

# The Happy Hedgerows Project



A joint project by the Pöhlbergzwerge day nursery and the Erzgebirge/Vogtland Nature Park

## Project content:

We want to discover nature together with the children by looking at hedges. We will learn that hedgerows are habitats for lots of different plants and animals. And the hedges have something to offer humans, too: the flowers, leaves and fruits of some shrubs not only taste good, but are healthy too! We want to find out which ones. The wood from the shrubs is great for crafting and making things. After we have discovered their treasures, we will think about how we can look after the hedges – because they need our care and protection!



## Project aims:

- We want to explore the hedgerow habitat with all our senses, so that we can learn to love it – which we need to do so that we can interact with nature with care and consideration. Fuchsi the Little Caterpillar will help us!
- We want to discover the hedgerow plants and find out what uses they have for us
- We want to observe the animals that live in the hedgerows. We want to discover through play what needs they have and learn that nature is interconnected
- We want to talk about the dangers for hedges and to think about what we can do to preserve and care for them



## Somatic education (body, movement, and health)

### We want to FEEL GOOD!

- We will learn to make sure that we are wearing the right clothes: when we go on our outings, we need long-sleeve T-shirts, trousers and hats – even in summer! When it rains, we need wellies and waterproof ponchos

- We will learn how to control our bodies in different situations (creeping and whispering when observing animals; dancing, hopping and singing when we're making music or theatre)

- We will learn that wild herbs and fruits are not only tasty, but also very healthy

- When we go exploring, we will TAKE THE TIME to listen, watch, feel, smell and taste nature; to be present and relax



**Social education (living and working in a group; asking grown-ups for help; becoming a team; taking responsibility; showing empathy; being considerate)**  
**We want to INVOLVE all the children and lots of adults (parents, experts and colleagues) in our project**

- We will empathise with Fuchsi and care for him → we will build a home for him and find friends for him (crafting with cardboard and stones)
- We will ask grown-ups for advice and work together with them – for example with our parents or with “experts”
- We will act in accordance with shared values and agree on rules for living together in and with nature (respect for nature and interacting with care for all of nature’s living creatures)
- We will be considerate of plants and animals and treat them as creatures with feelings – just like people
- We will vote and agree on different activities, such as building a picture frame or making elderflower syrup



**Communication education (we will relate to each other using speech, body language, facial expressions and gestures; we want to express what we like and what we don’t like; we want to make and keep agreements)**  
**We want the children to be able to enter into a natural DIALOGUE amongst themselves, with their teachers and parents, and with other adults**

- We will do a morning sharing circle, and Fuchsi will encourage the children to talk and to ask questions
- We will do interviews with ☒ pharmacists, natural health practitioners and people at the weekly market and herbal cooking studio
- We will imitate animals through pantomime (without talking)
- We will look at the way we use facial expressions and gestures



**Aesthetic education (we will explore nature with all our senses – smelling, seeing, hearing, feeling and tasting)**  
**We want to experience nature and art in harmony with all our senses. We want to APPRECIATE all of nature’s features**

- We will process and cook ingredients from nature (stinging nettle leaves, elderflower blossoms, rosehips, raspberries) (tasting)
- We will make a picture frame and decorate it with things we have collected (feeling)
- We will print place mats using leaves we have collected and paint (feeling)
- We will make natural instruments out of sticks, leaves and berries (hearing)



- We will dye fabric using stinging nettle leaves (seeing)
- We will make scented bags using rose petals (smelling)
- We will perform a play (The Very Hungry Caterpillar)



**Natural science education (we will discover nature and its treasures; we will ask questions and look for answers)**

**We want to give the children time to DISCOVER nature in peace and to paint or report on their observations**

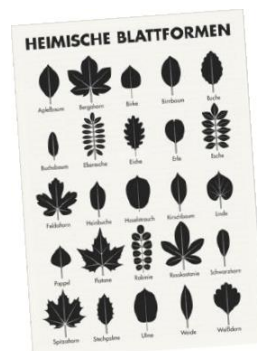
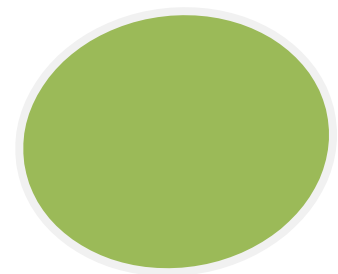
- We will learn about the different herbs and shrubs that live in the hedgerows (stinging nettles, elder, dog roses)
- We will learn about how flowers develop into fruit (elderflower blossom → elderflower berries; roses → rosehips)
- We will learn how plants and animals defend themselves
- We will learn about the lives of butterflies and observe the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly (experimenting)
- We will also talk about the contents of wild fruits → what do they have inside them? Do they contain minerals and vitamins, and what are their benefits? Why are raspberries picked from the bush much healthier than those from the freezer?



**Maths education (we incorporate maths into day-to-day nursery activities)**

**We encounter maths everywhere and need it for all sorts of things in everyday life. We build activities such as sorting, ordering, comparing and orienting into the programme so that the children can play with numbers almost without noticing that it's maths**

- We will build a picture frame and choose a shape (square or rectangle). To do this, we will also need to take measurements, such as measuring the sides with tools like rulers or measuring sticks
- We want to cook! To make sure that the tasty treats we make come out right, we have to put the right amount of every ingredient into the pot – We will learn to use scales and weigh ingredients
- We will make place mats, which can be different shapes → oval or rectangular, for example
- We will learn about the different shapes of leaves → oval, round, heart-shaped, serrated, toothed
- We will compare the sizes of different fruits → small elderberries, medium-sized rosehips, big hazelnuts



- We will pick a set weight and compare how many berries are needed to reach it (lots of light elderberries, but just a few big, heavy hazelnuts)



**Highlights:**

- Elderflower festival where we will taste the treats we have made
- Closing ceremony with tastings and a theatre performance