

TRAIL TALE

 New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

 Energise
Me

*FOREST
FRONT,
DIBDEN
PURLIEU*

WEIRD WILDLIFE

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TRAIL TALE

Trail Tales are stories that take you on a journey; quite literally.

Trail Tales are fun, free and family friendly stories that encourage people to explore their local area.

The stories are developed with local children and we hope that people will take the time to discover the wonderful green and blue spaces that exist on our doorsteps.

Being outdoors, being active, looking, listening and touching the world around us, can all help to improve our wellbeing, help us to feel happier about where we live, and improve our health.

You can use a physical copy of the trail booklet, for which you'll need a pencil or pen, or you can use the screen-based version. For that, you might need to take a photo of something to help you draw or write when you get home.

So grab your copy of the story and enjoy exploring.

This story was developed with the help of pupils from Wildground Federation.



April and Finn liked to watch the skateboarders at the Forest Front skatepark. Both of them were hoping for skateboards of their own at their next birthday, so for now had to be content with just watching.

1
ON
MAP

**TURN TO THE
MAP ON THE
BACK PAGE TO
SEE WHERE TO
BEGIN.**

“There’s nobody here,” said April with disappointment. “What are we going to do now?” It wasn’t just the skatepark that was empty. They couldn’t see anyone on the wide green space that made up Forest Front.

“Do you think we’re more likely to see the animals and birds when there’s nobody about like this?” asked Finn. “Maybe, if we’re quiet, we might see a fox, or a badger, or even a deer!”

“It would be fun to look,” agreed April, and so the pair of them headed off towards the nearest trees.

Standing on
top of the mound
by the skatepark, how
many of the following
can you see?

GOALPOSTS

PYLONS

DOGS

CROWS

**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**



At the trees, all they could hear was the traffic on the bypass, and there was no sign of a fox, badger or a deer. "How disappointing," said April. "Seeing wildlife is harder than we thought."

"So what's that then," asked Finn as he squinted. He was pointing at something amongst the branches of an oak tree.

"Eek!" said the creature. It was covered in green feathers. "Can you see me? You're not supposed to see me!"

"Are you a duck or an owl?" asked April. It was hard to tell.

"I'm neither," said the creature. "I'm a quoot. People don't normally see me because of my excellent camouflage."

"You do have lovely feathers," complimented April.

"Why, thank you," said the quoot. "Nobody's ever told me that before, what with people not normally seeing me."

"Are there other creatures like you, that we haven't heard of?" asked Finn.

"Oh, the New Forest is full of them," chuckled the quoot. "In fact, there are several right here, on Forest Front. Because you were so polite about my feathers, I'd be happy to introduce you to them, if you like."



**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

Draw
an oak
leaf.



The quoot took to the air, leading them across the playing field. On the other side of the bushes they could hear the busy traffic of the bypass. “Once upon a time, before the bypass was built, Forest Front was connected to the rest of the New Forest. It’s still part of the New Forest now, although the ponies can’t cross the road to visit any more,” said the quoot.

“Do you miss them?” asked April.

“Oh, I can just fly over the road whenever I want to,” explained the quoot. “But I always come back here. There’s something special about Forest Front that I really like.”

**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

Turn to face the road. Try to imagine no bushes, and no bypass. Can you picture it?

**3
ON
MAP**

“Are any of the mystery animals nearby?” Finn wondered.

“Not just yet,” said the quoot. “While we’re here, let’s put this playing field to good use. I’ll race you to the gate!” And with that, he was gone in a flutter of wings, the two children giving chase.

Either race somebody you’re with or time yourself to run all the way to the gate at the edge of the playing field.

**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**



The ground around them looked more like the New Forest now. “I can imagine when the ponies used to stand here,” said April.

**4
ON
MAP**



**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

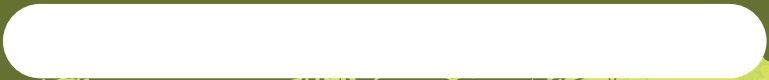
Draw a New Forest pony stood amongst the heather and gorse.

The path split. To the right it curved around a marshy area, but the quoot took them left, between bushes and trees.

**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

Look at the vegetation around you, paying close attention to the different kinds of leaves. How many different kinds of plant can you see? And can you name any?

**5
ON
MAP**



Eventually, the quoot guided them right, and then down to where there was a pond. "Is this it?" asked Finn. "Is this where another creature like you lives?"

"This creature isn't like me at all," laughed the quoot. "There's no one quite like a lippy-tappy-too."

