

Meet the Minibeasts EYFS

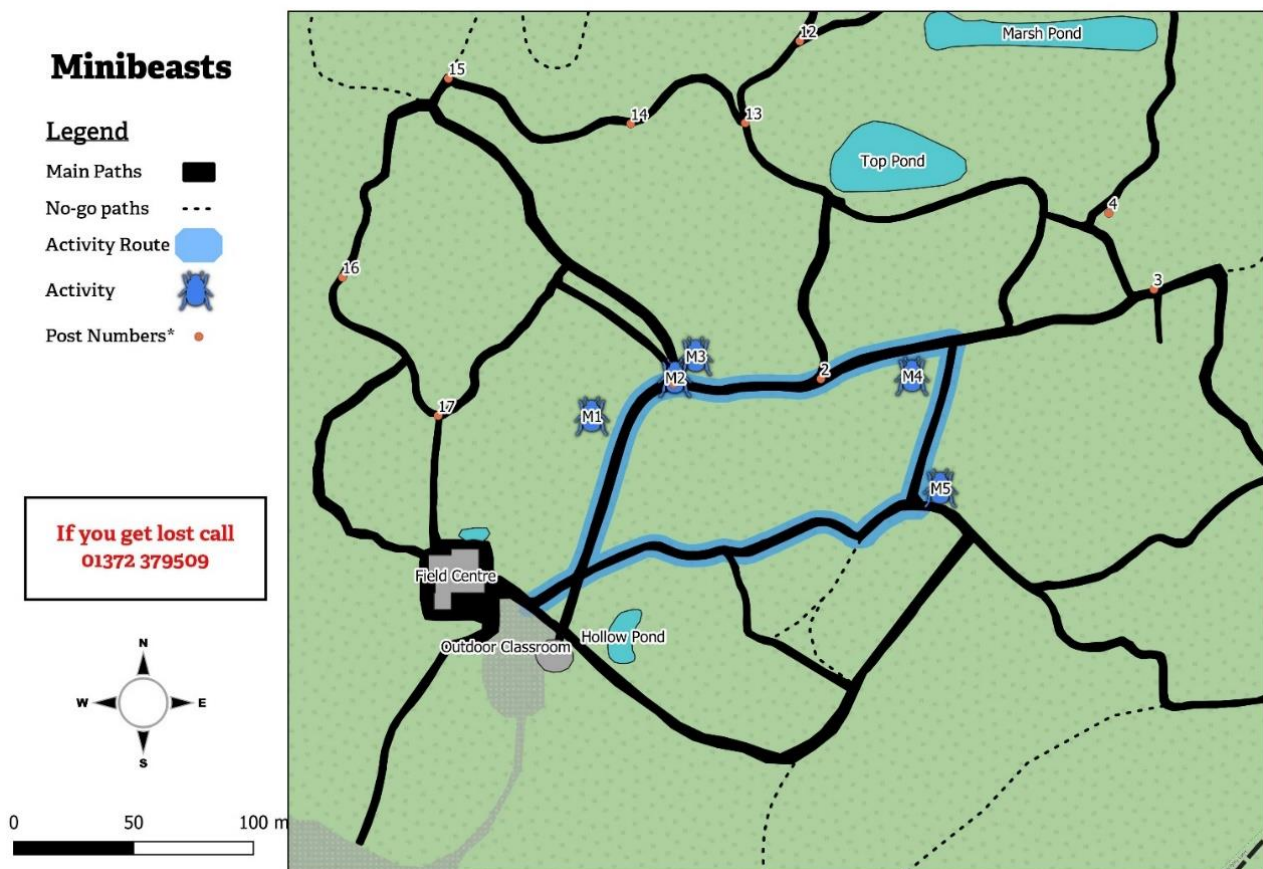
Activity How-To Guide – Anticlockwise Trail

Session Outline

Location	Activity	Time
Trail	Walk to site M4	5 mins
M4	Minibeast hunting	25 mins
M2	Butterfly wings	15 mins
Benches	Plenary	5 mins

Route

Each session follows a marked trail through the woods, guided by coloured bands on posts placed at intersections. **The minibeasts trail follows the blue bands.**



Equipment

You will be able to borrow the equipment required on the day:

- 5 square clear plastic tubs – per group of 15
- Small black pots – one per person
- 4 different ‘number of legs’ labels – per group of 15
- 2 green viewers with clear conical lids – per group of 15
- Identification guides
- Laminated pictures of minibeasts
- Butterfly wing outlines
- Laminated pictures of butterflies

Remember to ensure the right walk group leader has the medication for the children in their group.

Key Points

Short reminders for the key points of each activity. Please read on for full descriptions.

