

# Family Activity Trails **SILVER SPRINGS** Stalybridge & CHADWICK DAM



Standing at Stamford Park boating lake many people are not aware that that beyond the lake lies Chadwick Dam, a wildlife haven perfect for pond dipping and wildlife spotting. Beyond is Silver Springs with pockets of woodland and grassland-perfect for fun and games.

Great for a picnic and wildlife watching

Fun and games in the woods

Platforms and great spots for pond dipping



Carved nature posts

When Stamford Park is busy with people, why not get away from the crowds and venture to Silver Springs.

It's less than 2 miles round the circular route to the far top of the site and with surfaced paths its great for buggies and little legs.

Bring a fishing net, a ball and pen and paper and you are set up for the day.

There is a pay and display car park right next to the boating lake.

**Stamford Park Boating Lake**  
Darnton Road, Stalybridge.

**SK15 1NH**

**culture**  
Tameside



# Discover the NATURE POSTS

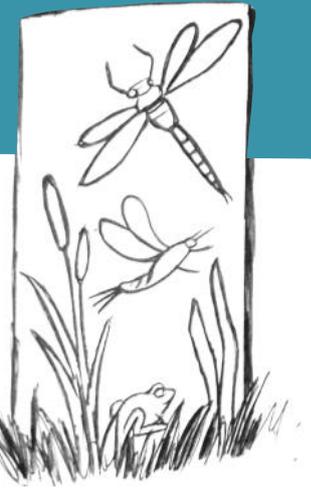
As you walk around the trail you should look out for the carved wooden nature posts.

(They are marked ● on the map)

**What are the creatures doing?**

Look out over the waters edge for the dragonfly and mayfly

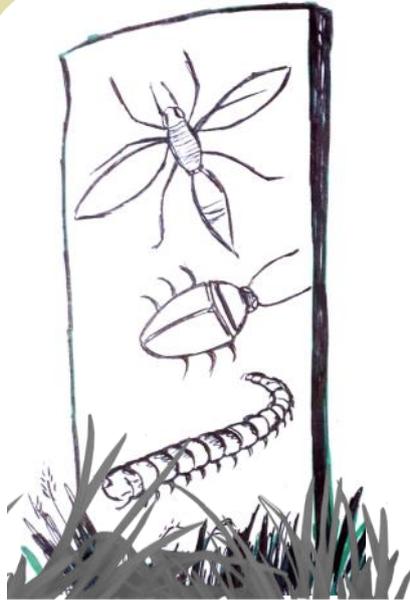
**Can you see the frog on the post?**



S \_\_\_\_\_

P \_\_\_\_\_

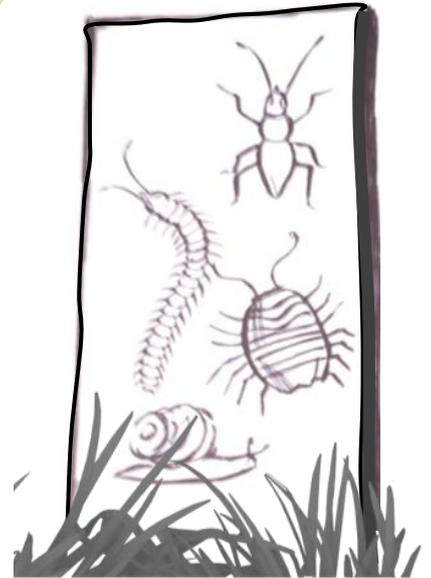
B \_\_\_\_\_



F \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_

S \_\_\_\_\_



M \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_

Have you spotted the carved tree post? How many of the trees can you see around Silver Springs?. The leaf ID sheet will help you identify them all.



How many of the birds named on the post can you identify?

**Can you match them to the birds on the ID sheet .**



# Try some BIRD SPOTTING



There are 7 birds names on the 'Tree' post... can you match them to the pictures?



