



## WILDWOOD VISITS – INFORMATION SHEET 2009

*This information leaflet has been put together to try to answer many of the questions teachers, lecturers and group leaders usually ask before visiting Wildwood. Much of it is aimed at primary schools but there are specific sections for secondary schools and other groups - I hope it helps you to plan your visit and answer your group's questions. If there is anything else you would like to know, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.*

### EDUCATION CONTACTS:

Email:

[anne@wildwoodtrust.org](mailto:anne@wildwoodtrust.org)

or

[laura@wildwoodtrust.org](mailto:laura@wildwoodtrust.org)

**Anne Riddell**, Head of Education

**Laura Hester**, Education Officer

Tel: 01227 712111; fax: 01227 719035

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*Notes last updated, January 2009*

# **AWARD-WINNING EDUCATION PROGRAMME 2009 – CSI: WILDWOOD – WHO KILLED MR BUNNY?**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION – PLANNING YOUR VISIT**

- If you have not visited Wildwood before or if you would like to discuss a programme for your visit, please get in touch with us (contact details above).
- Teachers/lecturers/group leaders are always welcome to pay a complementary pre-visit to the park, enjoy a free lunch and a discussion with our education team to see what we can offer (*please ring/email first to arrange*).
- We are always delighted to design specific days for schools/colleges to meet the exact requirements of your students/group and your syllabus. Please get in touch to discuss what we can do.
- Schools/colleges/groups are welcome to visit the park independently and to tour on their own and/or to have an educational session with a member of Wildwood's education department (pre-booking essential).
- Education staff can be difficult to contact as we are usually out in the park. Don't despair – please email us or leave a message with the office and we will get back to you as soon as we can!
- All schools/groups are issued with free return tickets for their children upon completion of an evaluation form.
- Please see our website [www.wildwoodtrust.org](http://www.wildwoodtrust.org) to download a copy of our guidebook, many educational packs and information for teachers/group visit organisers. Not everything is on our website yet - more resources are available from the education department direct.

## **HOW TO FIND US**

- Wildwood is situated on the A291 at Herne Common, three miles outside Herne Bay in East Kent.
- *By road* from the north, take the M2/A299 Thanet Way to Herne Bay, turning on to the A291, following the signs for Sturry and Canterbury through Herne village. You will find us up ahead on the right hand side, 3 miles from the A299 junction.
- *By road* from Canterbury/Thanet to the south, take the A28 to Sturry and then take the A291 turning, signposted Herne Bay, near the level crossing in the village. We are 2.3 miles ahead on the left.
- *By train* the closest stations are at Herne Bay (London/Margate line) and Sturry (Canterbury/Ramsgate line). Regular bus connections.
- *By bus* No. 4/4A buses from Herne Bay Railway Station and No. 6/6A buses from Canterbury Bus Station/Sturry stop just outside Wildwood (request stop between Broad Oak/Sweechgate and Herne Garage). Every 10 minutes from 9am-6pm.

## EDUCATION CENTRE

- Indoor workshops with Wildwood's own tutors are held in the education centre, situated just outside the main entrance to the park in a log cabin-style building.
- The light and airy classroom can accommodate one class of 30 at a time for a workshop or up to 100 people, conference style (10x12m).
- There are usually three available slots a day for workshops during school visiting hours – 1030-1130am, 1145am-1245pm and 1-2pm. On occasions, four slots are available if schools are local and likely to arrive before usual opening hours and leave later. Please book early to avoid disappointment.
- Both the main entrance and fire exit have disabled ramps.
- Schools are requested to leave the education centre in the condition in which they found it.
- **Please note:** *following an unfortunate series of incidents of damage and disappearance of artefacts, books and equipment from the education centre, we no longer permit students to occupy the centre without a supervising teacher present, including at break times.*
- All damage/thefts must be paid for.
- The education centre can be hired for activities by external organisations outside school hours – if available - but the artefacts and equipment inside can only be used with Wildwood's own tutors.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

- If you would like a copy of our school/group visits' risk assessment, please let me know and I will forward one to you, or you can download it from our website ([www.wildwoodtrust.org](http://www.wildwoodtrust.org)).