Activity	Key Points
Minibeast Hunting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lay out the big tubs on the table and add a leg label card to each one. 2. Lift a log with your hands, use a little twig and a small black pot to collect a creature gently. Never pick up creatures with your hands – only use the pot and a stick. 3. Remember to put the log back the same way down. 4. Put the creature in a green viewer for a closer look and use the identification guides to learn its name before tipping it into the tub for animals with that many legs. 5. At the end, sprinkle the animals back into the habitat so they can go back under the logs by themselves.
Butterfly Wings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at the pictures of butterflies to see how their wing patterns match. 2. Put the children in small groups and they will each make a pattern in one side of the butterfly outlines using natural materials. 3. Then all the groups rotate and they complete the next butterfly's pattern as symmetrically as possible.
Plenary	Hold up the pictures of the minibeasts, can the children remember the animals they found? What have they learned?

Minibeast Hunting

Walk to the site labelled **M4** on the map, anticlockwise around the route so aim for the site labelled M5 to set yourself on the right direction.

We recommend around **20 minutes** should be allocated for this activity once you are at the site.

Top Tip: To give the children focus as you walk to the site, ask them to think of as many types of minibeasts as they can and share their thoughts with a partner on the way.

Equipment

Gather the children around in front of the bench and put the following equipment out:

- 4 square clear plastic tubs – separated and spread along the table
- 4 ‘number of legs’ labels – one in each tub: ‘No legs’ ‘6 legs’ ‘8 legs’ ‘more than 8 legs’
- 1 additional tub with small black pots inside
- Identification guides
- Green viewers with clear conical lids

Instructions

1. Everyone will need a small black pot and a short, narrow stick.
2. You will see logs carefully placed around the site. Don’t stand on them - these are special minibeast habitats to make finding creatures easier.
3. Use your hands (not your feet) to turn the log over gently. You might see lots of creatures running around or they might be hiding under leaves so look very carefully.
4. Put your small black pot down in front of a creature and sometimes they will go in by themselves to hide in the dark inside. If a creature isn’t going in by itself, use your stick to gently encourage the creature into the pot. Be careful not to accidentally hurt it.

Important: never pick the creatures up with your fingers as they can easily be squashed by accident. Some creatures might also feel threatened and try to bite, but they’re all very small and no creatures are dangerous enough to pose a real risk.

5. Once you have a creature, put the log back in the same place and the same way up that you found it. This is the creature’s home so we can’t leave it broken with no roof!
6. Return to the table and carefully tip the creature from your small pot into the clear conical lid of a viewer, then put the green base on top and slowly turn it around to be the right way up. This helps to prevent the creatures escaping/getting squashed by the lid.
7. Look through the yellow parts of the viewer and use an identification guide to work out what type of creature it is and how many legs it has.
8. Once you have counted the legs, tip the creature carefully from the viewer into the appropriate square tub for animals with that number of legs to group similar animals together.
9. After 15-20 minutes searching for creatures, come together around the table again to discuss what you found.

Discuss: Which box has the most in? Which ones were hard to find and hardest to catch - why? What do we think they might eat - why?

10. At the end of the session, take the tubs and gently scatter the creatures near to the pieces of wood so they can crawl back underneath by themselves.

Butterfly Wings

Follow the map to walk to the location **M2** on the map.
At least **15 minutes** should be spent on this activity

Equipment

- Butterfly wing outlines (will already be at the site for you)
- Example photos of butterflies with symmetrical wing patterns

Instructions

1. Introduce how butterflies have beautiful patterns on their wings that are symmetrical. That means that they are the same on both sides from a line down the middle to the outside edges.
2. Show them the pictures of butterflies for examples to inspire them.
3. Place one of the butterfly wing outlines on the ground and gather the children so they can all see it.
4. Explain that the children are going to work in groups and use natural materials from around the area to fill in one side of their butterfly outline (left or right) with a nice pattern while you do a quick example to demonstrate.

Important note: Natural materials could be sticks, leaves, other natural things found on the ground but remind the children not to pick flowers or mushrooms

5. Explain that after about 5 minutes, the groups will swap and go to another group's outline and fill in the empty side with a pattern to complete the symmetry.
6. Remind them to look closely at the first side to see what materials they need to find for the empty side to match.
7. Split the children into groups and spread the outlines around the area so they can get started.

At the end of the activity, if you have enough adults, please bring the outlines back to the field centre with you.

Plenary

This can be done where you finish your last activity or once you get back to the **field centre**.

5 minutes should be spent on this activity

Below is one suggestion for a plenary but you can use this time to recap the learning in any way you choose.

Equipment

Laminated pictures

Instructions

1. Hold up a picture of a minibeast
2. Ask the children to share something they know or have learnt about that creature
3. Let the children share their answers and add extra observations if needed

Example Questions

- What creature has 6 legs? (beetle)
- What creature has no legs? (worm/slug)
- What creature has 3 body parts? (beetle)
- What creature has biting jaws? (centipede/beetle)
- What creature has antennae? (woodlouse/beetle/millipede/centipede)
- What creature eats other animals - carnivore? (beetle/spider/centipede/leopard slug)
- What creature eats plants - herbivore? (slugs)
- What creature eats dead plants - detritivore? (woodlouse/ millipede/ worm)