

Winter observations: trees and animal life

Learning objectives:

- Maintain interest in observation of the environment throughout winter
- To understand why changes observed in trees and in animal behaviour occur
- To understand survival techniques: hibernation, migration.

Resources required:

- Clipboard, paper and pencil for drawing tree shapes and insects
- Magnifying glass, tweezers and white tray for mini beast hunting
- Winter twig identification sheet
- <http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/find/spot/twigs.htm>

Lesson plan:

1. In the classroom talk about all aspects of winter
 - What changes occur? Short days, less sunlight, bad weather, deciduous trees have no leaves, less food available for birds and animals, hibernation, migration
 - Where do insects go? overwintering, hibernation, lifecycles (ladybirds, wasps, bees)
2. Search outside for mini beast activity.
 - Draw any found to identify later
3. Look for tracks or signs of animals and record all signs observed
 - Small mammal runs by hedges
 - Rat runs under fences
 - Chewed pine cones
 - Fox scat on mole hills
 - Broken/damaged logs from foxes
4. Draw two different tree shapes
 - Identify the tree using the twig identification sheet
 - Back in the classroom cut or tear the shapes out of thicker/sugar paper.
 - Label with the species type and place on the wall of classroom link each tree with the twigs on the identification sheet using arrows.

Interpretation:

- The diagrams, sketches and observations can be used to create a wall display.

