FOREST EDUCATION NETWORK ENGLAND

Forest Hangouts

Age: 7 - 14 year olds   🕐 **Minimum time needed:** 2 hours

Curriculum links:

Science

- Working Scientifically - identifying and classifying. Identify and name a variety of common animals. Explore and compare the differences between things that are living, and dead, and things that have never been alive.
- Identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited and describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals and plants, and how they depend on each other. Identify and name a variety of plants and animals in their habitats, including microhabitats.
- Recognise that living things can be grouped in a variety of ways. Explore and use classification keys to help group, identify, and name a variety of living things in their local and wider environment.

Explore the forest to discover how trees provide different habitats for a variety of animals to live in.

🍃 Get Ready

- Clipboard, paper and pencils
- Identification charts for insects and minibeasts
- Bug hunting kit (magnifiers, spoons, trays)
- Camera

🍃 Get Set

💬 **Discuss:**

- What are the differences between things that are alive, those that are dead, and those that have never been alive?
- What is a habitat? What do habitats provide for the animals and plants living in them?

> 💡 **Hint:** Food, air, water, shelter

- Working in groups, make some simple tables to record what they find in the forest.

🍃 Go

- Work in groups, explore for things in the forest that are alive, dead, and never been alive.
- Use prepared tables to record what is found.

💬 Discuss:

- Did they find any animals? Do the plants help animals and if so how?
- How are things that have never been alive useful in the forest? Do they create habitats?
- Are things that are dead useful? Do they help animals survive?

> 💡 **Hint:** Trees are an important habitat when they are alive but also play an important role by providing deadwood and leaves

- Can you describe what the different habitats (trees, deadwood, leaf litter) are like? What do you predict would live in each habitat?
- Look for living things such as insects in these different habitats.

💬 **Discuss:** How are the animals adapted to their habitats? What do you think they eat? Why are they that colour? How do they move?
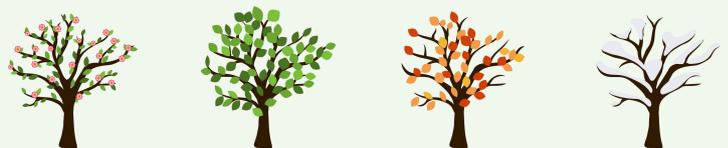
- Older children could use keys to identify what they have found and compare the different animals found in different habitats.

🍃 Go Beyond

- Ask groups to pick one of the animals they found from each habitat (e.g. one from deadwood and one from leaf litter). Draw them with notes to show how they are adapted to their different habitats. They could include descriptions of the habitats as well.
- Older children could include features that have helped them to identify the animal.
- Observe (or predict) the changes they can see over the seasons - how does a tree change and how do the habitats around it change?
- What makes a good home? Compare homes in natural habitats and think about man-made animal homes.

Habitats

Trees through the seasons