

# Nature Play

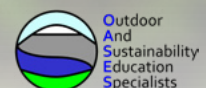
## Family Activity Pack Talkin Tarn Country Park



Fellfoot Forward is led by the North Pennines AONB Partnership and supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



In partnership with:



# Family Activity Pack

This family activity pack contains lots of nature inspired activities to help you take in the sights and sounds of Talkin Tarn Country Park. There are plenty of outdoor activities to do all year round, so take inspiration from the activities below and have your own fun-filled family adventure!

Did you know that the activities below could be used as part of the **Family John Muir Award**? The John Muir Award encourages awareness and responsibility for the natural environment in a fun and adventurous way.

The award has four challenges:

- Discover a Wild Place
  - Explore It
  - Conserve It
  - Share It



The activities in this resource have been split into themes based on the challenges.

To find out more visit

[www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award](http://www.johnmuirtrust.org/john-muir-award)

➤ Most of the activities require no resources. However, some activities may benefit from the following:

- Twine/string
- Magnifying glass
- Smartphone or camera

# Facilities

Talkin Tarn Country Park is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Toilets**

Open 9am - 5pm

- **Car Park** with a coach area and disabled parking spaces. Current car parking charges can be found here: <https://www.carlisle.gov.uk/talkintarn/Find-Us>



- **Boathouse Tea Rooms**

The tea rooms are open daily 11am – 3.30pm, with extended opening hours on a Saturday from 8am – 3.30pm. A takeaway service is available.

<https://www.carlisle.gov.uk/talkintarn/Planning-Your-Visit/Boathouse-Tea-Rooms>

- **Talkin Adventures**

Talkin Adventures offer exciting activity days for families including archery, stand up paddle boarding, canoeing and kayaking, along with boat hire every weekend and during the school holidays. To book visit:

<http://talkinadventures.com/>



# Map



## ● Fell Viewpoint

This place offers a panoramic viewpoint out to the fields and fells beyond Talkin Tarn Country Park. A sandstone monument at the top of the viewpoint is a great starting point to discuss the geology of the local area whilst looking out to the fells where coal mining and limestone quarrying used to take place.

## ● Wildlife Haven

Discover a stunning wildflower meadow in spring and summer; home to a huge variety of insects it is a great place to carry out a bug hunt. Access the bird hide all year round and use the colourful mural, painted by local artist Lydia Leith, to identify your sightings.

## ● Interesting Island

Although not quite an island, this area certainly has the feeling of one as it sticks out into the tarn. Small sandy beaches offer access to calm and shallow water, ideal for spotting wildlife or testing out boats made from natural materials.

## ● Low Woodland

With soft moss underfoot and a variety of trees, such as oak and beech, this is a lovely woodland to explore and is easily accessible via a short trail from the main path.

## ● High Woodland

The view from the top is worth the climb from the main path. A lovely flat area awaits you with great views over the tarn and ancient trees towering overhead.

## ● Flat and Open Space

Located just next to the main path, this is an accessible flat and open space. Discover a variety of trees and see if you can spot the animal wood carvings.

# Discover

## Spring

*Recommended location:*

**Low Woodland**



In spring, birds are busy making nests! They communicate with each other by singing. Find a comfy spot to sit and listen to the birds around you. Can you imitate any of the sounds they make?

## Autumn

*Recommended location:*

**Low Woodland** or **High Woodland**

Watch the trees burst into colour as the leaves turn shades of red, golden yellow, brown, and orange. Swish and crunch through the fallen leaves on the woodland floor. Can you catch any leaves as they fall from the trees? Who can catch the most?

## Summer

*Recommended location:*

**Wildlife Haven**

During the summer months (May to August), look out for common blue damselfly. They start their life underwater as larvae before they take to the skies! Admire the bright colours of the wildflower meadow and see if you can spot a flash of blue as the damselflies zoom around.

## Winter

*Recommended location:*

**Flat and Open Space**

Winter is a great time to try stargazing as it gets dark early enough for even young children to be able to see the stars. Visit Talkin Tarn on a clear night and marvel at the constellations.

*Image 1: Dragonfly - [Clipart Library](#)*

*Image 2: Daffodil - [Clipart Library](#)*

*Image 3: Autumn leaf - [Clipart Library](#)*

*Image 4: Dragonfly - [Clipart Library](#)*

# Discover

## Nest challenge

Birds are skilled builders. Using their claws and beak they build strong nests to keep their chicks safe. Can you build a nest like a bird?

Find a spot for your nest. Using either two fingers, like a bird's claws, or putting your hands together, like a bird's beak, can you build a bird nest using sticks and leaves?



## Build a tower

Who can build the tallest tower using sticks or stones?

## Scavenger Hunt

Can you find everything?

Something soft

Something straight



Something green

Something yellow

Something spotty

Something prickly

# Spotter Sheet

How many of these things can you spot at Talkin Tarn?



Duck



Boat



Beech leaf



Butterfly



Bug



Flower



Swan



Bee



Moss



Pine cone



# Collection Challenge

Can you find and collect all of these things?

Something smaller than your nail



A leaf bigger than your hand



A pine cone



A stick as long as your little finger



A green leaf



Something the same colour as an item of clothing you are wearing



A feather



A flower



Some green moss



A small stone



Image 1: Pinecone - [Clipart Library](#)

Image 2: Flower - [Clipart Library](#)

Leaf - [Clipart Library](#)

# Spotter Sheet

## Find a sturdy tree.

Look for one with lots of nooks or a Y shape fork.

## Collect strong branches.

Build a good frame by wedging these branches into your sturdy tree. Make sure that they are secure and won't move easily.

