

Name of session		Backyard Beasties	
Level: EYFS		Length of session: 2 hrs (half day)	Available at: Sutton Ecology centre
Curriculum Links			
EYFS Framework Early Learning Goals			
Communications and language			
Listening and Attention: They listen to stories and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions.			
Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.			
Speaking: Children express themselves effectively.			
Personal, social and emotional development			
Self-confidence and self awareness: children are confident to try new activities, they are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need to their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.			
Understanding the world			
The world: children know about similarities and differences in relation to ... living things. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur and talk about changes.			
Previous knowledge expected from students		Key concepts/key words	
Name a minibeast		minibeast, insect, camouflage, woodland, pond, habitat, safety	
Learning objectives			
Learn examples of creatures that may live in the pond or the woodland.			
To be able to find, using a variety of equipment, recognise and identify, using a variety of keys, several minibeasts			
Learn simple examples of creatures that are special to where they live (breathing underwater, colour)			
Outcomes			
All pupils will have investigated, observed, identified and recorded a variety of minibeasts in the woodland and pond habitat, using simple equipment			
Pupils will be able to name a variety of minibeasts.			
All pupils will learn the name of two different habitats pond and woodland.			
All pupils will predict which habitat one creature lives in.			
Some pupils will understand that creatures are special for their habitat.			
Starter			
Welcome, and introductions.			
Introduce the Sutton Ecology centre and the word minibeast. Can anyone name a minibeast?			
Introduction			
Timings	Student Activity		
20mins	In the pond/Out of the pond Game Pupils stand in the middle with course leader. One adult stands to one side with a picture of the pond, another stands to the other side with a picture of the woodland and meadow (loand). The course leader pulls a plastic minibeast out of a bag, pupils have to name the minibeast and go to where they think it lives (in the pond or out of the pond on the land).		
10mins	Pupils to use toilet facilities prior to outdoor activities		
Main Activities			
Timings	Student activity		
45mins	Minibeast explorers – meadow or woodland (depending on weather and season) With a bug pot and brush, we investigate the meadow/ woodland areas of the Ecology		

30mins	<p>centre to find a variety of minibeasts for each habitat. Pupils will need to investigate different micro-habitats to search for minibeasts; e.g. under stones, logs, leaves, in grasses. Return to groups and use worksheet to help identify minibeasts, marking a tally to record the numbers of each minibeast found (for each group)</p> <p>The minibeasts recorded for the habitat can then be discussed, was it the animals we predicted?</p> <p>Results can be further investigated in follow up sessions back at school.</p> <p>Pond dipping (using raised ponds)</p> <p>Each pupil will have at least one turn using the nets to dip for pond creatures, emptying them into trays of pond water where they will be able to observe them more closely. Creatures can be transferred to an observation tank for closer inspection and simple keys are available to aid identification. Worksheets are also available to record findings such as tallies for each type of pond creature found.</p>
Plenary (10mins)	
Recap the variety of creatures found in the habitats. Back at the centre, wash hands & use toilet facilities.	
Extension work	
Draw a picture of a pond minibeast.	
Baby animals: imagine you are a baby animal just been born: a caterpillar just hatched, a tadpole has emerged from its egg within the frog spawn. What can you see, smell, hear? How big are you?	
Pre-course preparation work suggestions	
Go on a minibeast hunt in the school grounds. Discuss what other minibeasts pupils might have seen at home, in the garden or on the way to school. Are there any minibeasts that they hope they might see at the Ecology Centre? (this may help establish prior knowledge of the subject).	
Further Work (post course) suggestions	
Write formal thank you letters, recalling what you did and did not enjoy about the day. Categorise minibeasts in different ways: number of legs, colour, size etc. Focus on the life cycle of some of the creatures found.	
Alternatives (field sites and wet weather)	
This session is not translatable inside, and therefore will go ahead in wet weather. The introduction and plenary can be done inside if the weather is wet or too cold/windy. The session will be cancelled only due to severe weather warning such as flooding, high winds and stormy weather.	
Opportunities for evaluation	
Teacher evaluation: Photograph pupils in action for evidence, observation throughout the session, assess understanding post session through activities and questioning. By providing appropriate level of adult/child ration to ensure pupils are kept 'on task'.	
Leader evaluation: The session leader will assess progress throughout the day by open ended questioning and plenary session. Through observation, the session leader will ensure that all pupils are engaged in learning and complete the tasks required.	
Resources	
Minibeast identification and tally worksheets for Meadow, Woodland and Pond habitats Clipboards, pencils Bug pots, brushes, 'Slime pots', plastic spoons, larger minibeast cage Sweep nets, cotton squares Water tray, Observation tank, pond dipping net, magnifying glass, plastic spoons, pond creatures key	
Key H&S	
Sutton Ecology Centre provide one Education Officer for your group. Schools must provide a suitable number of adults to ensure pupils safety and engagement in the tasks. Dress and prepare for the outdoors. Long trousers due to tall grass, brambles and nettles.	



Sensible footwear in all weather conditions.

Waterproofs in wet weather. Sunhats, suntan lotion and water bottles in hot sunny weather.

All pupils and teachers should wash their hands prior to leaving the site or eating.

Teachers should arrange a pre-visit to discuss specific health & safety requirements to generate their own risk assessments.

Course leaders: Site check and dangerous litter pick. Health & Safety talks when appropriate.