## FIRST AID COVER

- Many of our staff are trained first aiders.
- First aid boxes are located in all permanent buildings around the park (e.g. shop, vet room, badger building, rat barn, office).
- All uniformed park staff are in radio contact and can respond immediately to any emergency.
- If you have a walking casualty, please take them to the shop as the first contact point.

## SECURITY

- All Wildwood staff are police checked on appointment.

## LOST CHILDREN

- The woodland trail around the park follows a circular route.
- Please advise your children and accompanying adults that, should they become detached from their group, they should continue following the trail in the same direction. This will eventually bring them back to the restaurant/play area, whichever way they go.
- They should then go to the shop, past the restaurant, where the staff can alert other park staff to reunite the child/adult with his/her group.
- All uniformed park staff are in radio contact and can respond immediately to any emergency.

## FEEDING POLICY

- Visitors are asked not to feed the animals because of the risk of spreading disease (human/animal and animal/human).
- Also, the animals have specialised diets and can become extremely ill if fed inappropriate food or materials (e.g. chocolate, crisps, pencils or plastic bags).
- Please ensure that your group is aware of this and that they do not feed animals.
- Please ensure that everyone washes their hands before eating as the woodland has its own wild inhabitants and virtually any surface may have been used as a feeding station.
- Antibacterial hand wash dispensers are located outside the restaurant, shop and in the education centre.

## CLOTHING

- Wildwood is an ancient woodland with natural paths through the wood, complete with tree roots, overhanging branches, nettles, brambles, etc.
- Clothing should be appropriate for a day out in the woods with trousers, sensible footwear, plus a waterproof in case it rains.

## FOOD

- Roomy log cabin-style restaurant with a large covered veranda and children's menu (ice creams/cold drinks can be ordered in advance – call 01227 712230).
- Range of picnic tables in and around the play area, woodland and car park if you would like to bring your own food.

## WHAT TO DO WITH SCHOOL/LUNCH BAGS

- The education centre is available for bags unless it has already been booked (please check). Alternatively, bags can be left on the veranda of the Education Centre. **No children are allowed in the Education Centre without teacher supervision.** It is much appreciated if you tidy up after yourselves.
- You may ask the restaurant staff if you can leave bags on the restaurant veranda.
- Otherwise, schools choose 'their' picnic table in the play area and leave lunch bags there in the shade.
- If you do not want to carry your bags with you, please ensure that you remove valuables (money, cameras, mobile phones).
- Food should be well wrapped inside sealed plastic lunch boxes, zipped up rucksacks or carrier bags with the handles tied tightly together - we have a host of woodland birds and invertebrates (especially ants), that will find their way into a tempting jam sandwich if they can smell it!

## WET WEATHER PROVISION

- If the education centre has been booked by another school for an activity, it will not be available for general lunches. Please check before your visit.
- If wet, you may ask the restaurant staff if you can eat on the veranda.
- Priority access to the restaurant itself is given to the youngest children in bad weather.
- Please understand that the restaurant is a franchise operation. While the staff are extremely friendly and understanding, they do appreciate teachers (a) asking first if

- children can use their facilities to eat their packed lunches in poor weather and (b) ensuring children collect their rubbish and tidy up after themselves.
- The woods themselves in full leaf offer reasonable wet weather shelter.

### **DISABLED ACCESS**

- Disabled minibuses are welcome to use the disabled parking bays immediately outside the park entrance in the Wildwood top car park (*please follow signs – see map also*).
- The park has wheelchair access throughout with alternative routes to avoid obstacles.
- Several enclosures have low viewing windows to ensure everyone can see the animals.
- We have recently completed an extensive upgrade of the paths to improve wheelchair access. The majority of paths have been laid with compact stone chippings but some areas can still be muddy in wet weather.

### **PUSHCHAIR ACCESS**

- Double buggies can now access all paths, following a path widening scheme.

