

Discover Invertebrates

Set off on a nature-explorer mission!

Search the Wildlife Garden and the grassed area in front of the Countryside Centre to find all **ten hidden rubbing plaques**. Can you spot each one and record what you find like a real nature detective?



Step into the role of a naturalist and explore!

Nature explorers are called **naturalists**. Naturalists are curious people who look closely at the world around them. They notice tiny details and how animals and plants live in their habitats. On this trail, you will carry out your own mini field study.

Invertebrates are animals without a backbone. They include insects, spiders, worms, molluscs, crustaceans and many sea creatures. Most of the animals on Earth are invertebrates, and they are very important for every ecosystem.

Your mission as a naturalist is to explore the Wildlife Garden and grassed area in front of the Countryside Centre and find each hidden plaque. Match it to the invertebrate facts in your booklet, then make a wax-crayon rubbing to record your discovery.

1. Find the Plaque – Look for a post with an invertebrate picture and match it to your booklet.
2. Position Your Page – Lay your paper flat over the picture so it doesn't slip.
3. Rub With a Crayon – Use the side of your crayon and rub gently until the picture starts to appear.
4. Complete the Picture – Keep rubbing until the whole image is clear.
5. Off You Go – Head to the next plaque and fill your booklet with discoveries.

Bumblebee



- **What they look like:** Bumblebees are large and fuzzy with black and yellow stripes. Different species have slightly different sizes and patterns.
- **Why they are important:** They pollinate many plants and help them make seeds and fruit. They also support the food chain.
- **How to spot them:** Look for them buzzing around flowers in gardens and meadows.
- **Fun fact:** Bumblebees use “buzz pollination” to shake pollen out of flowers. They can also do a simple waggle-style dance to show other bees where good flowers are.
- **Common UK species:** Buff-tailed, White-tailed, Red-tailed, and Early Bumblebees.

Earthworm

- **What they look like:** Long, soft-bodied creatures that live in soil.
- **Why they are important:** They eat dead leaves and tiny bits of organic matter. Earthworms are also food for other animals such as birds, frogs, hedgehogs, and badgers. Their digging and castings (worm poo) help make soil rich and healthy.
- **How to spot them:** Look in moist soil or leaf litter, especially after rain.
- **Fun fact:** Earthworms have five simple hearts and can sense light and vibrations.



Woodlouse



- **What they look like:** Woodlice are small, grey, oval-shaped creatures with hard, segmented bodies. They have seven pairs of legs.
- **Why they are important:** They break down rotting wood and dead leaves, which returns nutrients to the soil. Woodlice are also an important food source for spiders, centipedes, and birds, helping to keep food chains balanced.
- **How to spot them:** Look under bark, stones, or rotting logs.
- **Fun fact:** Woodlice are related to crabs and lobsters. They breathe using gill-like parts, so they need damp places to stop them from drying out.

Snail

- **What they look like:** Snails have soft bodies and a hard shell that protects them.
- **Why they are important:** They help break down old plants and leaves, returning nutrients to the soil. Snails are also food for birds, frogs, hedgehogs, and beetles, making them an important part of the food chain.
- **How to spot them:** Look on damp leaves or paths after rain.
- **Fun fact:** Snails have a radula, a tongue covered in thousands of tiny teeth that scrape and grind food like a tiny grater.



Ladybird

- **What they look like:** The 7-spot ladybird is small, round, and bright red with seven black spots. Other species, like 2-spot and harlequin ladybirds, can look very different in colour and pattern.
- **Why they are important:** They protect plants by eating aphids and other tiny insects.
- **How to spot them:** Look on leaves and stems where tiny insects gather.
- **Fun fact:** Ladybird larvae are long, spiky, and look a bit dinosaur-like.



Larva

Slug

- **What they look like:** Soft-bodied creatures like snails but without a big shell.
- **Why they are important:** They recycle nutrients by eating rotting leaves, fungi, and plants. Slugs are also food for birds, frogs, hedgehogs, and beetles, helping energy move along the food chain.
- **How to spot them:** Look under logs, stones, or in damp grass early in the morning.
- **Fun fact:** Some slugs have a tiny hidden shell inside their body.



Slug

Dragonfly

- **What they look like:** Fast-flying insects with long bodies and strong wings.
- **Why they are important:** They eat flies, midges, and mosquitoes. Dragonflies are also eaten by birds and frogs, making them an important link in the food chain.
- **How to spot them:** Look near ponds or streams on sunny days.
- **Fun fact:** Dragonflies rest with wings open; damselflies have slimmer bodies and rest with wings closed.



