

Topic: Plants – potential dangers posed by fauna and flora

Year 3, 4 and 5

Linked to Science

What I should know

- There are many different allergies, intolerances and reactions which can occur when you are unaware of what you are touching or eating.
- There are potential life-threatening dangers posed by plants and animals which can occur.
- Which common plants/animals pose a danger in and around our area.

What will I know

- Name a few common poisonous plants that may be found at Forest School.
- The effect of some poisonous plants.
- Some plants are harmful if eaten and others are harmful if handled.
- What to do if you suspect skin or eye irritation by a plant.
- Understand hay fever and its triggers.

Vocabulary

- **Ticks** – these tiny creatures can cause Lyme disease. When going into an area with long grass, ensure long trousers are worn and exposing the skin will make it easy for the tick to attach itself to your body.
- **Bees, hornets and wasps** – a reaction to a sting without immediate medical attention may result in death.
- **Horseflies** – may spread bacteria which can make you very unwell.
- **Hairy caterpillars** – during the warmer months, these caterpillars can release their tiny hairs which are harmful, as they can cause rashes, asthma attacks, and throat irritations.
- **Adders** – adders should not be handled, as their bite can cause serious injury.
- **Stinging nettle** – this can create a rash and itchy skin. A common remedy is to rub a dock leaf over the infected area.
- **Foxgloves** – both the flowers and berries of foxgloves attract children, but this is a poisonous plant and can be extremely harmful.
- **Thorns** – without vaccination you can die from tetanus, an infection which can be transferred from a thorn scratch.
- **Giant hogweed** – if this plant is picked it can release a sap which causes burns. If it comes into contact with your eye, this sap can cause blindness.
- **Hay fever** – caused by an allergic response to outdoor or indoor allergens, such as pollen, dust mites, or tiny flecks of skin and saliva shed by cats, dogs, and other animals with fur or feathers (pet dander).
- **Fungi** – children should be taught never to eat or touch any fungal growth they find at any time. If they have touched any fungi, they must wash their hands.
- **Bluebell** – a woodland plant that is harmful if eaten. Bluebells are a fairly common native plant and often carpet the ground with spectacular ‘blue bell’ flowers from April until June. Narrow linear bright green leaves grow from white underground bulbils. Flowers hang down from near the top of the stem from which white fruits develop, gradually turning brown as the black seed matures.
- **Bulbs** – for example, daffodils, hyacinths and narcissus. If eaten these will cause irritation and vomiting/diarrhoea and can be fatal.
- **Celandine and buttercup** – both of these flowers are yellow. Celandine is found on woodland floor, flowering in early spring and buttercup flowers throughout spring and summer. All parts of these plants are poisonous to eat.
- **Holly** (*Ilex Aquifolium*) – smooth and often spiky evergreen leaves and red berries in the winter and white/green



What's next?

- Expand knowledge and awareness that some plants and fungi, both cultivated and wild, may contain poisonous properties from different places.
- Develop an understanding of First Aid and know what to do if you suspect that someone is suffering from eating a poisonous plant.