

Backyard beetles and bugs

Identification sheet

The identification sheet will help identify many of the animals found in a garden, parkland or woodland. There is a space to record your findings so one challenge might be to see how many creatures you come across altogether using the three different methods of collecting. Which method has been the most successful? What does this say about the different habitats? Gyles introduces other questions for investigation in the video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPmJbv_y4IY

Minibeast Detective

This activity helps children to focus on one particular animal and through it develop the vocabulary of: -

Invertebrate – Invertebrates are animals that don't have a backbone. Some have soft bodies like worms and slugs. Other invertebrates like insects and spiders have a hard outer casing which protects their body like a suit of armour. The term minibeast is a more child friendly term for any small invertebrate.

Vertebrates – Have a backbone inside their body. They include mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles.

Insect- all insects have three body parts (head, thorax and abdomen) and six legs as adults.

Habitat – An area where a particular species lives. Plants and other organisms all have natural habitats.

Food Chain – A food chain shows a simple feeding relationship in any habitat. meat eaters and herbivores vegetarian as described in the activity.

We found an excellent Minibeast Pack published online in 2010 by the Holland Park Ecology Centre, London, which provides lots of information and further school based approaches. www.rbkc.gov.uk/Minibeasts/pack/PDF

We also like the links between these activities and literacy and reading. Some of the classic picture books for younger children feature minibeasts and there are often readings of these to be found on YouTube. You could try for younger explorers: -

“Superworm” by Julia Donaldson and Axel Shaffer.



“The Very Hungry Caterpillar” by Eric Carle.

Minibeasts: Ladybird first Fabulous Facts.

And for older children: -

“Bonkers About Beetles” by Owen Davey.

“Project Bugs” by Camilla De La Bedoyere.

And right now, it is time for the Reading Agency and public libraries’ Summer Reading Challenge 2020 and this year the theme is Silly Squad with a celebration of funny books, happiness, and laughter. Here are three of the books featured in this year’s “challenge”; -

“Tiny Ant” – It’s time for the jungle talent show and all the animals want to show off what they can do. Acrobatic Lion, Dancing Gorilla and others try to impress the judges but what can a tiny ant do? By Claire Freedman and Claire Powell.

“Bug Belly: Babysitting Trouble” – See what happens when Bug Belly has the task of babysitting hundreds of tadpoles and froglets for the day. The pond is draining away, a ferocious old pike and a heron are not far away and there is a sneaky snake snooping around. What will happen next? By Paul Morton.

“Dragon Detective: Catnapped” – And if you like the idea of being a nature detective here is one with a big difference. When detective Dirk Dilly gets a call from Holly, a young girl whose pet cat has gone missing the dragon ends up with a new case to solve. It could end up a cat-astrophe! By Gareth P Jones.

More details about all these books, the Summer Reading Challenge and how children, parents and schools can be involved are to be found at summerreadingchallenge.org.uk

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Gyles Morris



