



Come and play!

Wild Play



SCROLL DOWN
FOR THINGS
TO DO

HELLO!

With autumn just around the corner, thoughts are turning to the changing season and all of the fantastic opportunities for wild play that it brings.

Autumn is one of my favourite seasons, with the changing colours, falling leaves and the comfort of a warm jumper and welly boots! I always like to get out and about as much as possible in autumn, before the days reach their shortest.

Here are a few ideas to help keep you and your family busy over the next few months.

Claire Pearce,
Wild Play Officer

Wild play wander

Monday 22 October, 2pm - 4pm, Ashurst

Enjoy some family fun and explore the wilder side of the Forest as part of this year's walking festival. Go to:

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/festivalwalks to book your place.

Autumn wild play day

**Wednesday 24 October, 10am - 3pm, Holmsley Campsite
Forest Road, Burley, BH23 8EB**

Discover fun ways to explore, play and get creative in the outdoors, from your back garden to the New Forest woods, streams and heaths. Create forest art, explore with scavenger hunts and much more. Wear old clothes and don't forget your wellies!

Suitable for all (children must be accompanied by an adult). Find out more at: **www.eventbrite.co.uk/autumnwildplayday**

Things to do during autumn



Mud, mud, glorious mud

There is definitely nothing quite like it!

Children and mud are like magnets, drawn together as if by magic. So why not put on old clothes and get ready for some mud filled adventures? If we've been lucky enough to have some dry, sunny weather it may be worth having some water handy to help the mud along a little!

Some children may be reluctant to join in with muddy play and get dirty so be prepared to lead by example and get stuck in, put any of your own apprehensions aside and make some mud filled memories. If you have driven to your destination, remember to take an old towel and some bin bags to sit on in the car on the way home!

- **Mud castles:** You've heard of sandcastles, but why not have mud castles too? Dig out your bucket and spade and get creating!.
- **Mud monsters:** Collect some sticks and leaves to help you create some wild imaginary monsters.
- **Make a mud pit:** If you want to indulge in some mud play nearer to home, lay out a tarpaulin in the garden and create a mud pile on top.
- **Mud painting:** Bring out the brushes and get creative on the ground. A bit of rain will wash the mud away so no need to worry about any damage to your surroundings.
- **Muddy footprints:** When you have been playing in the mud, you will often find that you leave a trail of muddy footprints behind you. Why not make the most of this opportunity to create a trail for your friends to follow, leading to a secret hiding place. Will they be able to find you?!



Muddy mahem!



More autumn antics.....

Of course, autumn is about much more than just mud, so here are a few more ideas to keep you going:

- **Get crunching:** One of the best things about autumn has to be jumping in piles of crisp, crunchy leaves, throwing them up in the air and watching them fall.
- **Colours:** Autumn is the season of colours, so why not go on a colour hunt?! Can you make a rainbow of natural materials? Who can find the brightest shade of red? What is the most unusual colour that you can find?
- **Fly a kite:** Whether it's home made or shop-bought, windy autumn days are the perfect time to get out and fly a kite. When choosing a location, remember the higher up the better!
- **Nature paints:** Collect lots of natural materials such as berries, green and orange leaves and seed heads, give them a bit of a squash and experiment to see which can be used for some natural painting.
- **Catch a leaf:** Can you catch a leaf as it falls from a tree, before it hits the ground? It's harder than you think!

Go crazy for Bolderwood!!!

Bolderwood is a fantastic part of the Forest to indulge in a bit of wild play! With some of the tallest trees in the Forest, a variety of buggy friendly walks, picnic tables and lots of space for running round and playing games, it's definitely worth a visit.

Unique to Bolderwood is the amazing deer sanctuary, providing a great opportunity to spot some of our more secretive New Forest residents. Autumn is the time of the rut for our Forest deer, which can be quite spectacular to watch if you are lucky enough to spot the males battling each other. If you do manage to seek them out, remember to give them lots of space.



Over the October half term (Monday 22 - Friday 26 October) the Forestry Commission will be hosting a week of fungi fun. There's lots to discover and activities for all the family. You will find them based at the Bolderwood unit.



Adopt a stick

Pick an interesting stick the size of your hand, forearm or arm. Take it on an adventure and imagine all the things it could be as you walk. It could be a walking stick, fishing rod, water diviner, stick man, trumpet, giant pencil, arrow, drumstick, sundial, nest or picture frame. Say goodbye and leave your stick behind for another child's adventure. Safety tip - check whether anything is living on your stick and don't forget that a stick can be sharp and pointy.

Collect a...

Collect a rainbow, an alphabet or as many things as you can that are different shapes, such as circles. Choose your own categories and challenge the whole family. Safety tips - only collect things which are not alive, poisonous or sharp. If it's too big or you think it might be dangerous you can always make a photo collection or keep a list instead.

Go bonkers for conkers!

First you have to find a horse chestnut tree.

- Now you have found one, choose your conker wisely!
- You can play float or sink – place them in a bucket of water and sinkers are the winners!
- You can collect loads and play miniature skittles
- You can also play conkers!



FACT:

Sadly conkers are likely to be a thing of the past. Experts have said conkers could vanish from Britain within 15 years as horse chestnut trees are being ravaged by moths and disease.