

Invertebrates KS1 - How to guide

Collect equipment from the centre and follow the map to the Orchard Meadow.

Split the children into small groups (ideally 3 per group)

Equipment

You will be able to borrow the equipment required on the day from Suffolk Wildlife Trust, please do not bring your own.

Each small group will need:

- 1 white tray and a stick
- 1 brush
- 1 bug box
- 1 identification guide
- 1 sweep net (if weather is dry)

Instructions

1. Introduce invertebrates, what do we mean by an invertebrate?
2. Discuss: how are invertebrates different from us?
3. Introduce invertebrate hunting equipment:

The white trays and sticks are for tree tapping: trays are held under a branch and the branch tapped gently to dislodge invertebrates into the tray for identification

Bug boxes are to be placed in front of a creature and the brush used to gently sweep creatures into the pot. Place the lid on being carefully not to catch any legs/wings etc. Be careful not to accidentally hurt it. No slugs, snails or worms should be put in bug boxes as this makes them very sticky and other creatures will get stuck to them!

There are lots of logs in the meadow, ask the group to use their hands (not feet) to turn logs over gently. They might see lots of creatures running around or they might be hiding under leaves so they must look very carefully and be careful not to stand on the areas they have uncovered.

Sweep nets should be swept through long grass or nettles (being careful not to catch brambles), the bag of the net should then be held closed and then tipped out into the white tray where the bug box and brush can be used as above to catch invertebrates.

4. Once they find a creature, children should put their bug pot down in front of a creature, sometimes they will go in by themselves but if not, use the brush to gently encourage the creature into the pot.
5. Once you have a creature, put the log back in the same place and the same way up that you found it. This is the creature's home so we can't leave it broken with no roof!
6. Look at your creature and use an identification guide to work out what type of creature it is.

7. Once a creature has been identified, it should be returned back to where they were found. If this was under a log, they should be released beside the log so they can crawl back underneath by themselves.

Important:

- never pick the creatures up with your fingers as they can easily be squashed by accident. Some creatures might also feel threatened and try to bite, but they're all very small and no creatures are dangerous enough to pose a real risk.
- Don't put too many creatures together in a pot, they don't all get on!
- nets should not be used to catch butterflies, dragonflies or damselflies as this can cause serious damage to the invertebrates.
- don't roll the logs in the sitting circle as this will dislodge creatures who will then get squashed as we sit on them
- If you find a lizard or a newt, please do not pick them up, you may have a legally protected species – err on the side of caution and assume all are protected and therefore can only be handled under licence. The logs should be placed carefully back over them with small sticks placed either side of the creature to prevent the log from crushing them.

At the end of the activity

1. Discuss: what did you find? Where did you find things? Did you find more under logs or in the long grass? Why was this?
2. Now you are ready to play Number Bugs; a team game looking at physical differences in invertebrates (separate resource sheet).