

LOOKING AT NATURE

Summer

A series provided by the BBC at the request of the Educational Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom

Lower Junior
Thursdays 2.05 to 2.20
Radio 4 VHF/FM

Programmes written and produced by Michael Howarth
Series consultant and teacher's notes author: Robin Robbins

Introduction

Interdependence is the theme of this term's broadcasts in the Looking at Nature Series.

Please note that the broadcasts differ from those advertised in the Annual Programme. This is because we feel that, in line with current curriculum ideas the theme of interdependence can be demonstrated through our active learning approach. This approach gives you a framework on which to base the relationships between living things and their habitat.

Interdependence operates rather like a food chain. For example, on chalk grassland, poor soil and heavy sheep grazing have controlled the species of plants that would naturally invade and choke the low ground-hugging species, and therefore the development of a unique and hugely varied plant community. However, grazing results in a widely diverse animal community, both of herbivores and the carnivores which prey on them. If one part of the chain is broken, for example, the removal of grazing, then the plant community will turn quickly to scrub, increasing the richness of the soil. Ultimately woodland will take over, and the chalk grassland flora and fauna will be lost.

In this booklet the pictures of projects are placed against background views of a series of habitats and illustrates some of the habitat's major influences on the wildlife. The material is arranged to help a teacher who may wish to work systematically with children in similar locations.

As in previous booklets in the series, the information and activities are in a form that can be quickly read and understood and can be photocopied or redzawn on handouts and worksheets.

continued overleaf



Photographs from top to bottom: Robin Robbins and Production Assistant Rowan Mandish with a Natural Investigator watch Timmy using his mobile 'phone' to speak to an expert. Ross Cox, Senior Warden for Studland Heath NVC, shows schoolchildren an Adder at Studland Heath near Swanage. Timmy Mallett and Robin Robbins with the stick-it-anywhere bookable used for wood.

LIST OF PROGRAMMES

- 1 SUMMER ACTIVITY (RADIOVISION)
- 2 CONIFEROUS FOREST
- 3 HEATH
- 4 CHALK DOWNLAND
- 5 MARSH
- 6 DUNE

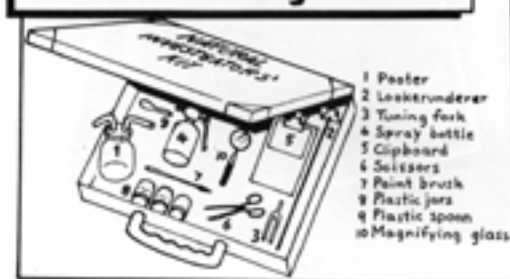
Some of the project work about interdependence must inevitably be of the 'look and see' variety. Children need to observe before they can question, and it is their own questions which give the greatest motivation and creativity. These observations are the key to further work with which can be discovered the relationships between creatures and plants. Explorations arising from children's curiosity will be at their own working level, and will remain in their memories for a very long time.

For schools that are not able to get away this summer, we have planned some of the activities so that children can do similar projects in and around school.

There is no letters section in the programmes this term. We will, however, be delighted to hear about your adventures, and as usual all letters will receive a written reply. This is a deliberate policy to encourage children's close involvement in their work. Also, please make use of this service yourself to let us know about your experiences and ask for advice.

If you are able to make field visits, it will be a good idea to make yourself a Natural Investigators' Kit. The kit has been described in more detail in past Looking at Nature booklets.

Natural Investigators' Kit



If this kit is kept ready at all times, it can be used both in the school grounds, and taken away from the building, as soon as a good day dawns! Check the individual programme notes to see if you need to add anything to the basic kit.

Obviously make a prior visit to your chosen habitat if you can. This will give you an idea of what to expect and your own project ideas can begin to develop. It could be that you will never need these ideas, but should the children need initial inspiration, you will be prepared.

One of the tricky things about field work is that there are so many changes in such a short time since your

visit, and during the day it may be that a shower of rain will alter all your plans, but at least you will be prepared with alternatives.

The Natural Investigators' Office

We have found that it helps if children can visualise this work place where the projects are carried out with its door, letterbox and sign hanging from the door knob, 'Natural Investigators in here' with 'Do not disturb' on the other side. We have had reports that classrooms have been turned into Natural Investigators' Offices with their own sign. Bedrooms at home have been similarly converted. Try the idea for yourself.

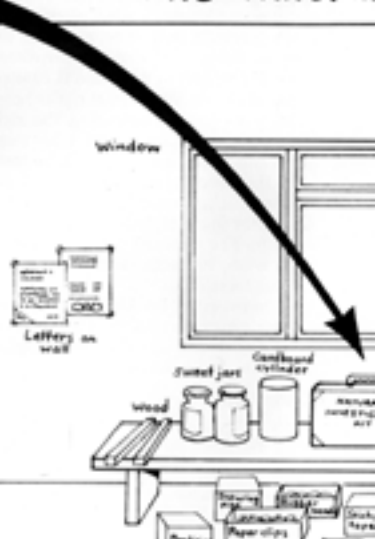
Looking at Nature Items

The Badges and Conker Fact sheets are both free and will be a useful addition for the start of the term.

The Database Booklet (£2) is a 40-page step-by-step guide to using a database for primary science including the topics of plant growth, eye colour, taste.

The Make a Nature Garden Competition continues again this year. Natural Investigators are encouraged to set up nature gardens to make homes for wildlife. Schools can send in for a free illustrated information sheet showing how to start and a smart plaque with a message from Timmy Mallett (£2).

The Natural



Looking at Nature items



Badge (free)

Conker fact sheet (free)

Database Booklet £2.00

Make a Nature Garden Competition information sheet (free)

Smart Garden Mague £2.00

Food Web Mobile £2.00



The Food Web Mobile (£2) is an attractive and informative kit for children to make and a valuable teaching aid for this topic.

This is the address for teachers' and pupils' letters.

And to obtain the items above make your cheques payable to the BBC and send a large stamped self-addressed envelope to:

The Natural Investigators' Office, Looking at Nature, BBC School Radio, 1, Portland Place, London, W1A 1AA.

Radiovision

Radiovision programmes have separate notes which you can purchase with the filmstrip. This is the reason why this booklet does not contain pages allocated to the Radiovision programme. Please order your filmstrip on the School Order Form well in advance of the broadcast. You can also order them at any time from the address in the Annual Programme.

Programme 1: Summer Activity (Radiovision)

This is an important filmstrip. You can check the illustrations in this booklet against photographs of some of the project ideas as they are being carried out by groups of children on their field trip to Swanage. Swanage is a particularly good location because the habitats illustrated in this booklet are all within a short distance of the YHA hostel with its special field study facilities.

The second part of the filmstrip contains pictures of classwork as a result of the school visit and the all-important feedback comments and advice from teachers who have tried out some of the ideas outlined in this booklet. The filmstrip will help those pupils who are unused to listening, to visualise the content of the broadcasts.

Investigators' Office

Microphone

Cardboard boxes

Weights

Bench

Letters

NATURAL INVESTIGATORS' IN HOUSE



STOP PRESS . . . The *Looking at Nature*; THE BIRD SPY software pack is available now! Write into the Natural Investigators' office for details.