



Wild at Heart
Be wild, whatever your age



Sheffield &
Rotherham

NATURE ACTIVITY IDEAS BOOKLET



WILDSHEFFIELD.COM

SHEFFIELD & ROTHERHAM WILDLIFE TRUST

Make a Sketch Book

Turn your notebook into a sketch book – and capture your favourite things in nature on paper!

You will need:

- Pencil
- Colouring pencils or Crayons
- White paper or Coloured card
- Rubber
- Sharpener
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Notebook



Steps:

1. Find somewhere to sit, and get your pencils and paper on a flat surface like a table, a board, or just your knees!
2. Find something to draw: the view from your window, or your garden, or your favourite street tree.
3. Sketch your nature scene or object.
4. Cut out your image and stick it into your notebook.

Sticky Pallets

Create a beautiful collection of the nature you come across on a walk – with just coloured card and double-sided tape!

You will need:

- Sticky pallet



Steps:

1. Take a sticky pallet with you on a nature walk.
2. When you are ready, peel off the film from the double-sided tape so that you now have *sticky* Sticky Pallets! Remember to put the white covering in the bin.
3. As you go on your walk, pick up leaves, bits of grass, moss, feathers, petals or fallen flowers and stick them onto the sticky side of your pallet, building up a record of the nature you spot on your walk.
4. Take home and put on display – you can try making these at different times in the year, and see how they change through the seasons!

Rock Painting

You will need:

- A rock
- Paints
- Paint brushes
- Pot of water*
- Old newspaper or spare paper*

*you will need to provide these yourself



Steps:

1. Protect your table surface with some sheets of old newspaper.
2. Dip your paint brush in the pot of water, and use the paints to paint the river rock how you like.
3. For inspiration, try a flower, or a spiral or a star, wavy patterns with alternating colours, or some nice words or a festive message.
4. Leave your painted rocks to dry for some hours
5. Place in your garden, give them as a gift to someone, or hide them on a walk to make other people smile!

Grow Pea Tops

You will need:

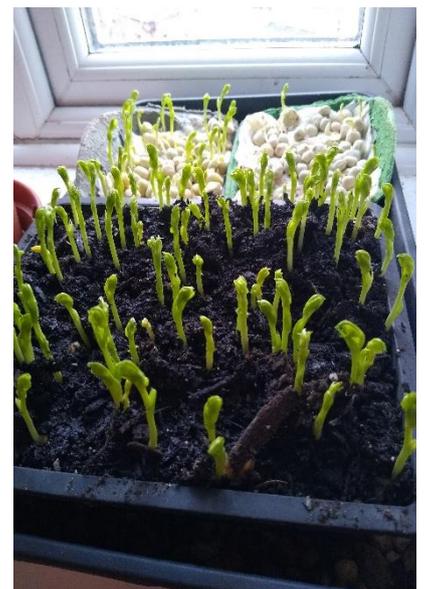
- Marrowfat peas
- An empty egg box / empty plastic mushroom tray*
- A baking tray*
- Kitchen paper/cotton wool*, or Compost

*you will need to provide these yourself



Steps:

1. Fill the empty egg box/plastic tray with some kitchen paper or cotton wool.
2. Place this on the baking tray to catch the water. Water the paper/cotton/compost well.
3. Push the peas into the cotton wool, with small gaps in between each pea.
4. Place on a sunny windowsill. Keep the peas damp with gentle watering for a week or two.
5. When the pea shoots are about 10cm tall, cut off the shoots and add them to a tasty salad or sandwich.



Leaf Rubbing

You will need:

- Leaves
- Paper
- Coloured card
- Pencil or Colouring pencils or Crayons
- Scissors
- Glue



Steps:

1. Collect some leaves – thick waxy ones work best.
2. Place a piece of paper over your leaf.
3. Holding the leaf and paper steady, rub the pencil firmly at an angle over where the leaf is.
4. This leaves behind a stencil of the shape and textures of your leaves.
5. You can cut this out and stick it into your nature journal, or stick it onto the front of a card to send to a friend.

Make a Nature Journal

You will need:

- Notebook
- Pencil
- Colouring pencils
- Sharpener
- Rubber
- Scissors
- Glue stick



A Nature Journal can be whatever you find interesting and be filled with whatever you want. Here are some ideas that you can add to your Nature Journal:

- 🌸 Pressed flowers or leaves
- 🌸 A list of birds or insects or animals that you spot in your garden
- 🌸 Sketches of your favourite tree
- 🌸 Write about a nature walk you enjoyed
- 🌸 Short poems
- 🌸 Favourite photos you have taken on a walk
- 🌸 What you are growing in your garden
- 🌸 Simple sketches or maps of places you have visited

Mood Boards

A mood board is a collage of pictures and words which captures your interests, hobbies, thoughts, or feelings.

