



Forest School Worksheet

Spring Term 2, Session 1

In these sessions we will be sharing inspiration, facts & ideas for activities

Did You Know?

The next full moon is on 27th February and is sometimes called the Storm Moon, because of the stormy weather. It marks the start of Spring

On the 26th February is the Chinese Lantern Festival, perfect for blowing about in the wind

Follow this link if you want to make your own Chinese lantern:

<https://www.auntannie.com/PartyDecorations/ChineseLantern/>

This week we are thinking about the wind- go outside lick your finger and hold it up, can you feel the wind?
Can you read this poem out loud and make wooshy wind sounds?

Wind on the Hill by AA Milne

No one can tell me, Nobody knows, Where the wind comes from, Where the wind goes.

It's flying from somewhere As fast as it can, I couldn't keep up with it, Not if I ran.

But if I stopped holding, The string of my kite, It would blow with the wind For a day and a night.

And then when I found it, Wherever it blew, I should know that the wind Had been going there too

So then I could tell them Where the wind goes...But where the wind comes from Nobody knows.

What is a Catkin?....Guess what? Trees have flowers! Some tree flowers are called Catkins.

- Catkins are spikes of tiny flowers that hang from some trees. At first, they are closed up, then they open to release pollen that turns flowers into seeds- this is called pollination.
- Long catkins hang down, and fly about in the wind in late winter and early spring, shaking the pollen into the wind, so that the pollen reaches another flower.
- Shorter catkins appear in late Spring and early Summer. These ones attract bees and butterflies. Insects take the pollen from the catkins to another flower.

Different types of tree, have different types of catkins. Here is your catkins spotting challenge

The catkin scavenger hunt challenge- spot them in the trees or pick them up...

- Take a walk where there are trees, into the park or wood or along the pavement,
- Take an empty egg box to find catkins that have blown to the ground,
- Can you find any other tiny things to go in your egg box?
- How many different types (varieties) of catkins you can find, and here's the important bit...can you notice the differences?
- Here are some clues....Do they hang up or down?..... Are they smooth or rough?

....What colour are they?....Are there different types on the same tree?.....Are they single or growing in a bunch or cluster?.....Are they growing at the end of the twig?.....Do they have pollen on them yet that you can rub off?.....Are they ready for the wind to blow them off the tree?

Catkin ID Sheet



Alder

Catkins from the Alder tree start green then turn yellowy red. They grow at the top of the twig. Once the small red flower has been polinated it turns into the brown cone, that holds the tree seeds



Hazel

Catkins from the Hazel tree are yellow and hang along the twigs. They release pollen in the wind to the tiny pink flowers that turn into hazelnuts



Silver Birch

Catkins from the Silver Birch Tree are long and yellow-brown hanging in groups of 2-4 at the tip of the twig



Willow

There are lots of different types of willow, this is Goat willow or pussy willow. Their catkins have fur coats, that come off to show the short catkins covered in golden pollen, with nectar that feed bees and butterflies

Have you seen a different catkin to identify or do you want to find out more? here are 2 useful links:

<https://www.treeguideuk.co.uk/mini-guides/catkins/>

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2018/12/which-trees-have-catkins-and-how-to-tell-them-apart/>



I did the catkin scavenger hunt today and the park had the best Alder trees and Hazel trees. Collect your catkins & other tiny things and take them home. Now you can choose what you do next with all of the treasures you found.

First, I made a face using the catkins & Alder cones and hazel nut shells. Then I sorted out all of the objects onto an identification sheet. You could take apart a catkin and look closely, or see what colour the pollen is, by squashing a catkin onto some white paper.

Lastly, I made a caterpillar by tying cotton to a catkin and then I scared someone...have a look

<https://youtu.be/siJXKbN9UA0>



Fact:

There are 10 different types of cloud. Stormy clouds are called Cumulonimbus clouds, also called thunderheads. Thunderheads produce rain, thunder and lightning and other dangerous weather like tornados and hailstones.

Tree of the week: can you find this tree

Silver Birch – The Silver Birch Tree has 2 types of catkins, the longer ones release pollen in May. The buds on the Silver Birch Tree are tiny and grow alternately up the thin twigs. Silver birch trees are easy to spot in the woods, because they have white (or silver) bark- see if you can peel off a tiny piece. The Birch tree is called a pioneer species because it was the first tree to grow in the UK after the ice age, the seeds were blown by the wind. Birch helps with new beginnings and brings you luck on your adventures.



Time to Reflect-

What have you learnt today? Do you know a feeling you had today? What was the best bit and the worst bit? What do you want to do in nature next time and what do you want to thank nature for today?

..and finally here is a stormy tale told by Martin Maudsley called 'Bride brings Spring':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jh5CqsiurFs&feature=youtu.be>