## Can you spot 'weasel'?



**Stoat or weasel?** Stoats are always bigger than weasels. In simple terms, think of a weasel as a long sausage, whereas a stoat is more like a cucumber.!



# Have a go at LEAF SPOTTING

Take a walk to the woodland area and see how many different kinds of tree you can spot from their leaves.



Silver Birch



Hazel



Ash



Horse chestnut



Hawthorn



Willow



Rowan



Holly



Oak

What others can you find? You can download tree Id information from:  
[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app/](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/tree-id-app/)



# Have a go at POND DIPPING

At the bottom end of Chadwick Dam, nearest to the boating lake you will find larger platforms ideal for pond dipping. Take care not to disturb fishermen —so why not grab your nets and see what's lurking below the surface.

## How to pond dip

First, scoop some pond water into your container so that any creatures you find will be happy swimming around in it.

**Then kneel by the side of the pond – don't lean too far over the edge of the barrier or there's a chance you'll fall in.**

Sweep your net slowly through the water. Make sure you don't stir up the mud at the bottom as that will make it hard to see anything.

Lift up your net and carefully turn it inside out so anything you've caught drops into the container. You can then use your spoon to scoop them up and get a closer look. Don't pick the creatures up with your hands – they'll be very tiny and you could hurt them.

## What you will need

### A container

A shallow one is better for looking at creatures



### A plastic spoon

for looking closely at your creatures



### A fine mesh net

Fine mesh will catch more small creatures



### hand wipes

Always wash hands afterwards and cover any cuts with band aid.

When you've had a good look at what you've found, carefully pour the water from your container back into the pond and make sure all of the creatures are safely returned.

Before you put your nets in the pond, take a look at what's around the pond and on the surface. Can you spot any of these?



Whirligig Beetle



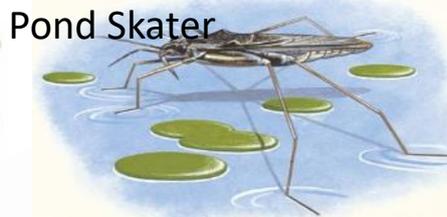
Mayfly



Backswimmer



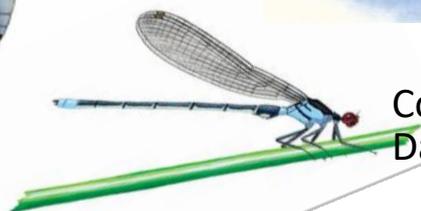
Blue Chaser



Pond Skater



Large Red Damselfly



Common Blue Damselfly

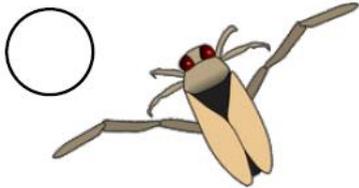


# Finding POND CREATURES



How many pond creatures can you spot?

