

Mobile art

You will need:

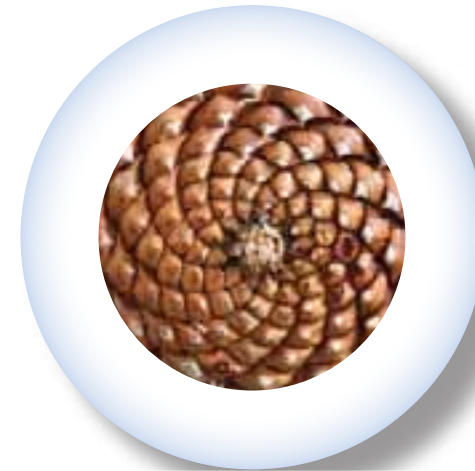
Sticks

String

Woodland objects

Make a mobile by tying twigs together. Suspend objects from each end of the twigs. Find the point of balance and suspend from a treebranch with another piece of string.

Leave for others to find. Take a photo for yourself.



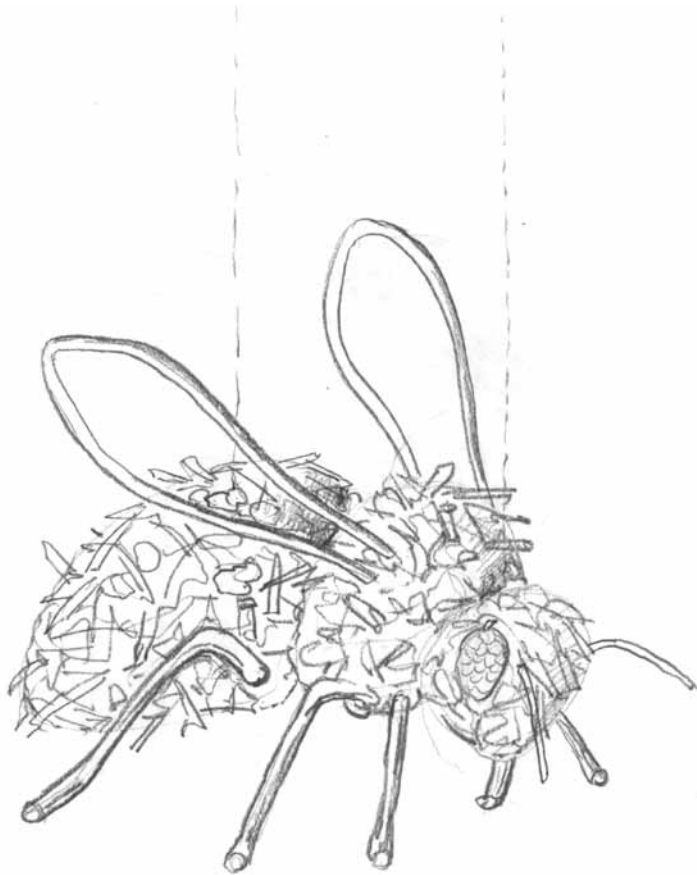
Art and Music

Twig sculpture

Collect twigs and other woodland products. Make sculptures of people or woodland animals.

Have a look at this website for the ultimate inspiration:

<http://www.sallymatthews.co.uk/text.html>



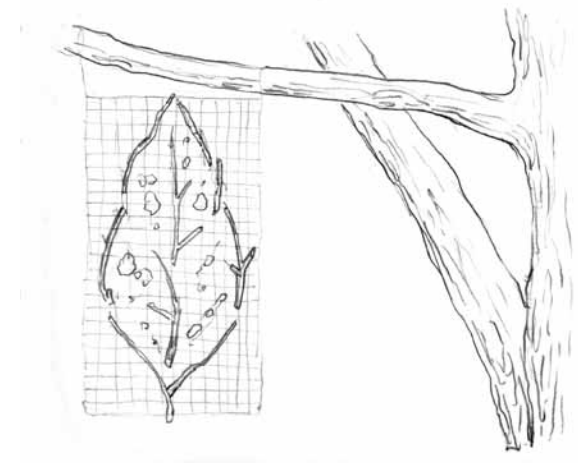
Nature pictures



Create a frame on the woodland floor using branches. Collect woodland objects to make a picture inside the frame. Leave for others to find. Take a photo for yourself.

