

Connecting with Nature Event Pack

Hello and welcome to your Connecting with Nature pack. This pack contains all the information you'll need to run your own Connecting with Nature activities or event.

Purpose of the event pack

Girlguiding is part of the Access Unlimited coalition's Generation Green project, working to get more young people outside and connecting with nature. This pack includes activities that were run at our activity centres to get members outdoors, learning more about nature and enjoying all aspects of being immersed in it.

Generation Green is the first project to be delivered by the Access Unlimited coalition. The coalition comprises YHA (England & Wales) - who are hosting the project on behalf of the partners - The Outward Bound Trust, Scouts, Girlguiding, Field Studies Council and the 10 English National Parks.

Who is it aimed at?

Our events were so popular that we wanted to offer the opportunity for girls to engage with these activities more widely. The activities in this pack are aimed at Brownies and Guides, however they can be slightly adapted for all sections.

Who can deliver these activities or event?

Anyone can deliver these activities, you could use them to plan part of your term programme or you could enjoy a nature themed day using these activities.

What information do I need to deliver these activities?

Everything you need to know is in this pack, it includes individual activity instructions, a list of resources required and some items for printing.

What type of venue should the event be delivered in?

The majority of these activities can be delivered in your usual meeting place, however there are a couple that involve a walk and collecting natural items. This could be done at home with parents and then brought into the unit if you're unable to get out and about. A campsite or outdoor activity centre is ideal for these activities.

How long is the event?

This is really up to you, you can use some of these activities within your normal unit meetings, or spend a whole weekend away completing the activities.

Do I need a Risk Assessment

Please ensure you complete a unit risk assessment before taking part in any of these activities as you would with all activities, taking additional precautions when out on your walk.

What to wear?

We recommend uniform, sturdy comfy shoes, and a warm waterproof coat for the outdoor activities, just uniform for those inside.

More activity ideas and information about the project can be found on the [Generation Green](#) pages of our website.

Habitat Walk

A chance to get outside and enjoy your local area, taking in the nature all around you.

What you'll need:

- Paper bags to collect nature items in
- Paper
- Crayons for any bark rubbings you may wish to do
- Information on insects - optional - this is for you to find yourself

What to do:

1. With your group go for a walk near the area you are meeting, this will need to be pre-planned in advance, try to take in lots of different areas.
2. While you're walking collect items you could use later in a nature collage and/or story telling activity, look for different colours, textures and shapes. Please don't pick anything off trees or plants though, only take from the floor.
3. Use your paper and crayons to make some bark rubbings as you go through the trees.
4. Use the insect information you've found to see if you can spot any of the bugs.
5. While on your walk try some of the following:
 - a. Stop, stay silent and see what else you can hear
 - b. Lie down on the grass and watch the clouds moving, can you spot any shapes?
 - c. Stop in the trees and watch the leaves blow in the wind
6. Continue your walk back to the meeting place.

Natural Collage

Nature is beautiful and we want to show it off in a large piece of art to share on social media and beyond.

What you'll need:

- Large sheet of paper
- Pens/pencils
- Ink for finger painting
- Your collection of natural items
- Any bark rubbings you completed
- Glue sticks

What to do:

1. Get into smalls groups.
2. As a group talk about your favourite things about being outside are, what activities do you like to do and what spaces do you like to use.
3. Lie out the paper in a space so everyone can get to it. If the groups would prefer to make individual collages, cut the paper up smaller.
4. Now use the items you have available to express your favourite things to do outdoors. Think about how they make your feel and how to share that with other people.
5. Use the natural items you have collected and any bark rubbings you completed.
6. You can use the ink pads for finger painting to finish off your master piece.

Grown by Nature

Learn how nature supports the growth of food and plant your own broad bean plant seed to take home with you.