From the centre of the pond rose the strangest creature April and Finn had ever seen. It looked like a cross between a horse, a shark and a dinosaur.

"What's all this then?" asked the lippy-tappy-too.

"I've brought some friends to say hello," said the quoot.

"It's a long time since I've made new friends," said the lippy-tappy-too.



**6
ON
MAP**

What animals
would you expect to live
in or on a pond?

**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

April and Finn were full of questions. “Why has nobody ever seen either of you before?” asked April.

“Long ago, people knew we existed,” said the lippy-tappy-too, “but nowadays they’re more interested in their cars and their phones and their TVs. I guess everyone just forgot about us.”

“Are there any more like you on Forest Front?” Finn asked.



“There’s one more,” said the quoot. “She might be harder to find, but we can try.” So they said goodbye to the lippy-tappy-too and headed away from the pond.

**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

Keeping a safe distance from the water, how many steps is it to walk along the edge of the pond?

**6
ON
MAP**

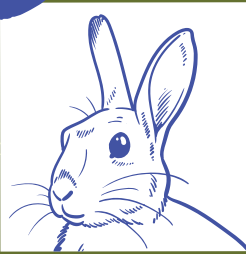
The quoot led them along a path beside a small wood. From here, they couldn't see the playing field or the skatepark at all. "I wonder what this other animal looks like," April whispered to Finn.

"Based on what we've met so far, it's hard to imagine!" Finn replied.

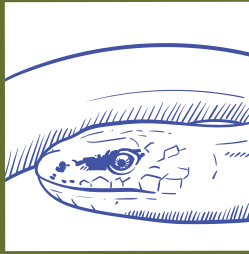
**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

Stop at one of the large benches along the path. Below are animals that all live at Forest Front. Can you complete their names?

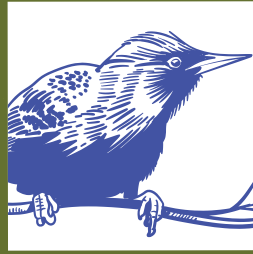
**7
ON
MAP**



___ B _ T



S ___ W ___



S ___ L ___



___ G



M ___ J _ C



___ ZZ _ RD

**8
ON
MAP**

They followed the path as it disappeared into the trees. "Hmmm," said the quoot. "She's not around here. Let's try this way."

Stop at the small bench in the woods and see if you can spy any bracket fungus. They often appear on dead trees.



**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

They headed back onto the heath, following a different path. "Keep your eyes open," said the quoot. "My friend is a little secretive. She could be anywhere."

Finn and April kept very quiet as they arrived at a wooden bench, looking towards the chimneys at Fawley. Then, to April's surprise and delight, she saw a black and white face amongst the bracken and gorse.

"Look, Finn, it's a badger! We were hoping to see a badger!" she said.

A flash of orangey-red appeared behind the hidden animal. "And a fox! There's a fox too!"

"That's not a badger or a fox," laughed the quoot. "You've found the garbridge."

On seeing the quoot, the secretive garbridge emerged from her hiding place. Bizarrely, she had the body of a badger and the tail of a fox. "Were you looking for me?" she asked.

"My new friends wanted to meet some of the unusual Forest Front animals," explained the quoot.

"I'm definitely one of those," said the garbridge.

**IT'S
YOUR
TURN**

**9
ON
MAP**

The chimneys you can see belong to Fawley Refinery. This was originally built in 1921, then rebuilt and extended from 1949. The bypass was built to help move the refinery's products when not using sea or rail. How many years ago was the original refinery built?



They stayed and chatted for a while before the garbridge announced that she must get going. This left April, Finn and the quoot with a choice of which way they could now go: left or right around the marsh.

9
ON
MAP

IT'S
YOUR
TURN

Take your pick. Which way will you go?

This brought them out near the playground. "Would you like to have a go with us?" asked April as she sprinted for the climbing equipment. The quoot decided that she would.

As they clambered and climbed, Finn got thinking. "Are there any more hidden creatures out in the New Forest," he wondered.

10
ON
MAP

"Oh, yes," said the quoot from his perch. "And if you stay alert, you just might spot one!"



IT'S
YOUR
TURN



Use your imagination to draw some weird wildlife by mixing up more than one creature.



Follow this link to find more trails and to let us know what you think.

TRAIL TALE

MINI GAMES!

- 1 Sit on the bench and listen. How many different bird songs, insect noises and other sounds of nature can you hear?
- 2 Count all the human-made objects you can see around you.

