



ANIMAL SHELTER

Materials you need:

Time to get creative – use what you already have in your outdoor environment or go searching together! You might find or use some of the materials listed below or choose something entirely different!

A garden full of wildlife is a fun place for kids to learn about biodiversity. It also encourages them to participate in regular outdoor activity.

- Logs, wood stumps, branches and sticks.
- Bird feeders
- Uprturned plant pots
- Bricks with holes
- Old terracotta or PVC pipes
- Pallets
- Rocks, pebbles and boulders
- Bark and leaf matter
- Shallow dishes with water
- Bamboo poles
- Mulch in the gardens

Setup for play:

- Talk to children about the benefits of creating some safe shelters (or habitats) for small living creatures like lizards to hide and feel safe in.
- Use what you have from the materials list above to create different small spaces and shelters around the yard to invite and protect animals.
- The pipes are perfect for small reptiles to make a home in.
- Exposed branches of trees are a great vantage point for birds.

EXPLORING OUR WORLD - ACTIVITY GUIDE 79

- Planting climbers, shrubs, grasses, groundcovers and native trees help make backyards and play spaces outdoors a diverse playground for wildlife to live in.
- Flat rocks and pebbles around the yard will provide sunny spots for cold blooded lizards to bask.
- The mulch, leaves, twigs and mulch are a great way to attract insects.
- Shallow pot saucers provide a source of water.
- Birdhouses and nesting boxes encourage breeding and protect native birds.

What are they learning with this activity?

As the children help you to collect materials and build animal shelters and habitats they are learning to:

- Explore, infer, predict and problem solve
- Broaden their understanding of the world
- Use play to investigate and explore new ideas
- Use their senses to explore the natural environment
- Explore simple scientific concepts through play and experimentation
- Observe and describe characteristics of living things
- Exhibit curiosity, interest, and willingness in learning new things and having new experiences.
- Ask questions and make predictions based on observations and manipulation of things and events in the environment.

Extending the play:

- Use a large tub or old aquarium to create a water habitat. Add a water lily, tadpoles and perhaps a fish or two. Keep supervision and safety in mind when creating a habitat with water.