

# Activity Cards



"While we are born with curiosity and wonder and our early years are full of the adventure they bring, I know such inherent joys are often lost.

I also know that, being deep within us, their latent glow can be fanned to flame again by awareness and an open mind." Sigurd Olsen



## Introduction

These activity cards bring a new dimension to the outdoors.

They introduce simple games and activities designed to increase awareness and enjoyment of our environment.

Choose activities that best suit your group, location and interests.

Allow about 15 minutes for each activity.





# Take a Photo

**Materials:** Paper and pencils to record images

*This is a simple activity that focuses our attention in a powerful way.*



Work in pairs - one will be a **photographer** and the other a **camera**. The photographer guides his/her partner (the camera) in search of memorable photographs.

1. The camera's eyes must be closed. Photographer guides camera looking for interesting photo.
2. When the photographer has found a good photo, let your camera know whether you are using a wide angle (far away) or close-up lens.
3. Adjust the camera so their eyes (the 'lens') are pointing at the subject to be photographed.
4. Tap the camera's shoulder to open the shutter and take the photo. Count to three then tap again to close the shutter.



When you are ready, move on to the next photo. After three or four different photos, the camera and photographer can swap places.

You can extend this activity by asking the cameras to record (draw) the photos taken.



# Sensory Scavenger Hunt

**Materials:** Scavenger hunt cards

Take one card each or share with a partner.

Tick off the items as you find them. ☒

This is an activity you can do while you walk. It's about using your **senses** to find things:



Sight



Hearing



Smell



Touch

**Note:** Taste is the only sense missed off the list.

## Items to find:

- ☐ Something furry
- ☐ Something that fits inside something else
- ☐ An interesting pattern
- ☐ A sweet smell
- ☐ An unpleasant smell
- ☐ A noise made by a plant
- ☐ Something with a flaky surface
- ☐ Something unusual
- ☐ Something multi-coloured
- ☐ Something rotten



# Colour Matching

**Materials:** Colour matching cards

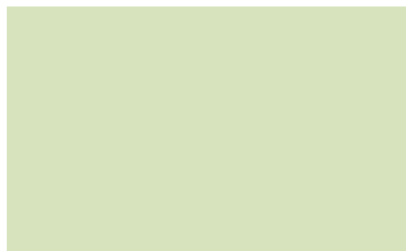
What colour is the bush?

**Green** ... but more different shades of green than you'll ever find on a paint chart.

You can do this activity as you walk along.

Take a colour card and try to find natural shades of green that match the paint shades on your chart.

When you find a good match, take a small sample (small leaf or part of a large one) to put against your card.



# Tree Friends

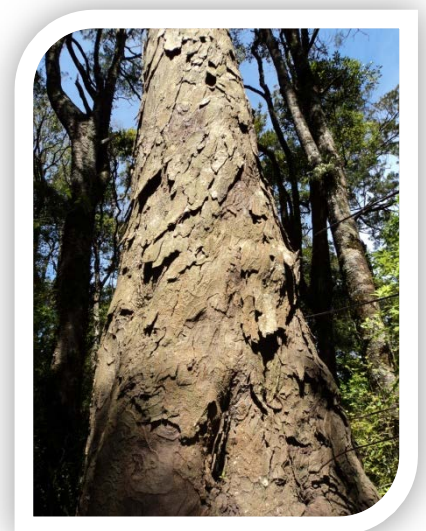
**Materials:** Blindfolds

You don't have to know a tree's name to recognise it in a crowd.



Choose an area where there is a variety of trees and shrubs that you can reach easily.

1. Blindfold one member of your group and lead them from the starting point to a tree.
2. Leave them alone for 2-3 minutes so they can build up a “mind picture” of the tree.
3. Getting to know “their” tree - ask them questions like:
  - Is the bark rough or flaky or smooth?
  - Can you hug the tree so your arms meet around the trunk?
  - What is growing on the ground?
  - How high are the branches?
  - What do the leaves feel like?
4. When they are ready, lead the blindfolded person back to the starting point, turn them three times and remove the blindfold.
5. Can they find “their” tree?



You may be surprised at how easy it is!





# Beaut Bugs

**Materials:** String, toothpicks, magnifying glasses, identification chart.

There are more invertebrates (eg insects and spiders) on earth than any other group of living things.



Without their work in recycling dead plants and animals, life on earth would not be possible. Yet, because they are small it's easy for us to overlook them. Let's see what we can discover on a 100 cm "hike".

1. Use the string and toothpicks to peg out a route about 100 cm (1 metre) long – it doesn't have to be a straight line.
2. Imagine that you are an ant as you explore the unknown world of the forest floor.
3. Look under leaf litter or decaying logs to discover more secretive members of the recycling gang.
4. Use the identification chart to see what you've found.

Don't forget to return the "beaut bugs" to where you found them.



# Bird Calling

**Materials:** Bird caller

What can you hear? Find somewhere comfortable to sit and be still for a while.

To help focus on forest sounds, first try sitting with your eyes closed.



1. Each time you hear a different sound, raise a finger.
2. After about 2 minutes (length of time will depend on the age and inclination of your children) – open your eyes and share about the sounds you heard. (Eg wind in the leaves, insects, different bird calls).
3. How many different sounds did you identify?

## Using a bird caller

If there are birds around, try using a bird caller.

1. Twist your bird caller to create a range of squeaking sounds.
2. Be patient and wait for the birds to come to you. You may see tui, fantail, grey warbler, tomtit or silver eyes.
3. Record where you are and what birds you see.



How close the birds come to you will depend on how quiet and still you are.



# Camouflage Game

**Materials:** 50 coloured pegs, chart to record numbers of each coloured peg.



1. Choose a short (30m) section of track with an obvious beginning and end.
2. Place pegs along either side of the track – you can put them on the ground, onto overhead branches or in the foliage. They should be at a range of levels but all must be visible from the track. (Remember where you put them!)
3. The group has 2 minutes to find as many pegs as they can.
4. Sort the found pegs into colour piles and count numbers of each colour.
  - Have you collected more of some colours than others?
  - Why do you think that might be?
  - See how long it takes you to find the rest of the pegs – what colour was the hardest to find?
5. After finishing the game, take note of the birds and small creatures you see on your walk. How many have colours that make them hard to spot? Try looking for caterpillars, moths, slaters, etc)





# Bush Snifter

**Materials:** Plastic containers

Captain Cook discovered he could make an excellent herbal brew from the leaves of the mānuka (tea tree).



Make up your own special blend by picking a variety of leaves (and other plant material), crushing them lightly between your fingers and putting them into plastic containers.

Take very small samples of live material, you don't need much to make a good "snifter".

Smell the aromas you have created – pass the containers around to compare. You might like to give yours its own name like "Earth Tang". What creative names can you come up with?