Make a net from string and then hang woodland objects from the net by either tying them to it or threading them through. Suspend the finished image from a tree branch

<http://chestofbooks.com/crafts/popular-mechanics/Amateur-Work-I/Making-Hammocks-I-A-Net-Hammock.html>



Perspective

Find 2 trees or 2 of your friends and draw them from different angles. Notice where the horizon is in relation to the top and bottom of the objects as you move position.



Choose a tree and draw it from lots of different focal points. Lie down, sit, stand, between your legs, high, low, far, near and different sides etc.

Collage

Collect nuts, seeds, leaves and twigs to make a collage. Stick to paper using double sided sticky tape or sew onto fabric.

Alternatively, take lots of photos of a scene. Try to get the whole scene by standing in one place and taking photos looking up and down and while turning a whole 360 degrees. Put all these images together to form one picture.

Make a painting from the photographic montage. Perhaps you could get your friends to help. Copy each section of the image using different media and colours and then paste back together.



Or, if you have a little longer, choose a scene and take photos at different times of the day or even year and then make a montage from them all.

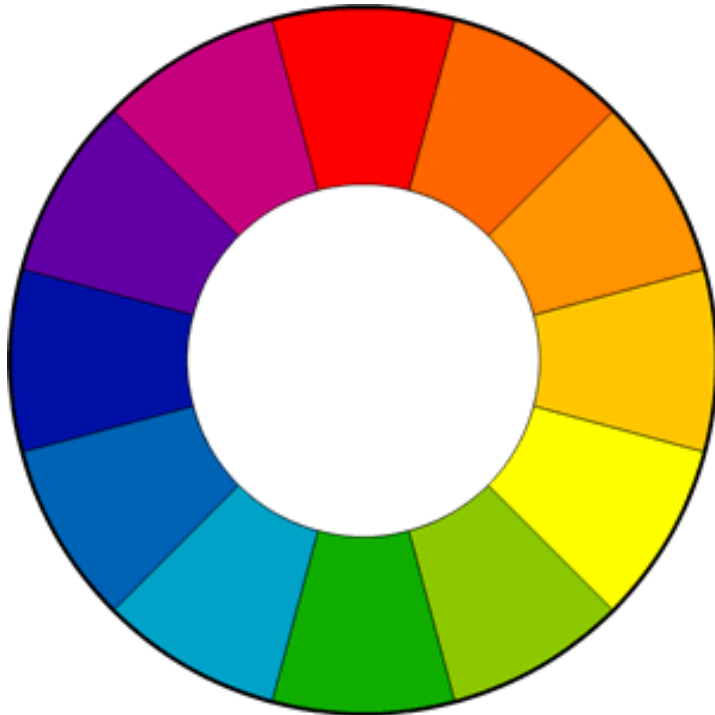
Colour wheels

Print out a copy of this colour wheel and take it on your next visit to the Wyre. How many colours can you find? Collect things that represent each colour or photograph them. Try to reproduce the colour wheel with objects and photos.

Which colours are hardest to find?

Why do you think this is?

Do the colours you find change with the season?



Nettle and Bramble String



Background

Early people found that some plants were a source of long fibres and developed the craft of string making. Lengths of fine threads gave people the ability to make fitted clothes, repair tears in their clothes, make nets for fishing and trapping, secure thatch onto shelters, make draw cords for pouches etc.

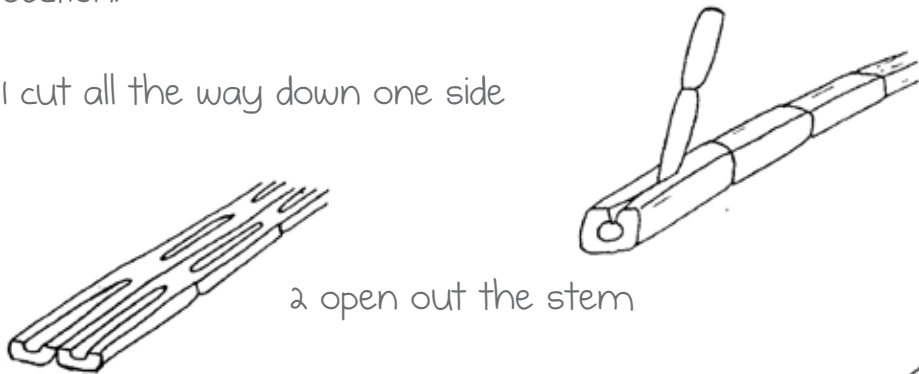
In an ancient woodland there are many sources of good fibre ranging from the stem of tall plants, the inner bark (bast) of some trees, long tree roots and even the underground threads of certain fungi. All require slightly different preparation.