### **TOILETS**

- As part of an ongoing improvement plan, new ladies' and gents' toilet blocks are now open.
- Toilets are located at the entrance – there are no others anywhere in the park so making sure that children visit them before starting to walk round is advisable!

### **GIFT SHOP**

- Yes, sorry, we do have one!
- It stocks a variety of pocket money gifts, including stickers, stationery, animal masks, soft toys and science games.
- We stock a range of materials related to British wild animals which teachers often find useful for pre-visit/follow-up work in the classroom – e.g. animal masks, posters and postcards, books, badges, crafts, reference materials, etc.
- Shop staff always appreciate it if children visit the shop in small individual groups with an adult to supervise.
- If schools are able to stagger shop visits throughout the day, staff are able to serve much more quickly than if every school tries to visit at lunchtime.
- We can provide pre-prepared and priced souvenir bags for collection (please book before your visit 01227 712111 and ask for ext 28). A list of typical goody bag contents and prices is available from the Education department.

### **COACHES**

- Following improvements, coaches can now park in the main Wildwood car park (*please follow the signs*).
- Disabled minibuses are welcome to use the disabled parking bays immediately in front of the gift shop entrance in the Wildwood top car park (*please follow signs*).
- Please tell your coach driver that he/she is welcome to come in, tour the park and have a staff breakfast and hot drink or equivalent in the restaurant free of charge.

- He/she will be issued with a voucher in the restaurant for a staff breakfast and hot drink.

## BOOKING YOUR VISIT

### BOOKING PROCEDURE

- Once you have decided on possible dates for your visit, please contact us (tel: 01227 712111; fax: 01227 719035; email: [anne@wildwoodtrust.org](mailto:anne@wildwoodtrust.org) or [laura@wildwoodtrust.org](mailto:laura@wildwoodtrust.org)) to discuss availability (please leave a message if we are out in the park – we will get back to you).
- If you do not require a tutor, it is still advisable to check dates before booking as some very popular dates may be closed to avoid overwhelming the park.
- If you would like to book a tutor, it is vital to check early that there will be enough Wildwood education staff available.
- Admission prices and education department fees are reviewed annually; bookings made before December 31 for the following year are held at the previous year's prices. Ask for a pricing schedule or check the website.
- Peak season visits booked before Friday February 27<sup>th</sup> 2009 qualify for an extra early booking discount.
- Once you have agreed a date, then you can:
  - download a booking form from our website ([www.wildwoodtrust.org](http://www.wildwoodtrust.org)), if we have not already sent you one, then post the booking form to:  
Anne Riddell, Head of Education, Wildwood Trust, Herne Common, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7LQ, or
  - fax it to us on 01227 719035, or
  - email it to [anne@wildwoodtrust.org](mailto:anne@wildwoodtrust.org).

### BOOKING FORM

- Please return the booking form as soon as possible. It does not matter if you do not have final numbers.
- **Unfortunately, your booking cannot be confirmed nor your tutor allocated unless we receive your form in good time.**

## ACTIVITIES

### PLAYGROUPS AND NURSERIES

#### *Close encounters*

- Aimed at younger children, nurseries and play schools.
- Choice of Meet an Owl, Meet a Tortoise or Meet a Deer. 10 minute session including talk from tutor and opportunity for questions. Deer and Tortoise sessions involve feeding (tutor only, children cannot feed the animals), Owl session does not. Tortoise can be touched by children (shell only), strictly no contact with Deer or Owl.
- Choice of animal subject to head keeper's agreement on the day and may be changed according to particular circumstances (e.g. birth of young, illness, etc).
- Unfortunately, owing to the children's young age and concentration levels, we are not able to offer guided tours or any other school activities to nursery groups/playgroups.

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS KS1 and KS2:

### WOULD YOU LIKE A TEACHER-LED VISIT or ACTIVITIES LED BY WILDWOOD STAFF?

- Schools/colleges/groups are welcome to visit the park independently and to tour on their own and/or to have activities by arrangement with a member of Wildwood's education department (pre-booking essential).
- Please discuss with us what you are looking for and we will design a day to meet your curriculum requirements
- Please see separately our schools' activities suggestions for details and prices.

