



High Weald Hero Activity Card

Sweep Netting



Equipment: Sweep nets, plastic trays, Invertebrate ID sheets, magnifiers, paper and pencils

Location: An area with long grass/tall vegetation and not too many brambles!

Audience: KS 1 & 2

Time: 30 minutes

An investigative activity to discover what exciting animals live beneath our feet.

Activity Description: Divide the children into groups of 4 or 5. Each group is given a sweep net, tray, magnifiers and a set of ID sheets. While walking forwards a short distance e.g. 10 steps, encourage children to sweep the net in a long, gentle motion back and forth - aiming at the tops of the plants rather than the roots. Demonstrate how to hold the net so the handle is parallel with the ground and the net is at right angles. Each back and forth motion is a 'sweep'. Once the child has completed 5 sweeps and 10 steps they must turn the net to close the mouth and prevent the flying insects immediately escaping.

The children can now have a look at what has been collected. They will need to carefully turn the net inside out over the tray and deposit the invertebrates gently into it. Flying insects are likely to escape but invite the children to closely examine the remaining creatures (with their eyes, not their fingers!) It is important to empty the tray between each sweep - ensure that the creatures are gently released into an area that is not being swept or walked on.



As an extension, children could carry out some sweeps in different areas or habitats to allow for comparison and discussion as to which creatures are found where and why this might be. As well as using the ID sheets, children could make notes or sketches on what they have found and collect information on the number of different species found (biodiversity) or the total number of animals found (biomass).

High Weald Teaching Point: You may have been doing this activity on your school field or on a patch of shiny, green grass. However did you know that, compared to many areas of Britain, the High Weald still has a relatively large number of ancient, undisturbed, wildflower-rich hay meadows and pastures? These unimproved grasslands are some of our most important habitats for wildlife conservation, supporting up to 100 kinds of grasses and wildflowers.



Love Where We Live

