



Autumn Woodland Walk

Name _____

SOUTH-YORKSHIRE
Forest
A National Community Forest Partner

—SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER—NOVEMBER—

As the days get shorter and the nights get cooler the plants and animals in the woodland begin to prepare for winter. The trees and bushes are full of nuts, berries and seeds of all kinds. The leaves on the deciduous trees begin to turn colour and the woods are bright with oranges, reds and yellows.

There is plenty to see in the woods in autumn. See how many of these you can spot.

Seeds and Berries

These are the months for berries, seeds and fruit of all kinds.

See how many kinds of seed you can spot.

Try to work out how seeds like sycamore, ash, birch, oak and hawthorn are distributed.



Moss

The weather usually becomes wetter again in September and the moss becomes thick and bright green once more.



Birds Travelling

The summer migrant birds will now have left the woods to travel back south to warmer parts of the world. Other birds such as chaffinches join us from colder countries for the winter. Watch for birds getting into flocks to roost, feed or migrate.



Autumn Leaves

Deciduous trees drop their leaves to prevent water loss in winter. Chemical changes produce changing colours. Which trees are the brightest colours in your wood?

Make a collage with different coloured leaves.



Fungus

It is in autumn that fungus suddenly appears. Look out for bracket fungus on birch trees, shaggy ink caps amongst the grass and candle snuff on dead logs.



Spiders

On cool autumn mornings thousands of spiders' webs glisten with dew.

Look at their patterns. Red admiral butterflies from the continent join the peacocks and tortoiseshells on ripe blackberries or elderberries.



Autumn Smells

In autumn the woods have a strong smell of damp, rotting leaves. You might also catch the strong smell of fungus, especially the stinkhorns whose unpleasantly strong scent is designed to attract flies.



Decaying Leaves

Look in the leaf litter for leaves which are being eaten by tiny creatures like springtails. Try to find one which has only a leaf skeleton left. Look deeper to see how the leaves are decomposing to add nutrients to the soil.

