

Observing and Collecting Guidelines

Pick up insects using a plastic spoon or a paintbrush as they are delicate and can be easily harmed. There are a number of ways you can search:

- Look carefully in leaf litter, soil, grass.
- Overturn logs or stones and carefully replace them.
- Tree beating – lay a large white sheet under a tree branch or bush and vigorously shake the branch or bush (you will have to be quick to spot creatures which can fly or run fast).
- Use a sweep net to check what lives in long grass or nettles.
- Use a pond net to collect creatures from a pond.

Always check before touching a plant. Many common British plants can be poisonous.

Qualities of a Good Observer or Collector



Search carefully, disturbing the surroundings as little as possible.



Handle only a few, but look at many living things.



Replace overturned logs and stones.



Carefully return the living things to their natural habitat after your study.



Do not pick wild flowers; draw them or photograph instead.

Local Living Things

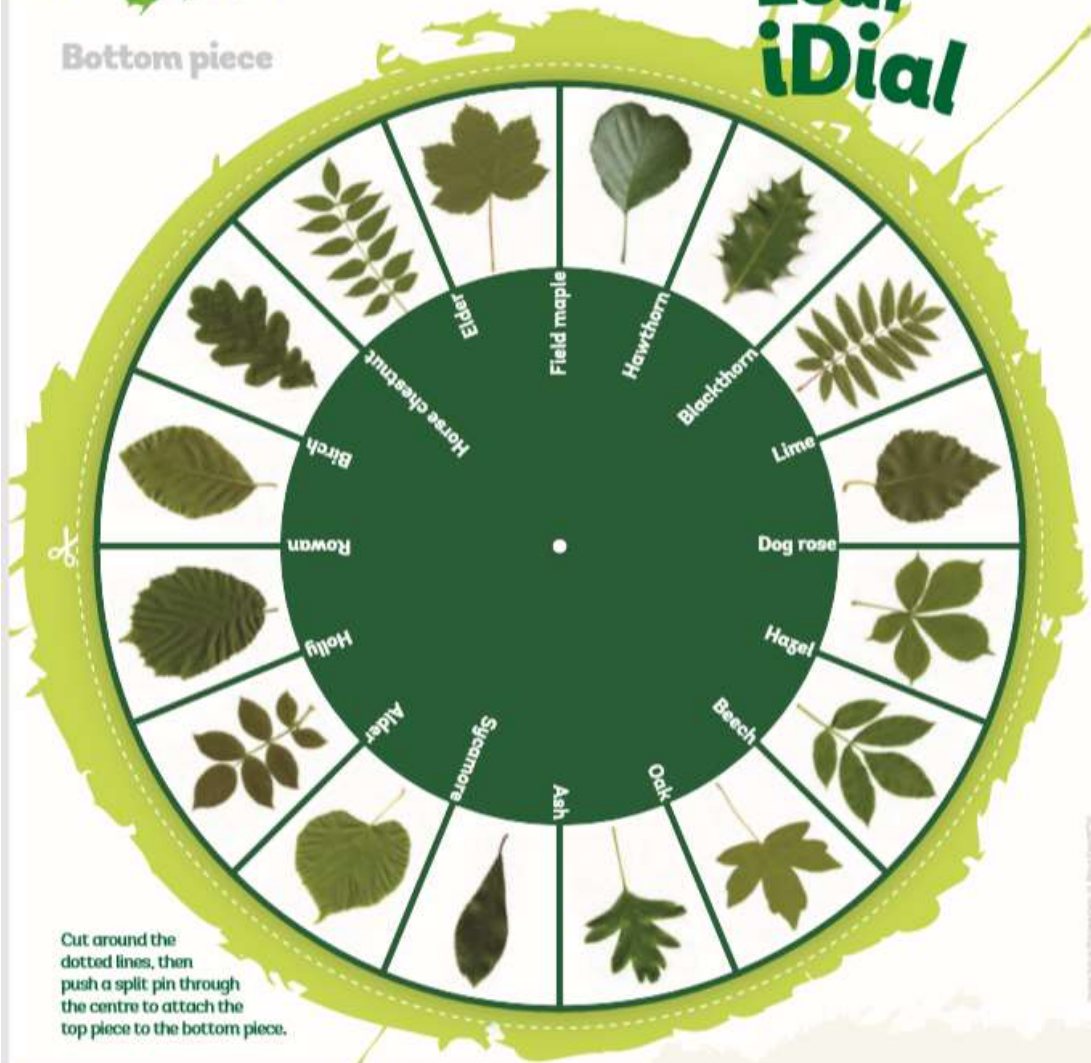
What is it? Do you know what it is? Have a go at writing the name of it.	Where did you find it? Write down which area you found it in. Add details about the habitat conditions such as shady, light, damp, dry.	What does it look like? Draw a quick sketch, jot down details like how many legs or wings, take a photo and write the photo number.