### Guided tours

- Differentiated according to age group, interest, ability and purpose.
- For primary schools, guided tours usually focus on the themes of variety within the animal kingdom, caring for animals, animal adaptation, animal homes and habitats, animals in myths, folklore and legend or species-specific topics (e.g. badgers).
- Further topics may include conservation of endangered species, captive breeding/reintroduction schemes or human impact on our environment (e.g. hunting, persecution, pollution, habitat destruction and isolation of populations), depending on age and topic of study. We can cover almost any topic – just ask!
- Tour duration depends on age and interest; usually we offer a 1hr short tour of the central section of the park and a 2hr longer tour (not suitable for KS1); please see attached map for tour coverage and separate price structure.
- We can, of course, shorten tours if you prefer.
- There are short cuts along the tour which take visitors back to the restaurant/play area if they are tired.
- Tutors usually have a small amount of food to attract selected animals over so children can see them at close range.
- Tour size is limited to a maximum of 30 students or one primary school class as this can be accommodated comfortably at one time.
- If there are more classes and/or other groups requiring tours on the same day (it is particularly busy in June and July), each class/group will be given a timed slot for their tour.
- For example, if you wish to bring 90 Year 3 children from three classes, arriving at 10am and leaving at 2.30pm, we would normally allocate two tutors to your group. Each tutor would take one class of approximately 30 (groups 1 and 2) at 10.15am (allowing for a loo stop, dropping bags, etc.), returning at approx. 11:15am. One tutor would then take the remaining class (group 3) at about 12noon, returning at 1:00pm (group 3 would be encouraged to have an early lunch so they are ready for their 12noon tour). *See the sample timetable below.* At very busy times, one tutor would work with all three groups in rotation.

### ***Sample timetable for 3 classes (for information only)***

Time slot	Group	Activity
10.15-11.15am	1	Guided tour (Tutor A)
	2	Guided tour (Tutor B)
	3	Free time (play area/early lunch/shop if required/other activities)

12noon-1.00pm	1	Free time (play area/early lunch/shop if required/other activities)
	2	Free time (play area/early lunch/shop if required/other activities)
	3	Guided tour (Tutor A)
1.00-2.30pm	All	Free time

- We can provide tutor-led workshops in the education centre *or* worksheets/quizzes for you to supervise for those groups not on tours *or* your children can take advantage of our robust woodland play park if you are having a fun day out.
- Please remember to bring clipboards/pencils/crayons if you want to use worksheets.
- If you would like your day organised differently – for example, if you would like everyone to have lunch together – please let us know in advance so we can allocate tutors accordingly.
- We will try to fit in with whatever your preferences are, as long as we can ensure that all groups visiting the park on any one day are covered.

### **Interactive workshops**

- 45-minute indoor and outdoor workshops covering a range of scientific, craft and other topics including forensics, animal homes, animal adaptation, finding woodland minibeasts, skulls and teeth, owls, wolves etc.
- 25-minute art & craft sessions also available. Please see Primary Workshops List for details.

### **Saxon workshops**

- Meet a real Saxon peasant woman in her cottage in the woods as she cooks over an open fire and talks about her life.
- See and handle many of her household implements.
- Groups of 10-15 children per workshop.
- Must be booked well in advance and are subject to Saxon availability!
- Please ask for separate Saxon information sheet.

### **Meet an animal sessions**

- 10-15 minutes with a tutor who will feed and talk about a particular animal.
- Choice of animal subject to head keeper's agreement on the day and may be changed according to particular circumstances (e.g. birth of young, illness, etc).

## **SECONDARY SCHOOLS, FE COLLEGES AND ABOVE**

### **WOULD YOU LIKE A TOUR/WORKSHOP OR WOODLAND ECOLOGY DAY?**

- Please discuss with us what you are looking for and we will design a day to meet your curriculum requirements.
- Tours and workshops as for primary schools on a theme of your choice (e.g. adaptation, habitats, conservation, human impact on wildlife, or a behind the scenes look at our captive breeding/reintroduction programmes or a discussion of our tourism and marketing strategies, etc.)
- Choice of one or two-hour tours (longer for A-level/IB/FE college and adult students).