## Collect smaller branches.

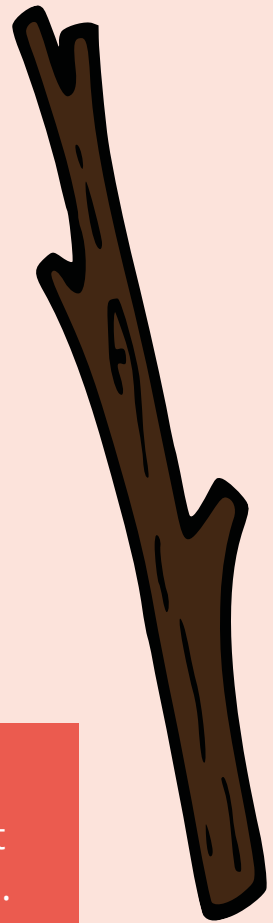
Place these branches against your tree and main branches.

## Fill in the gaps.

Weave small sticks and leaves in and out of the branches or use mud to plaster the den walls.

## Explore your den.

Make sure your den is sturdy then crawl inside. What can you see? Close your eyes; what can you hear?



# Minibeast Hunt

There are all kinds of minibeasts hiding around Talkin Tarn. Can you find any?

Look in different locations to discover what minibeasts are hiding there.

**Be gentle:** Remember minibeasts are much smaller than you.

**Be careful:** Don't try to catch or hold of stinging insects, such as bees or wasps.

**Return them home:** Once you have finished looking at it, return the minibeast to where you found it.



Look at the minibeasts closely. What do you notice?

How many legs do they have?

What colour are they?

Do they have a pattern?



# Bird Watch

Lots of different birds visit Talkin Tarn throughout the year. Visit the bird observatory, located just off the path, to see the bird mural created by local artist Lydia Leith. **Can you spot any of the birds that are painted on the mural?**



# Tree-mendous Trees

There are lots of different types of trees in Talkin Tarn Country Park, some of which are hundreds of years old. How many different types of trees can you find?



Hazel



Birch



Beech



Lime



Oak

## Meet a Tree

Choose one person to close their eyes.

Spin them round a couple of times then lead them to a tree.

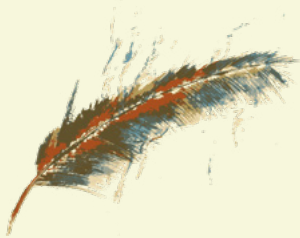
Ask them to feel the tree with their hands. What does the bark feel like?  
Can they get their arms around the tree?

Guide them back to the start. Can they guess which tree they were taken to?

# Wildlife Detectives

Animals leave clues which we can use to learn more about them.

Become wildlife detectives and hunt for clues. What do you find? Examine your findings to discover what animals call Talkin Tarn Country Park home.



Feathers

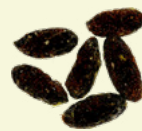


Tracks

Like molehills



Animal activity



Animal poo



Nibbled nuts and seeds



Habitats

Click on the animal track to view an animal tracks ID guide



## Natural Rainbow

Collect natural items from the ground in as many different colours as possible. Use these to create a rainbow.



## Me Space

Find a comfortable spot to sit in quietly for a few minutes. What do you see? What can you hear?

## Water Music

Find a quiet spot to stand by the tarn.

What sound is the water making?

Can you hear any patterns in the water?

Can you make other sounds in the water? Try swirling a stick or skimming a stone.



## Mud Painting

Collect different sized sticks and twigs. Find a patch of mud and use the sticks to draw some pictures.



## Mobile

Find two sticks and tie them together to create a frame. Find leaves and flowers to hang from the end of each of the sticks to create a beautiful mobile.

# Mystery Photograph

There are so many interesting patterns to see in nature.  
Play this fun game to take a closer look at the things around you.

Choose one person to take a photograph while everyone else closes their eyes. Take a photograph of something interesting nearby, such as the spots underneath a bracken leaf. Return and show the photograph; can they work out where your photo was taken?



## What Is It?

Collect some different natural items.  
Take it in turns to make up a creative story about each item.

A curled up leaf could be a boat used by a spider to travel across the tarn.

A stick could be a dragon bone.



## Eye Spy

Take it in turns to choose and describe something. Can the others guess what you are describing?

## Smelly Potion

Add natural ingredients, like leaves and flowers, into a cup. Crush them, rip them or squash them to release their smells, then add a little water and stir with a stick. Add in some more ingredients; does it change the smell of the potion?



# Conserve

## iSpy a Hedgehog

In the last ten years, hedgehog numbers have fallen by 30%. Help scientists understand more about hedgehog numbers in Cumbria, by [recording a hedgehog sighting](#) if you see one at Talkin Tarn Country Park.



## iRecord Butterflies

Download the free iRecord Butterflies app on your phone and be guided through the identification of any butterfly you spot in Talkin Tarn Country Park. Use the app to add your sighting to millions of other valuable records that inform Butterfly Conservation.

## Considerate Travel

Cars release harmful greenhouse gas emissions in to the atmosphere which contribute to climate change. Instead of taking the car, hop on the train or travel on foot or by bike to Talkin Tarn Country Park.



# Share

## Say Cheese

Take photos of yourselves completing some of the activities and share them on social media. We'd love to see what you've been up to.

**@NorthPenninesAONB**

**#fellfootforward**

## Wonderful Words

Come up with five words or a sentence together that describes your day of adventures. Share them online to inspire others to get active outdoors and connect with nature.

## Frame It

Collect four sticks and tie them together to make a frame. Use the frame to take pictures of your favourite landscape, plants or animals at Talkin Tarn Country Park and share them online.

## John Muir Award

Take part in the John Muir Award and share your experiences at Talkin Tarn Country Park.