You will need:

- Old magazines or newspapers*
- White paper or coloured card
- Scissors
- Glue



*you will need to provide these yourself

Steps:

1. Flick through the old magazines and newspapers, and look for nice scenery, animals you like, pretty patterns and colours and images. Also look out for words that resonate with you today.
2. Cut out the images and words that stand out to you today.
3. Stick them onto the paper or card: you might want to stick one large background image down first, and then glue smaller images next, and finally stick over the words.
4. Hang your Mood Board up, or stick it into your nature journal.

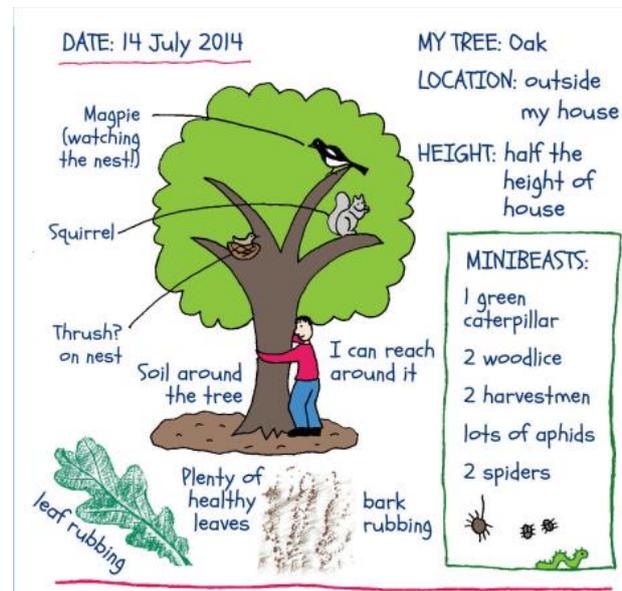
Meet a Tree

You will need:

- Paper or notebook
- Pencil
- Colouring pencils
- Tree Spotter Sheet
- Measuring tape

Steps:

1. Head outside and find a tree nearby which you think looks nice.
2. Draw a rough sketch of the tree in the middle of your piece of paper.
3. Investigate what type of tree it is: look for leaves on or fallen from the tree, and match them to the Tree Spotter Sheet. Write down what tree you think it is at the top of your page.
4. Make a leaf rubbing, or attach a leaf to your page.
5. Is the bark rough or smooth? Can you hug it?
6. How thick is your tree trunk? Use the measuring tape to find out.
7. What creatures are living in or near your tree? List or draw them on the page too.



Make a Flower Posie

Flower posies are a little bouquet of flowers – they have been made since Victorian times to express love, friendship, or remembrance.

You will need:

- Garden Twine
- A few small flowers, leaves or buds
- Scissors (Optional)
- A safety pin (Optional)



Steps:

1. Find some small flowers or leaves or grass that are growing in abundance: daisies or dandelions are great for this.
2. Gather together a flower or two and a small leaf or interesting twig.
3. Hold the stems together and trim them down to the same length.
4. Use the twine to twist around the stems and tie them together.
5. Pop it through your coat button hole, or pin to your jacket with a safety pin.

Fruity Bird Feeders

You will need:

- Oranges or apples*
- Lard*
- Mixed bird seed
- Garden twine
- Scissors
- Knife*
- Chopping board*
- Spoon*
- Saucepan*

*you will need to provide these yourself

Steps:

1. Cut your fruit in half.
2. Use a knife and a spoon to scoop out the insides of the fruit to make a fruit 'cup'.
3. Make 4 holes in the fruit halves by poking through the scissors or a pencil.
4. Pass a length of string through each of the four holes, knot them to the fruit, and tie the four lengths of twine together at the top: you now have a hanging fruit basket.
5. Melt the lard in a pan and mix in the bird seed and the scooped out fruit from step 2.
6. Spoon this mixture into the fruit cups.
7. Allow the lard to set, then hang up for the birds to eat.



How to watch Garden Birds

You will need:

- Garden Bird Spotter sheet
- Bird food/ Fruity Bird feeder (Optional)



Steps:

1. Find either a good view from a window to your garden or a street tree, or a bench in a park.
2. Sit comfortably and focus on the trees and bushes or the sky.
3. Can you notice any movement, as a bird flits from branch to branch?
4. Listen out for bird song, where is it coming from?
5. When you spot a bird, watch it for a while. What do you think it is doing? How does it interact with other birds?
6. Notice the colours and size of the bird – use your spotter sheet to see if you can tell what kind of bird it is.
7. You may want to scatter a small amount of bird seed in the park, or put up a bird feeder, which can help attract birds for you to watch.

Go on an Observation Walk

You will need:

- Countryside Code sheet
- A camera or phone (optional)



Steps:

1. Head outside.
2. As you walk, take time to notice what is natural in your local area and think about what it means to you.
3. Find a tree and watch it for a while.
4. Can you see a living creature? A bird, an insect? If you can, watch it as it goes about its business.
5. Look up at the clouds. Say one word about how they make you feel.
6. Count how many different shades of green you can see.
7. Breathe in the air. What does it smell like?
8. Listen out for bird song. Look closely, can you spot them?
9. Take a photo of something beautiful.
10. Pick up something to take home: a leaf, a feather, a nice stone.

