

Woodland activity idea

Simple ideas to inspire groups to engage with woods in a safe and fun way

8) Foraging for Rose Hips and making Rose-Hip Syrup/Tea over an open fire

Description of the activity / overview	Gathering Rose Hips and making Rose Hip Syrup/Tea over an open fire! Hips should be picked late in the season (During October and November is ideal) so there is a relatively short time period you can do this activity!
Permissions needed	Usual woodland permissions (with permission to forage) Fire permissions for fire or fire wok
Timescale	Works well in a 2-3 hour session or less if you prep the hips!
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Container for collecting Rose Hips(preferably metal so you can use it as a pot for boiling as well)• Water for boiling• Wooden spoon (one you have whittled)• Gloves for pouring water• Containers to take Syrup home and store• Labels• Ingredients for Syrup• Hand sanitizers and hand washing kit• Large bowl•• ~1kg rosehips, washed and chopped• ~1kg of caster sugar• Jelly bag/ or clean cotton cloth with a big sieve• ~3 litres of water (and more for hand washing)
Who's enjoyed it in the past?	Mind Groups, walking groups, historical groups and general public. Foraging sessions seem to attract more participants.

<p>Leader skills and knowledge needed to do the activity (minimum and desired)</p>	<p>This is an easy skill to learn with practice. Important to follow the forager's code and only pick what you need.</p> <p>Minimum requirement: leader knows what to pick and to do the activity beforehand.</p> <p>Desired: Previous foraging experience, knowledge of the folklore behind this session, food hygiene certificate.</p>
<p>Methodology</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start by outlining the usual health and safety features of your walk (length, pace, meeting points) risks of mistaking these rose hips for other red berries. 2. Great to find an example of a 'Hip' before you start to show the group what they should be looking for. Example is shown in the photo below. 3. De-seed rosehips by cutting the black part of the top and chopping in half, carefully use the knife to take out the hairy seeds (these can be very irritating to sensitive skin). It would be good to using plastic/surgical gloves when removing hairs/ seeds. The seeds/hairs as they must not contaminate anything which maybe eaten/drunk later. 4. Add two litres to the pan over the fire and bring to the boil, add in rosehips, then remove from heat 5. Cover and leave to infuse for half an hour and stir from time to time 6. Strain the mixture through muslin and place over a large bowl 7. Set the strained juice aside and transfer the pulp back into the pan along with another litre of water, repeat the last two steps. 8. Discard the pulp and combine the two lots of strained juice in a clean pan 9. Bring to the boil and boil until the volume has decreased by half 10. Add the sugar and stir until dissolved. Return to the stove and bring to the boil for 5 minutes. 11. Transfer to sterilised jars and seal (make sure to label them and add on dates) unopened it can keep up to 1 year.

Key elements	Health, walking, foraging, food, food hygiene, wartime stories
Online links	https://www.rivercottage.net/recipes/rosehip-syrup (River Cottage generally has great recipes for foraging)
Any other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for group to be wearing good walking boots if the ground is muddy/ uneven. • To keep encouraging the group to use hand sanitizer and to wash their hands throughout. • The hairy seeds inside the Rose Hips can be very itchy, they need to be taken out before the cooking process: this can be very time consuming and can be an irritant for those with sensitive skin. To save tip the leader could do this part (or at least half before the session starts) • Double-straining ensures that the tiny, irritant hairs found inside rosehips are removed
Special TIPS!	<p>Get as much of the pulp through the sieve as possible: this can be quite time consuming but it really helps thicken the syrup by getting plenty of the pectin through.</p> <p>Bring labels and pens so the group can get creative and make their own labels. This is also a useful activity if it's a large group and there are people standing around the fire!</p>
With thanks to Maggie Elsey and the Neath Port Talbot Actif Woods groups	



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