water boatman



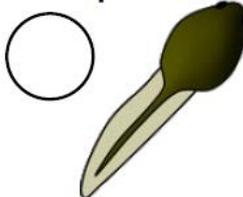
leech



pond skater



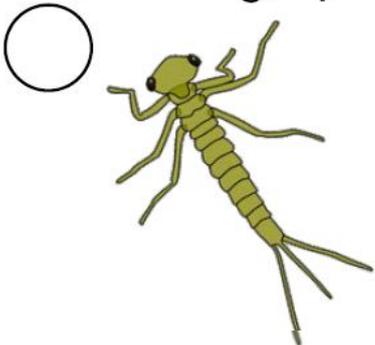
tadpole



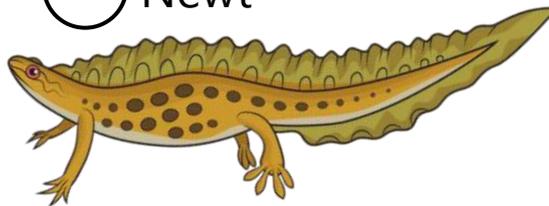
caddis fly larvae



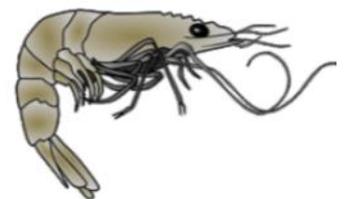
damsel nymph



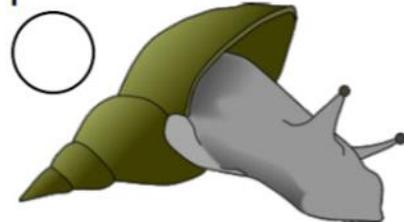
Newt



fresh water shrimp



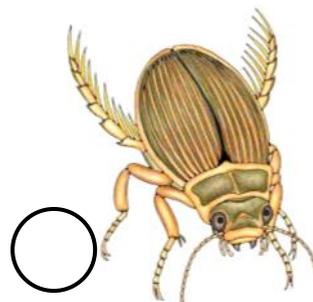
pond snail



whirligig beetle



dragonfly larvae



Great diving beetle



Rams horn snail



# BIRD SURVIVAL HUNT

This is a good game to play as a family and Silver Springs is a great place to spot all kinds of birds. Each imagine you are a small bird and must find enough food to survive. Here is a typical menu.



How many can you find.  
Each item is worth 1 point.

- Small Spider
- Small creature on tree bark
- Snail
- Caterpillar
- Centipede
- Ground beetle
- Pine cone
- Earthworm
- Small seed
- Flying insect
- Berry
- Maggot or grub
- Fruit tree bud

**Total score:**

**10-12** = Your sharp eyes and determination mean you will survive.

**7-9** = You will probably survive.

**4-6** = Your survival is doubtful.

**0-3** = Oh dear! You haven't found enough.

Can you spot any of these birds?



# Stick games in the woods



**Use twigs, leaves or stones to play woodland 'Noughts and Crosses'.**

## Twig Towers

Gather some twigs and create a twig tower. It doesn't have to be very big... It could have a square base or triangular base.. or design your own. How tall can you build it? Remember to never break twigs off living trees and always dismantle and return twigs..



## Tracks and trails

This is great fun if you and your friends make 2 teams. One team sets off and lays a trail of arrows and signs for the other team to follow. You can use twigs and stones or whatever is available. You can invent your own signs, but make sure everyone agrees them before you set off

## Host your own Woodland Games

**Event 1: Stick slalom.** Poke a long line of sticks into the ground for competitors to weave around.

**Event 2: Picnic rug tunnel.** Selflessly hand over your rug for the brave athletes – to crawl under, just like those netting things they use in the Territorial Army.

**Event 4: Hurdles.** balance a thin stick across two logs to create a hurdle to jump over, or to crawl or limbo under.

**Event 5: Gymnastics.** How far can our brave athletes go without touching the woodland floor? Extra points for arms held out straight. Or little jumps.

### Event 6: The sprint (back to the car)

There's just time to let competitors know that the overall gold medal will go to the child who runs/walks/skips back to the car fastest. Anything to get them back quickly, especially if it's starting to rain ...

## Make a nine square grid

With a friend collect 6 pairs of objects e.g. 2 stones, 2 leaves, etc. Make a 9 square grid each out of twigs. Decide who is the boss. The boss picks up an object and places it in his/her grid and describes to the other where it is e.g. Top right, one to the left and two up. The friend must place the identical object in the same place on their grid. At the end, look at the grids, are they the same

## For older children...

**How many triangles can you make with 10 sticks?**

(They don't have to be the same length)



# Discover bugs Minibeast Hunt



Armed with a small pot or tray, a small paintbrush and a magnifying glass there's a whole world of minibeasts waiting to be discovered.