What you'll need:

- Peat free compost
- Gardening gloves
- Small wooden pots - something like these [wooden pots](#) for example
- Coloured pens
- Wooden lollipop sticks
- Broad bean seeds
- Broad bean plant - this is just for an example and can be a photo
- Jute twine

What to do:

1. Introduce the activity by telling the group that today they are going to plant food and think about what needs to happen to grow the food that we eat.
2. Show your group a broad bean seed and then show them the fully grown broad bean, emphasising that the seed becomes the full crop thanks to the help of nature.
3. Ask the group to share their ideas on how nature helps the seed get to the full crop. Ideas include:
 - a. The sun gives the plants the energy and warmth they need to grow
 - b. The rain gives the plants water to keep them hydrated and allows them to grow
 - c. Pollinators help pollinate flowers so that fruits can develop
 - d. The soil gives plants the nutrients it needs in order to grow
4. Explain how they will be able to watch how nature helps food to grow themselves by growing their own broad beans, which they will be planting today.
5. Using the wooden pot kits, first build the pot and then decorate.
6. Fill up the pots with peat free compost using the gardening gloves, it's easier if an adult does this using the gloves.
7. Make a hole of several centimetres in the soil with your fingers and then place the broad bean seed into the bottom of the hole.
8. Take a lollipop stick and write 'broad beans' and the date on it, as well as your name on the other side.
9. You may have to secure the box using some twine.

Forest Thinking

Outdoor meditation session to explore emotions felt within the natural environment.

What you'll need:

- Sheets of paper
- Pens/ pencils
- Natural objects
- Glue

What to do:

The activity can take place in any outdoor location at any time of day. This would work well in outdoor spaces with seating, however if you don't have easy access to an outdoor space it is possible inside, but ensure you have natural items around you.

1. Allow the girls to spread out in the space, relax and take deep breaths. Encourage them to make themselves comfortable.
2. Ask them to notice five things about their surroundings that they can see, hear, smell, touch and feel. They could look at plants, animals, clouds etc. Feelings could include relaxed, peaceful, calm, happy, inspired, sentimental, sad... The girls can talk to each other, but this should be done quietly to allow natural sounds like bird songs to be heard and allow the girls to relax.
3. Write down, draw or create a collage of what they notice. This could be in any combination of media and can be in any level of detail. The journaling should not be prescriptive; girls could write in diary format, creative writing (poems / stories), drawing or a combination. Older girls could even take photos to make a collage.
4. If girls would like to, they can share their journaling pages but as they would be personal, some girls may prefer to keep them private.

Hedgehogs

In groups learn about our loveable hedgehogs with this quiz and play an identification game.

What you'll need:

- Life cycle activity - in appendix (one per group - you need to cut these out)
- Hedgehogs quiz - in appendix
- Pen and paper for quiz
- Footprints and insects - in appendix (you need to cut these out)

What to do:

Pre-set - create a space for the members to crawl through, place the cut out footprints and insects throughout the space, there needs to be enough for one per girl plus extra so they can choose.

1. Hand out the hedgehog life cycle cards to small groups
2. In groups put the different stages of the Hedgehog life cycle into order.
3. Talk about the life cycle together, was there anything you didn't expect? Were there some new things you found out?
4. Complete the hedgehog quiz, depending on the group you could either get them to write their guesses down on paper and go through the answers after, or you could do a run to the different sides of the room/space. The answers are in red on the quiz page
5. Move on to the pre-set area, crawl along and pick up a footprint, what did you find?
6. Look at the footprints found in the space and see if you can identify any hedgehog footprints, can you see what else may have been through.
7. Before hibernation hedgehogs need to eat a lot, now see if you can find any of their favourite creepy crawlies: **worms, beetles, slugs, caterpillars, earwigs, and millipedes**. Can you tell which is which?

Natural Story Telling

Recreate or write a fairy tale / story - set in nature, using objects found on your habitat walk or brought in from home.

What you'll need:

- Natural objects found on habitat walk or brought in
- Pens/ pencils
- Paper

What to do:

1. Come together in small groups with the natural objects you've collected previously.
2. Plan a short story set in nature. Younger girls could choose a fairy tale to recreate if they would like to.
3. Use the natural objects to represent the story. This could be separate pictures for each scene or one picture to represent the whole story.
4. Share each story with the rest of the group.