Using Natural Dyes

You will need:

- Calico fabric
- 5-6 Onion skins (or Beetroot / Coffee / Grass / Flowers) *
- Saucepan*
- Colander/Sieve*
- Bowl*
- Plastic spoon*
- Needles (Optional)
- Embroidery thread (Optional)

*you will need to provide these yourself



Steps:

1. Place the collected onion skins, or your chosen plant, in a pan and cover with cold water. Boil for 1 hour.
2. Strain the liquid into a bowl. Discard the onion skins.
3. Return the coloured liquid to the pan. Place the calico flat into the dye liquid. Top up with cold water if needed to cover the calico.
4. Leave to dye the fabric overnight.
5. You should end up with orange-dyed fabric for the onion, pink for beetroot, brown for coffee, and green for grass!
6. You can add embroidery as extra decoration using the embroidery thread and needles if you like.

Leaf Bashing

This is a really simple and effective way to use natural plant materials to get colour onto cloth.

You will need:

- Calico fabric
- Leaves or flowers*
- Hammer*/ Rock
- Chopping board*
- Blunt knife*

*you will need to provide these yourself

Steps:

1. Place your leaves or flowers on the calico fabric, and put this on a strong chopping board to protect the table underneath.
2. Bash the leaves/flowers with a hammer or a large stone to crush the plant and release the colours.
Be careful not to get carried away, and keep your fingers out of the way.
3. Use a blunt knife to scrape off the plant material.
4. Try out different plants, as different colours will be produced.



Write to a Friend

You will need:

- A postcard
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Sharpener
- Stamp



Steps:

1. Write a message to a friend: tell them what you've been up to, or any nature you have spotted!
2. Ask them how they are doing, and wish them well.
3. Write their address on the card.
4. Stick a stamp to the top right.
5. If you would like to send them a little gift – perhaps a leaf rubbing or a sketch of a tree you're proud of – make sure to pop your postcard and your gift in a sealed envelope.
6. Pop your card in your post box to send your message and stay in touch with someone you care about!

Natural Table Decorations

You will need:

- Scissors
- Shopping bag (for collecting)
- Empty mushroom/vegetable produce tray/jam jar*
- Chicken wire

*you will need to provide this yourself



Steps:

1. Take a shopping bag either into your garden, or to a local park or field.
2. Collect some attractive fallen treasures: pine cones, twigs, tree seeds, fallen leaves etc
3. With permission, snip some attractive leaves or berries: evergreens like holly and ivy are great.
4. Put a layer of chicken wire into the mushroom produce tray.
5. Insert the stalks of the leaves, twigs and berries into the holes in the chicken wire.
6. Arrange the pine cones and seeds etc to hide the rest of the wire. Place on your kitchen table to bring some greenery and colour into the home!

Tree Boggarts

In folklore, Boggarts are mischievous spirits that act as guardians of the forest or marshes – create your own to watch over and protect your local street trees!

You will need:

- A small lump of clay

Steps:

1. Take some clay and 'work' it with your hands until it is soft enough to mould into shapes.
2. Shape the clay into the shape of a face.
3. Choose a tree to give a 'Tree Boggart' guardian to, and press your clay face onto the tree trunk.
4. Collect found items to add hair, a beard, or facial features to your boggart – look for moss, grass, leaves, twigs, feathers, pebbles etc.



Decorate Clay Tiles

You will need:

- A lump of clay
- Rolling pin
- 2 Rolling guides
- Leaves or sea shells*
- Newspaper or tray*
- Paints
- Paint brushes

*you will need to provide these yourself



Steps:

1. 'Work' the clay with your hands until it is soft enough to mould.
2. Roll the clay into a circle or a square, using the rolling guides either side until about 1cm thick.
3. Decorate with natural textures: you can press shells onto the clay, or place leaves onto the clay and use the rolling pin to leave an imprint of the leaf.
4. Place on some newspaper or a tray.
5. Leave in a dry place to harden – this might take up to a week.
6. When hard and dry, paint your tile.

Grow a Sunflower

You will need:

- An empty egg box / empty plastic mushroom tray*
 - Compost
 - A baking tray*
 - Sunflower seeds
 - Large flowerpot / Garden*
 - Hand trowel*
- *you will need to provide these yourself



Steps:

1. Fill the container with compost.
2. Place this on the baking tray to catch the water.
3. Poke a hole ½ inch deep into the compost and pop in a sunflower seed. Cover up with the compost.
4. Place in a sunny windowsill and give a good water.
5. Watch the seedling grow over the next few weeks, adding water when the soil feels dry.
6. When the seedling has 4 pairs of leaves you can transfer it into a large flowerpot or into the garden – but wait until mid-May to do this so it is warm enough. Transplant to a large flowerpot with more compost/soil or into your garden using a hand trowel to dig a small hole. Water well and add a stake or stick to add support.
7. See how tall your sunflower grows! Bees love sunflowers, and birds will love the seeds when the flower dries out in Autumn.