

Activities to Teach Pupils about Irish Mini-Beasts!

Background Info and Fun Facts

- Mini-beasts are everywhere, if we just open our eyes to see them
- We think we are the rulers of the world but we are not. Without mini-beasts we would have no way of breaking down leaves, manure and dead plants and animals.
- The thing that all mini-beasts such as slugs, snails, spiders, worms, woodlice and beetles have in common is that they all have no back bone (invertebrates).



Curriculum Links

Subject	Strand	Strand Unit
Science	Living things	Animal life

1. Build A Bug Hotel (Junior and Senior)

- Under trees or in shady locations is the best site. Place the plastic on the ground. Logs put out spores of the honey fungus which spread under trees and destroy them. Cover with leaf mulch and bark mulch.
- Add in the logs in a pile or upright (this will attract bracket fungus).
- Make layers of bricks or tiles around the outside or just at the front or sides for access for investigation.
- Place wood on top and layer again with bricks, pipes or other available materials.
- Fill the gaps with straw, elder twigs, bamboo, moss and hay.
- Leave to decay!



2. Make A Woodlousery And Keep Woodlice In Class (Junior and Senior)

- Woodlice are easy to keep in class and observe. Keep a record and sketch the woodlice while in the classroom.
- Get a biscuit tin or plastic box. If using a biscuit tin, pierce the bottom with a screw driver or drill holes for drainage.
- Place some grit or sand on the bottom and fill the next two inches with soil.
- Finish the top layer with dead leaves, twigs and rotting wood.
- Place woodlice in the woodlousery and put the lid on to keep dark and retain moisture.
- Spray water to keep the atmosphere moist and keep in a cool place.
- Return woodlice to habitat when finished.



Web Links

- www.schoolearthead.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-oct-woodlouse.html to see a video on how to make a woodlousery and www.blackrockec.ie for more on mini-beasts
- www.insecthouse.co.uk + [Woodlice facts For Kids](#) for facts about woodlice