Based on Sensory Stories UMA
Express Myself
Brownies

World of Birds

A nature walk to learn all about local birds and birdwatching. Finished off with a chance to make a DIY birdfeeder and continue the experience at home.

What you'll need:

- RSPB bird watching sheets - in appendix
- Pens
- Clipboards for sheets - if you have them
- Binoculars to share - if you have them

What to do:

1. With your group go for a walk near the area you are meeting, this will need to be pre-planned in advance.
2. Be still and be quiet. As exciting as it is to watch a blackbird bouncing around searching for worms, you'll get a better look if you're really quiet - and you might even hear them sing or call too!
3. Look all around you, on the ground, in the trees and in the sky.
4. Another good way to find birds is with your ears! Yes, hearing where birds are and beginning to recognise their different calls and songs is a brilliant way to hone your birdwatching skills.
5. If you'd like to take a closer look then binoculars are a good idea, but if you're new to them you'll need to be patient as they take some practice. However, once you begin to get the hang of them, they're a great way to see a bird's colouring and shape close-up and help you determine what you're looking at.
6. Make sure to note down any birds you do see and hear on your sheets.

Bird Feeders

It's important we look after the world's birds, we're going to make these simple bird feeders for you to take home and put in the garden.

What you'll need:

- One pinecone each
- Lard
- Twine
- Homemade bird seed - to be made
- Large bowls
- Wooden spoon
- Baking paper

Recipe for homemade bird seed:

- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sunflower seeds
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup niger seeds
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup grated cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried fruit, soaked overnight

What to do:

1. Clean your pine cone.
2. Tie a long piece of twine around the bottom of your pine cone.
3. Mix all your ingredients together in a bowl to create your homemade bird seed mix.
4. Carefully and gradually mix the lard with the birdseed until it all sticks together.
5. Push the mix between the pine cone to create a tasty fat ball.
6. Place the fat balls on baking paper until the lard has set.
7. Use baking paper to take home your lard balls, you can wrap it up in the paper you've already used.
8. Hang in a quiet and sheltered area of the garden or in a friend/family members garden.

You might have your own recipe for bird feed, or you might rather buy pre-made, that's completely up to you.

Appendix

Hedgehogs - Life cycle activity

<p>Hedgehogs mate in the rut. Sometimes male hedgehogs will make a lot of noise and even fight other hedgehogs. So don't worry if you hear quite the racket coming from the garden, it could be hedgehogs!</p>	<p>Baby hedgehogs, called hoglets, are born, usually between 3 and 5. Mother hedgehogs need lots of time to themselves to look after their young. Sometimes she will carry them in her mouth to a new location.</p>	<p>Young hedgehogs will leave the nest when they are around three to four weeks old to go on foraging trips with their mother. After around ten days of foraging with their mother the young will wander off on their own.</p>
<p>Adult hedgehogs spend their days sleeping as they are nocturnal animals. And spend their nights searching out food.</p>	<p>Hedgehogs eat as much as they can to store enough fat reserves, they need to weigh about 500g (about half a bag of sugar!). Their favourite food is insects and slugs!</p>	<p>Hedgehogs make hibernaculum's out of leaves, twigs, and plants for hibernation. When hibernating they go into a state of near sleep called torpor, this allows them to save a lot of energy but slows down all other bodily functions making normal activity impossible.</p>

Correct order:

The rut

Hoglets born.

Hedgehogs leave the nest

Nocturnal

Eat to store fat

Hibernation

Hedgehogs - Facts and Fiction Quiz

1. How many different species (types) of Hedgehog are there?
 - A. 11
 - B. 17
 - C. 9

2. Hedgehogs like to live with other Hedgehogs.
True or False

3. Why do Hedgehogs roll into a ball?
 - A. To roll down hills so their legs don't get tired.
 - B. To collect leaves as they go along to keep them warm.
 - C. To protect themselves against predators.

