

Using the Trail

- *Get to know where you live.*



Everywhere has its interest but often we never notice!

The closer you look - the more you see.

"The creatures at your feet dismissed as a bug or a weed is a creation in and of itself. It has a name, a million-year history, and a place in the world."

Edward O. Wilson *

Look into the Butterfly Garden to see if you can spot any butterflies or insects such as dragonflies.

Did you know: Butterflies like to sunbathe on the blocks of stone which warm up in the summer sunshine



Examine a patch of grass and make a list of all you see:

the different kinds of grass,
any insects or bugs that live there,
any other plants.

Did you know: the bread we eat comes from the crushed seeds of cultivated grass?



Examine a stone or brick: see if it has any moss or lichen on it: what colour they are?

Did you know: lichens are amongst the oldest plants on earth which provide food for insects and birds as well as dyes which were used in Scottish tartans?

Look up at a tree: draw the shape of the leaves, colour the leaf you have drawn (the colour changes with the season), examine the bark and look what is growing on it, make a list of who lives in the tree – birds, insects, animals.

Did you know: you can tell the age of a tree by measuring round the trunk? (Roughly one inch for every year). Also you can count the tree rings on a broken branch or stump (one ring for each year).



Look for signs of hidden creatures: a hole in the ground, footprints on the ground, vegetation that has been disturbed like a little grass track, a spider's web.

Did you know: you can listen for hidden creatures, for example frogs and toads who sing to each other on warm Spring nights.



Stand on the reservoir path : see how many different sorts of water birds or geese you can spot: usually you will see at least six different species including Canada Geese, mallards, grebes, cootes, moorhens and swans.

Did you know: many birds fly thousands of miles to different lands in different seasons

**Edmund Wilson is the world's greatest naturalist – a result of his boyhood interest in insects.*