- **Woodland ecology days from Year 7 to A-level/IB:**
  - Understand woodland food webs.
  - Compare plants, invertebrates and/or small mammals of broadleaved woodland and pine plantation or various stages of coppice succession.
  - Understand the importance of sampling as an ecological technique.
  - Learn to use and compare different sampling techniques: soil horizons, transects, quadrats, live trapping.
  - Conduct your own personal investigations with the support of Wildwood's own ecologists.
- Ask for our specific A-level/IB woodland ecology course outline.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS**

- Please talk to us about your students' needs and let us discuss how we can help.
- Subject to eligibility – FREE group membership scheme for certain special needs schools and groups. Enjoy Wildwood whenever you wish for free! Please ask for details of our Gold membership criteria and application form.
- We are happy to design special days for any groups but it is helpful if we have a clear idea of each group's specific requirements so that we can try to ensure that your visit is a success.
- We have run successful summer schools and year-round visits for students with various levels of special needs and disabilities and have a range of artefacts which can be handled.
- We are also used to making the most of the smells and sounds of our woodland animals.
- Disabled minibuses are welcome to use the disabled parking bays immediately in front of the gift shop entrance in the Wildwood top car park (*please follow signs – see map*).
- The park has wheelchair access throughout with alternative routes to avoid obstacles.
- Several enclosures have low viewing windows to ensure everyone can see the animals.
- Following recent extensive work, the majority of paths have been laid with compact stone chippings and now offer much easier wheelchair access. Some paths can still be muddy in wet weather.

### **BEAVER SCOUTS**

- Our long-awaited new beaver enclosure is now open, complete with large pool and visitor-friendly beaver lodge so the beavers can be seen indoors.
- The best times of year to see them out are late afternoons in spring and autumn.

### **OTHER GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS**

- Most of the activities available to schools (e.g. guided tours, meet the keeper sessions, etc.) are available to other groups by arrangement, depending on tutors' availability, and are differentiated according to age and interest.
- Please discuss your needs with us in advance so we can ensure your day is successful.

## TEACHING RESOURCES

- We have a selection of educational materials from KS1 workbooks to A-level/IB/FE college notes and above. Please ask for details; not all resources are on the website yet ([www.wildwoodtrust.org](http://www.wildwoodtrust.org)).
- We also have a basic range of scientific equipment for practical woodland ecology fieldwork and this is expanding annually. Please get in touch to discuss your requirements.

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

- You can pay:
  - in cash on the day.
  - by cheque on the day (payable to Wildwood Trust).
  - or we can invoice you afterwards.
- If you prefer to be invoiced, please bring with you a sheet of headed notepaper with your contact details and the name of the person/department to which the invoice should be addressed.
- **If you would like a tutor, please send a deposit of £30 with your booking form.**
- Unfortunately, this deposit is non-refundable if you cancel within 28 days of your booking as we may have already turned away another group for your chosen date.

## PAYING FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE WILDWOOD FAMILY MEMBERS

- Occasionally, some parents may ask you if they can use their Wildwood family membership card for their child to come on a school/group visit to us and therefore not pay the group admission fee.
- Wildwood operates a membership scheme for regular visitors (which on payment of an annual fee allows unlimited free visits throughout the year).
- The membership card allows named children up to the age of 18 years to visit with named family members only, who must remain responsible for them throughout their visit to comply with our insurance.
- However, the fees charged to schools/groups represent the cost of providing our educational service which includes classroom facilities, tutors, equipment, materials, etc., to ensure Wildwood is a safe and enjoyable place for schools/groups to visit.
- These additional expenses for the charity are not covered by private family membership and so the full charge must be made to all school children and students visiting us on a group visit.
- Therefore, the family membership card may not be used on school visits.