4. Why are Hedgehogs called Hedgehogs?
 - A. Because they route through hedges looking for prey. They emit snorts, squeals, and grunts with their pig like snouts.
 - B. Because they like to keep a hedge all to themselves.
 - C. Because they look like hedges without leaves on.

5. What do Hedgehogs like to eat in the wild?
 - A. Insects, worms, centipedes, Bird eggs, Snails, Mice, Frogs and Snakes.
 - B. Haribo, grass, hard boiled eggs and chocolate.
 - C. Lizards, fish and Grass.

6. Why are Hedgehogs very good at digging?
 - A. Because their mothers taught them well before she left them
 - B. They have curved claws and a very good sense of smell.
 - C. Because they have to dig up trees if they are in their way.

7. Hedgehogs like to be out hunting at night, what are they are called?
 - A. Dark night animals.
 - B. Ninja animals.
 - C. Nocturnal animals.

8. A group of Hedgehogs is called?
 - A. A Display of Hedgehogs.
 - B. An Array of Hedgehogs
 - C. A Set of hedgehogs.

9. A Male Hedgehog is called?
 - A. A Sow.
 - B. A spinster.
 - C. A Boar.

10. A Female Hedgehog is called?
 - A. A Sow.
 - B. A Prickly Princess.
 - C. A Poppy.

11. A Baby Hedgehog is called ?
A. A Hoglet.
B. A Hedgelet.
C. A Spikelet.
12. How many Babies does a female have?
A. 4-6
B. 3-5
C. 5-7
13. How old is a Baby Hedgehog when it leaves the nest?
A. 3-4 weeks.
B. 3-4 Months.
C. 3-4 Days.
14. How long are a Hedgehogs spines?
A. 30 cm.
B. 10 cm.
C. 2.54 cm.
15. What are the spines made of?
A. Plastic.
B. Bone.
C. Keratin.
16. How many spines does an Adult Hedgehog have?
A. 5,000 - 7,000
B. 800 - 1000
C. 500 - 600
17. Does a Hedgehog have spines all over its body?
A. Yes.
B. No, not on their face, chest, legs or stomach.
C. No, not on their noses or toes.
18. Hedgehogs are naturally immune to snake venom.
True or False
19. Hedgehogs can pass infections onto humans.
True or False
20. Hedgehog fleas live only on?
A. Hedgehogs.
B. Hedgehogs, Dogs and cats
C. Hedgehogs, Dogs cats and humans.
21. Hedgehogs can swim.
True or False

22. **Why are Hedgehogs endangered?**
A. Because people hunt them for their spines.
B. Because Cows like to eat them.
C. **Due to loss of habitat and food.**
23. **What things are a danger to Hedgehogs?**
A. **Ponds, netting and Strimmers.**
B. Cattle grids.
C. Litter and Bonfires.
24. **How much should a Hedgehog weigh at its smallest to be able to survive hibernation.**
A. **500 grams.**
B. 850 grams.
C. 400 grams.
25. **You can feed Hedgehogs bread and milk.**
True or **False**
26. **Hedgehogs are lactose intolerant.**
True or False
27. **Hedgehogs Hibernate usually.**
A. **November - March.**
B. March -November.
C. Whenever they need a nap.
28. **Should a Hedgehog be out in the daytime?**
A. Yes, If it's not tired.
B. Yes.
C. **No.**
29. **Hedgehogs have tails.**
True or False
30. **If you find a sick or injured Hedgehog you should?**
A. Leave it, it might get better.
B. **Put it in a box in a warm safe place and call a vets or wildlife rescue center.**
C. Sing to it to make it feel better.

