

Little Explorer

Greater Manchester
Walking

October Nature Walks for Under 5's

Welcome to the 1st of 4 Little Explorer Packs, filled with ideas for using nature to keep healthy. Walking is a fantastic activity for families with young children. It's free, you can do it just about anytime and anywhere and, with so much space and nature to enjoy along the way, we can all still have fun whilst keeping our social distance and staying safe during the next few months. The activities are designed for doing on a walk in your local area or for when you get back home. But remember, it's important to look after yourselves and also nature. Here are tips to follow:

- Before going for a walk, **check the weather** to help decide where to go and what to wear.
- While you are walking, identify and **avoid touching** plants such as stinging nettles, foxgloves and fungi that may cause skin irritation, illness, etc.
- Take **only a single petal or leaf** and pick carefully so as not to damage the rest of the plant.
- **Never taste** or put any parts of **wild plants** near your mouth. Eating outside is fun but some plants can be poisonous so stay safe and take a picnic with you instead.
- **Always wash hands** after you have been handling natural objects

October is when the leaves of many of our trees change colour and start falling off. Losing their leaves will help the tree survive the winter weather. It's also the month when you can see all the amazing different types of fruits and nuts. These contain the seeds for new trees to grow but also provide food for wild animals. This month's nature walk activities will explore **Leaves & Seeds**.

Autumn Treasure

Upcycle an old egg box into an *Autumn Treasure Chest* to fill on your next walk.

What you need?

- An old egg box, poster paints & a brush

What to do?

- Start by painting each "egg cup" a different colour. Choose from green – yellow - orange – red – brown and any shades in between.
- Now go for a walk to find things from nature to match. There should be plenty of lovely colourful leaves and fruits for you to collect.
- When you get home, take some time to explore your "treasure".
- Try counting to discover which colour was the most difficult to find?
- Test out other senses but remember, never to taste wild plants.
- Do some sorting into different textures. Which are soft or hard? Hairy or smooth? You could also try sorting by shape or size.
- Do any of the leaves rustle or the seeds rattle? Do any have a smell? Do you like the smell or not?
- If you want to identify your finds, check out these links for more info:
www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/leaf.jpg
www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-07/nuts.jpg



Catch a falling leaf ...

In folklore, catching a falling leaf in autumn can bring good luck. Some stories say you will be free from colds all winter, others that for every leaf you catch, you will have a lucky month next year.



But whilst catching a falling leaf sounds easy, even the gentlest of breezes is a challenge making this a great game for getting your child running, stretching, jumping and hopefully laughing.

Here are some top tips for catching leaves

- Head somewhere with lots of trees. There are lots of lovely woodlands to visit in Rochdale. Check out this link to find one near you: www.rochdale.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/parks-and-countryside
- Choose a tree with lots of leaves still left to fall but do make sure the tree is one that loses its leaves in autumn! These are known as *deciduous* because they grow new leaves each springtime. Trees that keep their leaves all year round are *evergreens*.
- Stand under the tree and watch the leaves first. See how they fall and what happens if they are caught in the wind.
- Hold your hands out in front of you when you've seen the leaf you're trying to catch. Hopefully it should float down into your hands but you can always try grabbing at it if not.

Leaf Art

Fill the frame to create a picture. Collect on dry days when walking through piles of leaves is fun!

Glue a leaf into the frame then make it into an animal.
Give it some legs.
How about wings?
Eyes? Ears? Beak?
Count how many.

Place a leaf under the paper then use chunky crayons to make a rubbing.
Remember to put the leaf vein-side up for best results but try different ones
Use words to describe what each feels like.

Make a leaf print by painting directly onto a leaf then turn it over & press onto the paper
*Use a brush or a roller.
Which works best?*



Seed Shaker Marching Band

Use seeds in autumn to create a musical instrument to play on your next walk. Or for some fun indoor exercise, try this link to "*I am a Music Man*": www.dailymotion.com/video/x3to0gd

What you need?

- Cardboard tubes of different sizes. Toilet/ kitchen roll inners are ideal.
- Paper bun cases or circles of greaseproof paper & rubber bands.
- Old wrapping paper, scissors, glue, colouring pens to decorate.

What to do?

- Collect different seeds with different sounds e.g. grass, nuts, cones. These go in your shaker so harder things are better. Try out other natural materials e.g. shells or pebbles but no live animals please!
- Cut & glue wrapping paper around your tube or colour to decorate it
- Glue a bun case to one end and let dry. Secure with a rubber band.
- Now fill with some natural materials (1 or 2 teaspoons is plenty) then glue a 2nd bun case to the open end. Secure with a rubber band & start shaking!
- Experiment with different materials and containers to make shakers for everyone in the family to join the band. Metal biscuit tins and plastic sweet tubs make great drum kits too!!



Wildlife Wander

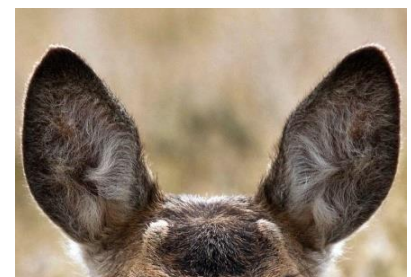
Each month, we'll look out some of Rochdale's amazing wildlife but remember, spotting animals can be tricky as often they see or hear us first then hide! Walking quietly can help but all the animals this month have really good hearing thanks to the shape and size of their ears.

- Match the photo to the animal's name then tick any you see while on your Wildlife Wander.

MOUSE

DEER

FOX



- Why not make a model animal from clay or salt dough when you get home? Look here for a recipe to make salt dough : www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/199354720976351277/
- Are the ears big or small? Pointy or rounded? Don't forget to give your animal a name!

Here are some more nature sound activities to have a go at

Sound Safari Download http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activities/pdfs/pdf_sound_safari.pdf and take on your walk. Did you hear them all? How many more did you hear?

We're going on a Bear Hunt Have a go at making your own sound effects of this well-known story. You'll need wellington boots plus different "noisy" things to walk through e.g. *crunchy* gravel, *swishy* grass, *squelchy* mud, *rustling* leaves. Remember to **take extra care if walking in streams or near rivers**. Fast flowing water can be dangerous but *splashing* in puddles will make just as much noise. If you haven't heard the story ... you can listen to the author Michael Rosen telling it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=kL36gMrHJaI.

Little Explorer Nature Walk Diary

Keeping a diary of your walks is a great reminder of where you've been and what you've seen. It's also something for showing friends and family who you aren't able to meet up with at the moment. By sharing it on Facebook, you might even inspire them to become a *Little Explorer* too!

Here are some things to make a note of in your diary and there's also a picture frame for you to add drawings or photographs as special memories of the walks and activities you've done.

Can you count how many walks you have been on this month

How long did the longest walk take?

Where was your favourite walk to?

.....

Why was it the best?

.....

Draw a picture or stick on a photograph in the frame below