- Bugs can be found everywhere but a great place in the park is around the orchard area and in the woodland.
- Dark damp spots under rocks and logs are good hunting grounds for things like worms, woodlice and spiders. You'll find critters like ladybirds, caterpillars and aphids on flowers, plants and leaves.
- A paintbrush to gently brush the bug into your tray will give you a chance to take a closer look with your magnifying glass.
- Don't leave your bugs in the tray too long and always put your bug back carefully where you found it and replace upturned rocks and logs.
- Always wash hands afterwards!



Millipede



Bee



Ladybird



Butterfly



Snail



Plant bug



Woodlouse



Earthworm



Slug



Centipede



Beetle



Fly



# Family **SCAVENGER HUNT**

**The whole area is great for a scavenger hunt.  
How many things can you find?**

Why not set a time limit?

How many can you fit in a tiny box?

Just remember to take care and not collect living creatures,  
pick a petal not a whole flower and careful of anything sharp.



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something shiny     | <input type="checkbox"/> Something with stripes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A heart shaped leaf | <input type="checkbox"/> Something round        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something soft      | <input type="checkbox"/> Something red          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something hairy     | <input type="checkbox"/> Something pink         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something manmade   | <input type="checkbox"/> Something bright       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A chewed leaf       | <input type="checkbox"/> Two kinds of leaves    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A piece of bark     | <input type="checkbox"/> A round stone          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A white stone       | <input type="checkbox"/> A seed                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A yellow flower     | <input type="checkbox"/> Something prickly      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something blue      | <input type="checkbox"/> A bendy twig           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A 'y' shaped twig   | <input type="checkbox"/> Something beautiful    |



# Fun and games in the Woodland



## Capture the Flag game

- Split the family into two teams of equal sizes and find an outdoor space -amongst trees is better.
- Find an outdoor space -amongst trees is better.
- Mark out 'Home base' for each team (a couple of metres around 2 trees) make them a distance away from each other. This is the territory of each team and each team will need a 'flag' positioned in each base. (This can be a tea shirt or glove on a stick!)
- The objective of the game is to steal the 'flag' of the other group without being touched by any opposing players.
- To capture the flag a player must try and enter the opponents' territory, dodge the opposition through ducking, diving and nifty footwork to claim the flag and bring it back to their territory without being captured (tagged).
- If a player is tagged, they must stay in the place where they were caught until a teammate frees them by touching them.
- The winning group is the team who gets the flag first, regardless of the number of children who have been caught.

Before you visit, why not make some 'Binoculars' out of cardboard tubes. Then you can be a real 'Nature Detective'!



