered and extinct wildlife (Appendix 14).

Instructions:

- Either in groups or individually, create a booklet, leaflet or poster about an endangered animal.
- Include information about it's habitat, food source, why it is threatened and conservation efforts which could help this animal.

ALBATROSS ▶



RSPB

Leaf Detectives and Nature Printing

DISCOVER, IDENTIFY AND CREATE WITH LEAVES!

Become a nature detective by collecting different leaves and plants from your local area. Can you identify what you've found? Then get creative and turn your discoveries into a unique nature-print tote bag!

You'll also investigate which leaves make the best prints and discover why some work better than others.

You will learn how to identify different plants and trees, how to observe similarities and differences in nature, how natural pigments can create prints and how scientists investigate and compare results.

Part 1: Leaf Detective Challenge

Resources:

- Collection bag or container
- Plant identification guide, app or website, such as [woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/48345/leaf-id-sheet.pdf](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/48345/leaf-id-sheet.pdf)
- Pencils
- Leaf Detective Challenge activity sheet (Appendix 15)

Instructions:

- Go out into your local park, woodland or green space.
- Find as many different leaves as you can, sketch or describe them and record where you found each leaf, using the activity sheet.
- Use an identification guide to identify the leaf.
- Only collect leaves that have fallen on the ground. If your leaf is still growing on a tree or flower, observe it where it is.



Part 2: Create a Nature Print Tote Bag

Resources:

- Plain cotton tote bags (one per girl)
- Collected leaves and plants
- Hammer or wooden mallet
- Piece of cardboard
- Kitchen paper towel
- Adult supervision
- Paint (Optional)

*To protect nature, collect leaves which have already fallen or which have been cut for another purpose (e.g. to clear a pathway). Only pick plants and flowers which are common and growing in abundance in the UK - such as the dandelion - and leave most of the plant intact so it can continue to grow. Aim to pick no more than one flower for every twenty, and don't pick flowers from a nature reserve or from privately owned land.

Instructions:

- Place a piece of cardboard inside your tote bag.
- Arrange your leaves and plants on the front of the bag to create a design.
- Cover with a piece of kitchen paper towel.
- Gently tap each leaf using a mallet or hammer.
- Carefully lift the leaves away and see what prints they have left behind

Top tips:

- If mallets are too loud and disruptive for your Unit, paint could be used instead. Paint the leaves and then press them onto the fabric to create a print.

Part 3: Nature Investigation:

Resources:

- Leaf investigation activity sheet (Appendix 15).

Instructions:

- Look at the leaf prints on the tote bags.
- Notice how not all leaves make the same type of print, for example, some are fainter than others.
- Use the leaf investigation activity sheet to record your observations.

Reflection:

Discuss with your group:

- Which leaf made the best print?
- Which surprised you the most?
- What did you learn about the plants growing in your local area?
- How did investigating the results help you think like a scientist?

The RSPB and Girlguiding Partnerships

The RSPB is a conservation charity for birds and nature. We bring people together who love birds and other wildlife, and who want to take action to restore the health and diversity of the natural world. We protect and restore habitats and landscapes, save species, help end the nature and climate emergency and inspire others to do the same.

The RSPB is working in partnership with Girlguiding London and South East England, North West England and South West England to give more young people the chance to discover and enjoy nature, and to empower them to take action to save it.

This pack was created by Girlguiding members from the three regions, that have been working with the RSPB as part of a Nature Steering Group. The members from the group are Megan Davies, from Girlguiding North West Region, Elise Kress and Ruth Watkins, from Girlguiding South West Region and Chloe Smith, Jess Killick, Jocelyn Donaghue-Freeburn and Mateo "Mickey" Durante, from Girlguiding London and South East Region. The group have been supported in creating the pack by Jo Cullum-Fernandez, Girlguiding leader from London and South East Region and staff from the RSPB.

Working in
partnership



rspb.org.uk

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