Damselfly



Dragonfly

Dragonfly

Comma Butterfly



- **What they look like:** Comma butterflies have bright orange wings with ragged edges and a white comma-shaped mark underneath.
- **Why they are important:** They drink nectar and help pollinate flowers. Their caterpillars are food for birds and spiders, so they play a role in the food chain
- **How to spot them:** Look for them sunbathing on leaves or fluttering around flowers.
- **Fun fact:** Butterflies taste with their feet, which helps them check if a plant is good to eat or lay eggs on.
- **Other common UK butterflies you may see:** Red Admiral, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, and Large and Small Whites.

Centipede

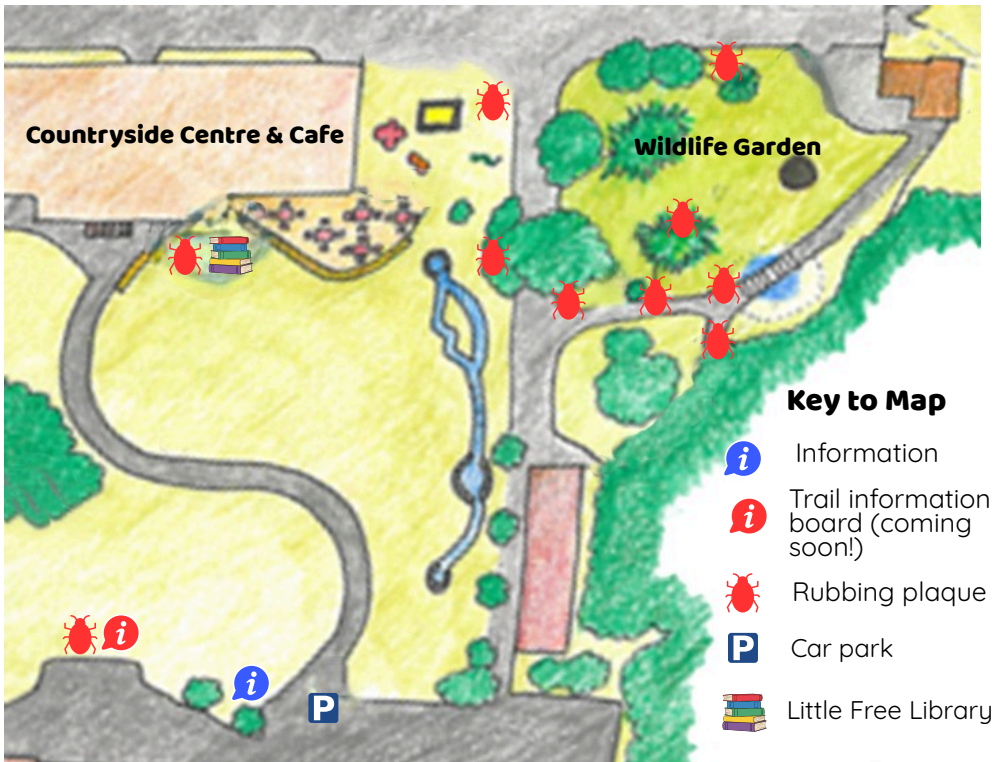
- **What they look like:** Centipedes are long, thin animals with many body segments. Each segment has one pair of legs. They also have long antennae and move very quickly.
- **Why they are important:** They help control small creatures by eating insects, spiders, and worms. Centipedes are also eaten by birds and toads, this help keep the food chain healthy.
- **How to spot them:** Carefully lift logs or stones — they like dark, hidden places.
- **Fun fact:** Centipedes always have an odd number of leg pairs.



Centipede

Rubbing Plaque Locations:

The rubbing plaques are located on the grassed area in front of the Countryside Centre, near the sand pit and within the Wildlife Garden.



Friends of Rising Sun Country Park

The Friends of Rising Sun Country Park are volunteers who help look after the park and its wildlife. They work with the park team to plant trees and bulbs, run litter picks and care for park and wildlife areas. They also help with events, record wildlife they see and support projects that protect nature. Their work helps keep the Rising Sun a safe, clean and welcoming place for people and animals.

You can find more information about the Friends Group on Facebook, Instagram or on our website :

www.e-voice.org.uk/friendsrscp

This trail was designed by Friends of Rising Sun Country Park and funded by community donations.

