

# Blashford Lakes Centre Activities for Early Years

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Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's **Blashford Lakes Nature Reserve** has a fantastic variety of exciting habitats to explore and discover. The nature reserve's mosaic of lakes, ponds, river, woodland and grassland, provides the perfect location for fun and inspirational hands on activities throughout the year and whatever the weather. Children will discover wildlife, experience the changing seasons, use natural materials and enjoy risky play.

Read on to find out more and if you can't find what you're looking for, please ask - many of the activities that are on offer were originally inspired by a request from an early years practitioner looking to support their topic work.



## Minibeast safari

Explore the wonderful variety of habitats at Blashford Lakes Nature Reserve searching for the creatures that creep, crawl and slither. Dip in the pond, splash in the river, creep around the woodland and hunt through the meadow.

**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; self-confidence and self awareness. CL, understanding and speaking. PD; moving and handling. L; reading. N; numbers. UW; the world and technology.



## Feathered friends

Follow the trail of footprints and feathers around the reserve. Help Mrs Blackbird to build a new nest for her eggs. Learn about familiar birds and discover new ones with amazing close up views of them from the woodland hide and watch the dabbling ducks out on the lake.

**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; making relationships, self-confidence and self awareness, managing feelings and behaviour. CL; listening and attention, understanding and speaking. L; reading. N; numbers. UW; the world and technology.



## Small seeds and tall trees

Set off on an expedition to find seeds of all shapes and sizes. Meet the trees that they will one day grow into. Play leaf snap, matching the different shapes and then collect some leaves to decorate your explorer hat. Plant a seed in a newspaper pot to take home.

**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; self-confidence and self awareness. CL; listening and attention, understanding and speaking. PD; moving and handling. L; reading. N; numbers, shape, space and measure. UW; the world and technology. EAD; exploring and using materials and media.



## Look, sniff and taste!

Explore Blashford Lakes Nature Reserves using all of your senses. Find the colours of the rainbow, look up into the sky, collect different touch sensations and make a smelly cocktail. There's even an opportunity to eat edible wild plants if you wish!

**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; self-confidence and self awareness. CL; listening and attention, understanding and speaking. PD; moving and handling, N; numbers, shape, space and measure. UW; the world and technology, EAD; exploring and using materials and media, being imaginative.







## Story trails

Bring well loved stories to life on an adventure around the nature reserve. Suggested stories include 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', 'The Gruffalo', 'The Three Little Pigs' and 'Stickman'.

**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; self-confidence and self awareness. CL; listening and attention, understanding and speaking. PD; moving and handling. L; reading. N; numbers, shape, space and measure. UW; the world. EAD; exploring and using materials and media, being imaginative.



## Natural art attack

Use your senses to explore Blashford Lakes and seek inspiration from nature to create wild masterpieces using natural materials. Use natural paint, weave willow, create woodland collages and sculpt a 'boglin' from clay you've dug up from the ground.

**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; self-confidence and self awareness. CL; listening and attention, understanding and speaking. PD; moving and handling, N; Shape, space and measure. UW; the world. EAD; exploring and using materials and media, being imaginative.



## Go camping!

Children can choose to build a den for themselves or for one of the animals that live in the forest, with opportunities to measure, count, explore natural materials and create 3D shapes. Collect firewood for a small campfire, prepare a roasting fork and toast bread over the fire.

**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; making relationships, self-confidence and self awareness, managing feelings and behaviour. CL; listening and attention, understanding and speaking. PD; moving and handling, health and self care. L; reading. N; numbers, shape, space and measure. UW; the world and technology. EAD; exploring and using materials and media, being imaginative.



## Forest school experience

A Forest School experience of 6 weekly sessions of 2 hours each suitable for up to 15 children. Our outdoor classroom is a fenced area of meadow and woodland and provides an inspirational and dynamic learning environment for child-led learning including:

- recognising, assessing and managing risk;
- designing, making and problem solving;
- using tools to make things;
- exploring the properties of natural materials;
- discovering and observing the natural world throughout the season;
- cooking and stories around the campfire.

*Cost £100 per session.*



**Learning and Development Opportunities:** PSED; making relationships, self-confidence and self awareness, managing feelings and behaviour. CL; listening and attention, understanding and speaking. PD; moving and handling, health and self care. L; reading, writing. N; numbers, shape, space and measure. UW; people and communities, the world and technology. EAD; exploring and using materials and media, being imaginative.

## Contact Us

There is no formal charge for group visits but we do rely on your donations to help towards the running costs of the centre and nature reserve – as such we ask for a suggested donation of £4 per person for half a day (£60 minimum donation) or £7 per person for a full day (£100 minimum donation). There is a charge for Forest School programmes of £100 per session.

To book your visit and discuss how we can tailor your day of activities to suit your learning objectives please call Jim or Tracy on 01425 472760 or email [BlashfordLakes@hiwwt.org.uk](mailto:BlashfordLakes@hiwwt.org.uk).

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