## Make a mini den

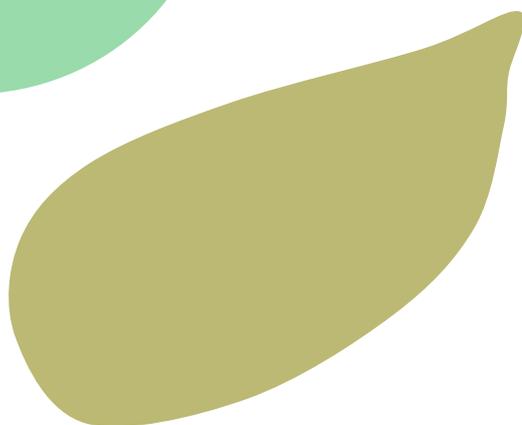
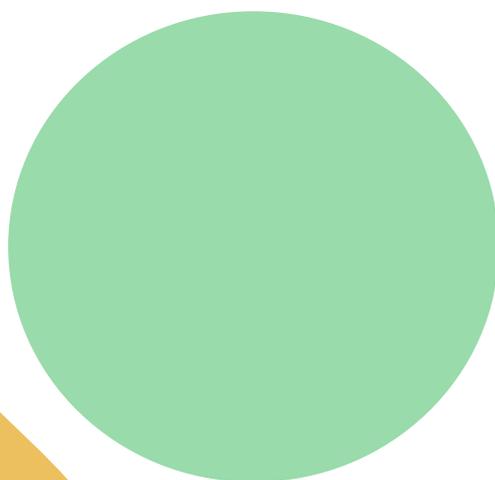
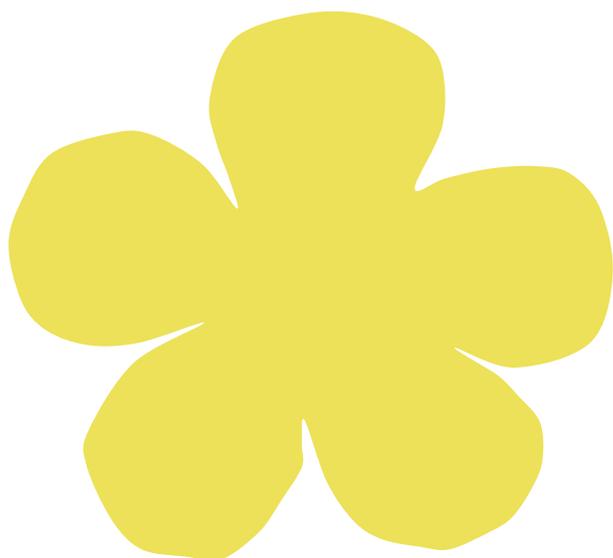
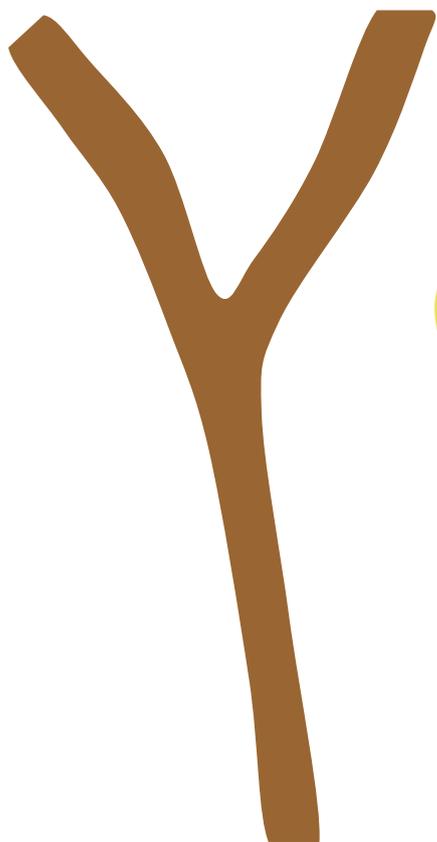
This activity is a lovely way for very small children to have a go at den building. Simply collect a handful of small sticks and prop them up against a tree trunk or fallen branch to make a mini den. Make the inside of your shelter nice and cosy with some fallen leaves. Now it's ready for child's favourite teddies or dolls.

**Remember not to break any branches off trees .. Only use what you find on the ground. . And dismantle your creations before you leave.**



# Discover the SHAPES in nature

How about trying to match some shapes?



# Stamford Park BOATING LAKE

**Stamford Park is a public park with gardens and woodland walks, a boating lake, play and sports areas, a cafe and an aviary.**

The Park was opened officially on the 12th July 1873. A crowd of almost 80,000 arrived on the day to watch the procession and opening ceremony. Following his speech Lord Stamford declared the park open; there was cheering, a fanfare of trumpets and the firing of cannon!. A few years later, Chadwicks Reservoir was acquired and the fishing lake and boating lake created.



In 2017 **Ridge Hill Enterprises**, a social enterprise, took on a 25 year lease for Stamford Boating Lake and Chadwick Dam. Their vision is to re-develop these areas of natural beauty to create a community nature reserve for all.

You can find out about fishing, hiring boats and other activities on the lake on their website:

[www.ridgehill-enterprises.co.uk](http://www.ridgehill-enterprises.co.uk)



120 years ago the boating lake opened as part of Stamford Park and with its refreshment rooms, rowing boats for hire and trips on the pleasure steamer, it was a popular attraction.



The Stamford Belle