Two of the most readily available sources of fibre are from Nettles and Brambles. Although the preparation for each plant is different, the method of rolling the fibres into string is the same, and so is described once only.

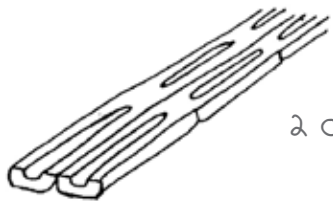
Preparing Nettles

Collect stems from mature or dying plants. Using a knife or scissors cut the stems as low to the ground as you can. Pinch the stem at the base with your finger tips (wear gloves) and with your knife or scissors trim off all the leaves so that just the central stem remains. With a rag or piece of clothing, rub up and down the stem firmly to remove the stinging hairs. Notice that the stem is square in cross section.

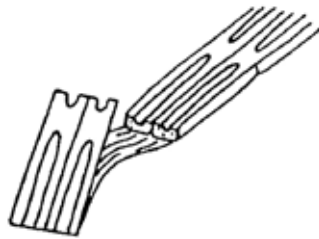
1 cut all the way down one side



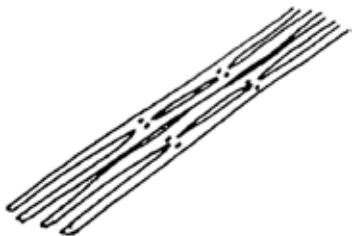
2 open out the stem



3 starting at the thick end snap and peel away sections of inside pith making sure every last bit is removed



4 eventually you will be left with just the fibres



Preparing Brambles

Collect green stems between May and early July of between 1 and 4 metres long. (After this time it is still possible to make string but much more tedious).

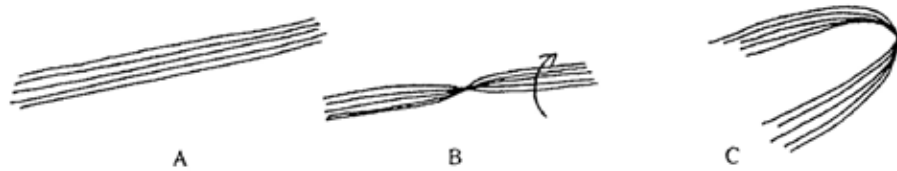
Cut the stem and trim off all the leaves and thorns with either a knife or a thick piece of rag. Scrape away the thin outer green layer using a blunt knife. With a smooth stone or stick, lightly flatten the stem all along its length, peeling away as many of the longest strips of outer fibre as you can. Using your finger nail or a knife, open up the fibre sections and pull them carefully apart into millimetre thicknesses.

Now leave the Nettle or Bramble fibres to dry for a couple of days to avoid shrinkage later. When you are ready to roll the string, dip the dried material into water for about 20 seconds to soften it.



Rolling the fibres into string

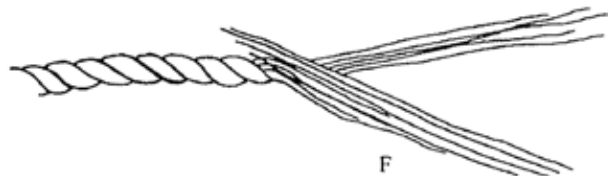
With the materials you now have, select 4 or 5 lengths and twist them in the middle, then bend the bundle over to effectively make two bundles (see diagrams A, B and C below)



Hold the middle and twist each bundle in the same direction as each other (see diagrams D and E below)



Wrap the bundles onto each other in the opposite direction. Keep the bundles about the same thickness as each other. As soon as one of the bundles becomes thinner, or comes close to finishing, add more fibres and twist them into the bundle and carry on (see diagram F below)



Keep the thickness of rope the same by adding only the amount of fibres you need. Often this will mean adding small amounts regularly. To finish, tie the end in a knot and trim off any protruding ends.

