

The 2007 Discovery Project

The Discovery Project contains a programme of activities that provide a wide learning experience for children relating directly to local biodiversity and cultural heritage. The school field trips and Ranger Club activities provided a hands-on sensory encounter with the natural environment helping to raise awareness and interest in the AONB. The activities were structured to provide information on the area covering biodiversity, minibeasts (aquatic and terrestrial), landscape, meteorology and geology in ways that provided lots of fun for the children.

School Activity Days

The day provided a practical approach to observing and investigating a range of wildlife, offering activities in both the classroom and field environments.

Participating Schools	No. of children	Activities
		All of the following activities were included on every day:
Terrington Hall (8 th June)	25 (Age 10-11)	Exploration of the AONB using maps and quizzes. Observational exercise during the coach journey. Biological field work techniques leading to data collection to monitor floral diversity increase at Sandlands. Plant lifecycles- need for light and water. Sampling and identifying minibeasts.
Slingsby (13 th June)	21 (Age 7-11)	
Hustwaite (15 th June)	23 (Age 10-11)	
Ampleforth St Benedict's (18 th June)	30 (Age 10-11)	
Foston (20 th June)	18 (Age 4-11)	
Welburn (22 nd June)	18 (Age 9-11)	

Ranger Club Sessions

May 2007

Held in Nunnington Estate Rooms with access to Nunnington Hall during the week beginning 28th May 2007. This was the first time that the Junior Ranger Club sessions have been held in Nunnington. The National Trust joined with The AONB Unit and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust for the delivery of some of the activities. The village and hall fitted naturally with the Cultural Heritage aspects of the Discovery Project. The children had the opportunity to go behind the scenes for a fascinating insight into how the residents of Nunnington Hall (family and serving staff) have lived through the ages and then got the opportunity later in the week to travel back further in time as they learnt the Tale of the Nunnington Worm. In the days of damsels and knights a worm was a particularly ferocious type of dragon and the children followed up the story with the making of an enormous dragon that they processed through the village to slay (by our very own knight) in front of Nunnington Hall. Other sessions included the always popular themes of mini-beasts, weather and kites (with links to landscape) and rocks and fossils. The mini-beast session was greatly enhanced by access to the organic gardens and orchard at Nunnington Hall and the walls of the village enabled the discovery of many different fossils.

Ranger Day	Activities	No of children attending
Cultural Heritage 'Behind the Scenes' Tuesday 29 th May (am)	A visit behind the scenes at Nunnington Hall. Guessing the use of mystery objects. Visiting rooms chosen by the Junior Rangers and finding out answers to their questions. Learning about the lives of the rich and working classes when The Hall was occupied. Trying out artefact conservation techniques with National Trust staff and making decorated plates and bowls to take home.	23
Geology 'Rock Solid' Tuesday 29 th May (pm)	Shown examples of different rocks and fossils, learnt how they were formed. Looked at fossils in stonewalls and the landscape, effects of acid rain, explored the village looking at lichens and evidence of weathering. Smelly rocks from under the sea (introduction to geomorphology). Made plaster casts of real fossils.	21
Landscape 'High Flying' Wednesday 30 th May (am)	Making wind-squids and bin-bag kites to find out about wind in valleys and over the hill tops. Gaining an understanding of the AONB landscape.	16
Biodiversity 'Brilliant Bugs' Wednesday 30 th May (pm)	Use of pooters, nets. I.D. cards, magnifying glasses etc to catch and name mini-beasts in an organic orchard and meadow. Lots of bumblebees – picked up on LBAP objectives. Animal families relay games in the gardens. Made bug homes.	24
Cultural Heritage 'The Dragon's Tale' Thursday 31 st May (am)	Learning the tale of the Nunnington Worm then re-enacting it. Procession to the hall where our young knight slayed the dragon on the lawn with his damsel watching on.	16

October 2007

A second visit for the Junior Rangers to The Arboretum, our first having been during the Christmas Holidays 2006. This time the weather was considerably warmer and we took full advantage of the magnificent autumn colour in the Arboretum. All the sessions included opportunities to discover the Arboretum and for the children to relate what they learnt to the AONB Landscape and the wider regional and national context. All themes were explored using indoor and outdoor activities and produced something for the children to take home as a lasting reminder of their day.

Take it or Leaf it! investigated the colours of autumn; gathering leaves, seeds, bark and berries to make a start on our giant tree collage, making bookmarks and learning about the 'skeletons' of leaves.

The **Wigloo and Willowcraft** session certainly left it's mark on the Arboretum as the Junior Rangers constructed their own wigloo which will remain to set root at the Arboretum for visiting children to enjoy.

Did you know that Bumblebees have smelly feet? This is just one of the many facts that the Junior Rangers learnt at the '**Smelly Feet**' morning as they found out about the many roles of scent and smell in nature through games and activities. Crafty fun included making an egg-box bee to take home.

A spookily good time was had by all who joined us for the **Howardian Halloween** afternoon. We carved four pumpkins for the Arboretum to keep to greet it's guests in the run up to Halloween, made bat head bands and modelled our own pumpkin pot tea-light holders.

The final session focussed on a **Howardian Harvest**. We looked at the changing ways in which we source our food; playing food air-mile games and taste testing apples, some that had travelled many miles to reach our supermarkets and other old fashioned native varieties from local orchards. We also bobbed for apples tied to the trees and tried our hand at making corn dollies.

The sessions all booked up very well and many new children attended this time. 66 individual children attended the events with some coming to more than one event resulting in a total of 112 sessions being delivered.

The events went very smoothly and are now running much better due to more thorough planning and learning from what has worked well from previous events. These Ranger Club events have been the best supported of all those we have run. The highlights for the children were the willow dome and pumpkin heads.

Ranger Day	Activities	No of children attending
Landscape and biodiversity 'Take it or Leaf it!' Monday 22 nd Oct (am)	The importance of trees in the shaping of the Howardian Hills AONB landscape. Colours and forms of leaf. Making leaf skeletons, bookmarks and colour palettes. Starting the giant tree collage.	20
Cultural heritage and biodiversity 'Wigloo and Willowcraft' Monday 22 nd Oct (pm)	Building a large wigloo (willow dome (igloo)) from locally harvested willow. The dome is to remain at The Arboretum where it will, hopefully, root and grow. Making decorative woven hazel/willow panels to take home.	30
Biodiversity 'Smelly Feet' Tuesday 23 rd Oct (am)	Focussing on the role of scent in nature. Bumblebees have smelly and other interesting facts. Making bumblebees to take home. Gathering samples for smelly cocktails. Lots of animal family/scent activities.	14
Cultural heritage and biodiversity 'Howardian Halloween' Tuesday 23 rd Oct (pm)	LBAP and National BAP animals associated with Halloween that live in the AONB. Making bat mobiles, dissecting owl pellets. Also carving (locally grown) pumpkins to leave by the door of The Arboretum to welcome visitors.	26
Landscape and biodiversity 'Howardian Harvest' Wednesday 24 th Oct (am)	The changing landscape of the AONB. Traditional harvest (orchards etc) and the harvest we know today (arable crops). Linking into local produce, food miles, climate change etc. Apple games.	20