

Newsletter No. 40 – April 2014

Bird Bonanza.



Owl pellet dissection, feeding the hens and owl masks were just some of the activities on offer on our Bird Bonanza day in February. Using microscopes to identify the bones found inside the pellets the two Bens found out that they had been eating field mice, voles and shrews.

Family Orienteering

On a beautiful day in March families came to try their hand at orienteering. Some kept to the trail in the grounds of Suntrap but some, having mastered their map and compass skills enjoyed the more difficult trail set out in the forest. We are glad to say that no one got lost.



Suntrap Spring Surprise



Making the most of the warm April sunshine were those who came to the Suntrap Spring Surprise. Craft activities included making bird or butterfly feeders, flowerpots made of newspaper or dream catchers made of natural materials. It



was then out into the forest to follow the activity trail balancing on logs, listening for bird song, paddling in the stream or making the tallest tower they could from sticks.

Children Centre Visits



Enjoying the "thick oozy mud" as part of the bear hunt.

Thanks to funding from Waltham Forest, over the past few months children centres from across the borough have been enjoying a series of visits. Each centre chose how to make use of their visits, so that a variety of users were able to get out into the forest and have a go at a number of different activities.

Families from the Lloyd Park Centre went on a bear hunt (after reading the book by Michael Rosen), and finally caught up with him in the "cave" in the front garden (also



It's amazing what you can find under a log!

known as the willow dome). While the dads' group from the Low Hall Centre had fun with their children one Saturday morning making a fire and cooking toast.

Here are what a couple of parents said;

"Loved exploring the outdoors, we live in a flat with no garden, so this is a great opportunity."

Mum from Higham Hill of a 2 year old.

"I loved the walk around the forest, so did my daughter. Tired as she was she wouldn't stop looking around. DON'T STOP DOING THESE VISITS! OUR CITY CHILDREN NEED THEM!"

Mum from Leytonstone Children's Centre of a 2 year old.

Upcoming Family Events

Pond dipping Thursday 29th May 2014 11-1pm (Grounds open until 3pm for picnics).

£2 per person

Visit our pond to carefully collect some of the fascinating animals which live there, then have a closer look using microscopes and hand lenses. Bring your own picnic to enjoy in the grounds after the pond dipping.

High Beach Festival Saturday 19th July 2014 11am-4pm

Church of the Holy Innocents, Church Lane, High Beach, Loughton IG10 4AA

The Suntrap animals will be visiting the High Beach festival.

Incredible insects Saturday 26th July 2014 11-1pm (Grounds open until 3pm for picnics).

£2 per person.

Explore the meadows near to Suntrap to find the incredible insects living there. Have a go at making your own incredible insect. Bring a picnic to enjoy after the activities.

Open Day Saturday 11th October 2014 1-5pm

Free entry - £3 charge for parking. Free shuttle bus to and from Chingford Station. Pick-up from station; 12.50pm, 1.40pm & 2.25pm return from Suntrap: 3.15pm, 4.30pm & 5pm.

Suntrap's annual open day where you can meet the animals, pond dip, peer down microscopes, complete a map trail, have a go on the low ropes course, make a clay animal, stroll through the forest on a guided walk, look at our exhibitions or enjoy some light refreshments.

www.suntrapcentre.weebly.com

If you have anything you'd like to contribute to the Friends Newsletter please send it to Suntrap, Church Road, High Beach, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4AJ or by email to: suntrap_centre@walthamforest.gov.uk or phone: 0208 508 0611