Other sources of fibre

Small-leaved Lime
Elm inner bark
Horse radish stems
Burdock stems
Horse hair
Hogweed stems
Spruce roots
Honey fungus threads

"Crafts from the countryside" Wyre Forest Discovery Centre, Forestry Commission.

www.wildpath.co.uk/blog-and-bushcraft-tutorials/item/4-making-string-from-nettle-bramble-and-other-natural-fibres.html

Musical instruments

Make musical instruments from woodland objects. Here are some ideas to try:

Drum - hollow tree with material stretched over hole.

Maraccas - Tupperware containers filled with acorns

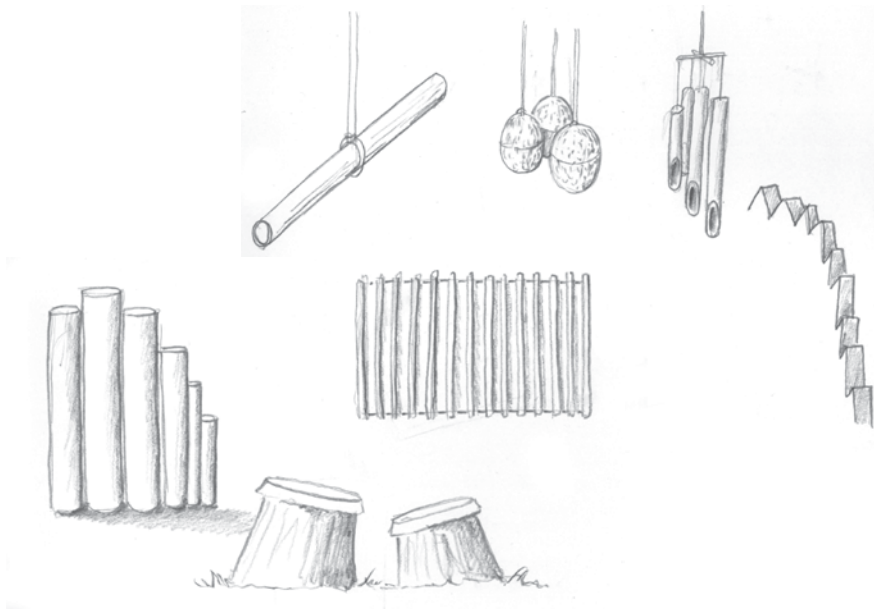
Xylophone - Cut sticks at different lengths and plant in the ground.

Washboard - Find a backboard and then pin lots of sticks to it so that they are all touching side by side

Chimes - Use lengths of bamboo and string to make a mobile chime that you can hang from a tree to catch the wind

Hang pieces of wood of different lengths from a pole. Strike them with a short stick. Do they give different notes?

Can you invent any more instruments?



Memory string

Collect leaves and other woodland objects and thread them onto string. Hang it up to remind you of your visit to the Wyre.



Leaf Lacing

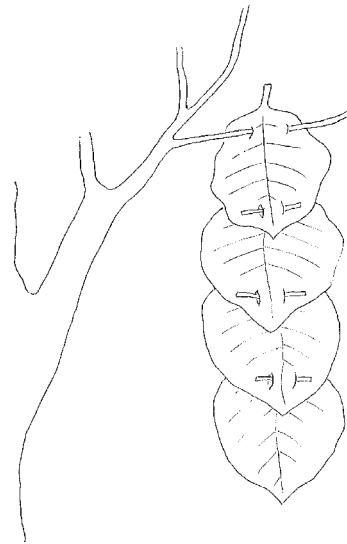
An Andy Goldsworthy-inspired experience!

Sculptor Andy Goldsworthy uses natural materials to create ephemeral art - it lasts only a short while but can be captured in photographs.

Anyone who can make a daisy chain can successfully make chains of leaves laced together with tiny pieces of thin twig. Green leaves are much easier to join than crisp, brown ones. Overlap the stalk end of one leaf with the tip of the next and push a piece of twig through both layers - in and back out to the front. Birch twigs are the best for this.

Try these variations:

- ★ Make the chains as long as possible and attach them to branches so that the light shines through them
- ★ Make a chain of each different leaf type that you can find
- ★ Make spirals or snakes on the ground
- ★ Make a cobweb of laced leaves and suspend it from a tree



How will your leaf lacings have changed by the time you next come to the forest?

Green man

Look for hidden faces in the trees. Either sketch or photograph them.

Can your friends and family see the same faces?