Be a real Nature Detective
Identify trees by looking at
their leaves

Bottom piece

Leaf iDial



Cut around the dotted lines, then push a split pin through the centre to attach the top piece to the bottom piece.

Use this iDial throughout spring, summer and autumn.

Image: iStockphoto.com, iStockphoto.com

Top piece

Leaf iDial

Top tips for top spotters!

Look at how leaves change through spring, summer and autumn.



Fab facts!

The ash tree was known as the 'Tree of Life' in Norse mythology, and it was very important.

Holly is an evergreen, which means its leaves stay green all year round.

Cut around the dotted lines, then push a split pin through the centre to attach the top piece to the bottom piece.



Ready to get detecting?
Spot frothy blossom and
furry catkins



Hazel

See it: January to March



Blackthorn

See it: March to April



Silver birch

See it: March to May



Ash

See it: March to May



Hawthorn

See it: April to May



**Beautiful
blossom**



Crab apple

See it: April to May



Elder

See it: May to June



Wild cherry

See it: April to May



Oak

See it: April to May



Rowan

See it: May to June



Horse chestnut

See it: May to June



Holly

See it: May to June

Some blossom looks similar, so use the trees' leaves to help you identify them.



Keep your eyes peeled!
What will you discover?



Frogspawn

Find frogspawn and tadpoles
in lakes and streams



Butterflies

Peacock butterflies have deep
red wings and 'peacock eyes'



Pine cones

See how many different
types you can find



Bluebells

Look for bell-shaped flowers
growing on the woodland floor



Eggs

Peek under leaves to spot
butterfly and moth eggs



Caterpillars

Big ones, fat ones, small
ones and hairy ones!



Dragonflies

Watch them hovering
above rivers and lakes



Catkins

Can you find any new catkins
opening for spring?



Bats

Look out for bats at dusk, ducking
and diving overhead as they
search for insects.



Birds

How many birds can you spot
searching for food in the woods?



Blossom

Spot frothy white hawthorn
and blackthorn blossom



Flowers

Find flowers on the woodland
floor, or high up in the trees

**Super
springtime
spots**

Can you spot anything else that lives in the woods?



Tadpole (newt tadpole)
See them: March–April



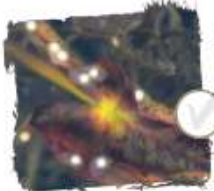
Eft or newtlet
See them: May–July



Newt
See them: All year round



Frogspawn
See it: January–March



Newt Eggs
See them: February–March

Amazing amphibians



Toad
See them: All year round

Frog tadpoles look speckled, toad tadpoles are black.



Toadlet
See them: July–October



Tadpole (toad tadpole)
See them: April–July



Toadspawn
See it: March–May



Tadpoles (frog tadpoles)
See them: March–May



Froglet
See them: June–September



Frog
See them: All year round

<http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=minibeasts>

Link to identification sheets for ladybirds, butterflies, minibeasts etc

<http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=birds>

Link to identification of birds

<http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/activitymenu/?cat=mammals>

Link to identification of mammals