Hedgehogs - Footprints and insects activity



Pigeon



Hedgehog

Hedgehogs - Footprints and insects activity

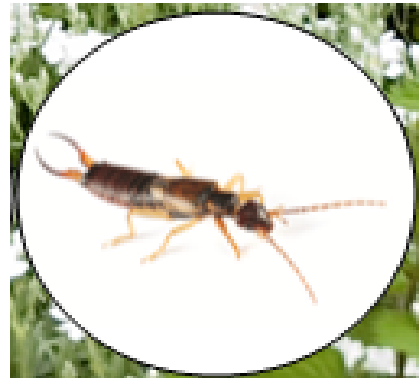
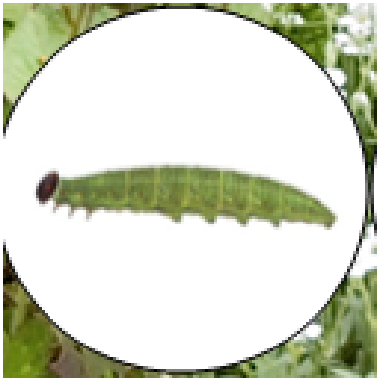


Squirrel



Badger

Hedgehogs - Footprints and insects activity



Name list left to right:

Worms

Beetles

Slugs

Caterpillars

Millipedes

Earwigs

World of Birds - RSPB bird watching activity sheets



Go birdwatching

How many of these birds can you find around where you live?

As you spot each bird, write down where you found it.



House sparrow

Search in hedges, parks and gardens for small, chirpy, streaky brown birds. Male has grey cap and black chin; female is plainer.

Where?



Starling

Bigger than a sparrow, but smaller than a blackbird (speckled in winter), short tail, pointed beak and waddling walk. Often in flocks.

Where?



Blue tit

Tiny green and yellow bird with blue wings and tail. Look for blue cap edged with white. Common in gardens and woods.

Where?



Blackbird

Common in gardens and woods, between sparrow and pigeon in size. Male black with yellow beak, female brown.

Where?



Woodpigeon

Common, big, grey pigeon with a white band on the wing and white neck patches. Wings make a noisy clatter. Often in flocks.

Where?



Robin

A small, perky garden and woodland bird. The orange-red face and chest are unique but not quite as bright as you might expect.

Where?



Great tit

Smaller than a sparrow but bright, bold and noisy. Has a black cap, big white cheek patches and black stripe down front.

Where?



Goldfinch

Brightly-coloured sparrow-sized, usually seen in flocks, giving ringing calls.

Where?



Action

Tell us what you saw when you went birdwatching.



Collared dove

A small, slim, pale dove. It has a thin black band around the back of the neck. Often in gardens.

Where?



Magpie

Big, long-tailed black and white bird like nothing else. Makes loud chattering noise. Often in gardens, farmland and woods.

Where?



Chaffinch

A sparrow-sized bird of gardens, fields and woods. It has two white bars across the wing and white sides to the tail.

Where?

Wild activities!

rspb.org.uk/wildchallenge
Sign up and earn rewards!

Wild Challenge



[Wild Challenge extra]

What did you spot?

Can you **describe two birds** you have found and add a **drawing** or **picture** of each? If you like, you could **send us a picture** of this page to share your experience. Maybe you could also try recording yourself mimicking the sound the bird made.



Name of bird (if known)

Where was it? (on the ground/in a tree/on water/somewhere else)

What was it doing? (flying/hopping/walking/standing still/feeding/something else)

How big was it? (sparrow-sized/pigeon-sized/bigger)

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**Wild
Challenge**

The RSPB is a registered charity in England & Wales 207076, in Scotland SC037654 327-0546-20-21 House sparrow by Ben Andrew, starling by Andy Hay, blue tit by Louise Greenhorn, blackbird, woodpigeon, collared dove, robin and chaffinch by Ray Kennedy, greenfinch by Ben Hall, great tit by Grahame Madge, goldfinch by Nigel Blaka and magpie by Paul Chesterfield (all rspb-images.com), ladybird, wellies, soil and pencil by iStockphoto.com, blackbird by fotoka.com, magnifying glass by dreamstime.com and binoculars by Shutterstock