

For adults and children in the garden

Natural puppet shows

Natural England wants to give a million children the chance to discover the outdoors. The natural world is a fascinating place to explore and our natural habitats together with the creatures and plants that live there can provide endless sources of fun. From your own back yard to the wilds of our national nature reserves, now is the time to make the most of the outdoors and go wild!

Together with Fiona Danks and Jo Schofield (www.goingwild.net), authors of Nature's Playground, Go Wild and Make it Wild (www.franceslincoln.com), we've produced these fantastic activity sheets to give you plenty of ideas of what you can get up to, what are you waiting for?



This scary monster is a boggart, a cheeky sprite that likes to play tricks on people out in the woods. What sort of characters can you make using twigs, clay and natural materials gathered from the wildlife area? Whether you wish to make scary monsters or beautiful creatures, try making up your own characters for a puppet show.

What you need

- A collection of natural materials such as berries, leaves and feathers,
- Some straight sticks,
- Clay – try to collect some “wild clay” – from wet, muddy areas nearby. If no clay is available locally you may need to buy some, or you could use plasticine or play dough,
- Possibly some natural paints such as crushed chalk or some charcoal to decorate your puppets.





Making a 'marotte' style puppet

- Take a lump of clay and work it in your hands until it becomes pliable, then roll it into a ball and put it on the end of a stick.
- Mould the clay into a face.
- Add details to bring your puppet to life – perhaps some seeds for eyes, leaves for ears and feathers for a headdress.
- Decorate with natural paint if you wish
- To give the puppet arms, tie another stick across at right angles.
- Make up a little show for your natural puppets; perhaps they could tell a story about an adventure in the wildlife area.

Safety tips

- Avoid collecting poisonous berries.



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