



The Usborne Outdoor Book: Inspiring ideas for discovering and exploring outdoors

Books Reviewed:

[The Usborne Outdoor Book: Inspiring ideas for discovering and exploring outdoors](#) [1]

Issue:

[219](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Margaret Mallett](#) [3]

Not a Choice:

off

BfK Rating:

4

A recent poll conducted by The Wildlife Trust showed that many parents felt their young children did not spend enough leisure time exploring the outdoors. Learning about the natural world is important in school, too, and so it is not surprising that there is an abundance of nature books to choose from. Like similar books, this one is structured round sections covering different environments - ponds, rivers and seas, woods and wild areas. We join children as they investigate nature in different weathers and during the day and night time. The book has some welcome strengths; the pages have a modern look with an arrangement of illustrations and written text which will be inviting to young readers who also use on-screen information sources. There are annotated diagrams, information boxes and clearly set out instructions for such things as crabbing, dipping, pitching a tent and for mapping a place children have explored. The paintings of landscapes and seascapes and the creatures and plants that inhabit them are alive with interesting information, giving a welcome sense of place and encouragement for children's own sketching and note taking. I like the way the young readers are addressed directly: 'If you're near a river or pond, you could try to find out what creatures live under the water. See what happens when you build a dam, too.' The creators of this book know how to capture children's interest. In the 'Night explorer' section the two children who have accompanied readers through the book set out on a nocturnal nature hunt and learn how to trap moths and how to stargaze. I know from experience that children find forays into the dark atmospheric and exciting and here some structure is given to such explorations.

Young readers are helped to keep safety in mind and also to show respect for the countryside and its creatures, for example by not touching nests and carefully putting beetles back after they have been observed. A continuing interest in nature and the outdoors in all seasons and weathers is encouraged by the additional suggestions detailed on the well-established Usborne Quicklinks website.

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Links:

[1] <http://savfikn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-usborne-outdoor-book-inspiring-ideas-for-discovering-and-exploring-outdoors-0>

[2] <http://savfkn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/219>

[3] <http://savfkn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/margaret-mallett>