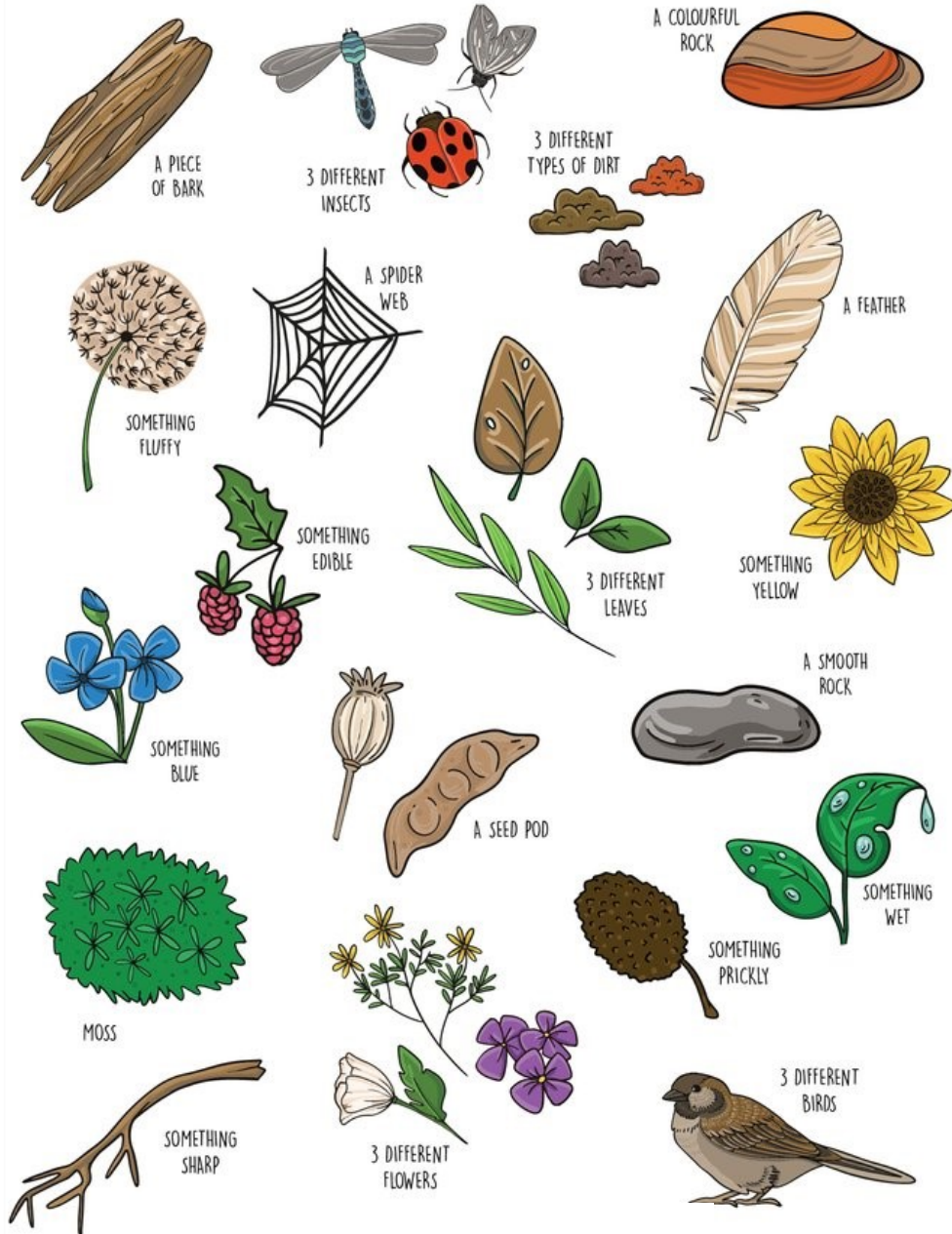




Nature Hunt



Can you find these things whilst out walking?



OPT circular walks

OXFORD PRESERVATION TRUST

Dreaming Spires Walk

This circular walk is approximately 2½ miles and takes around an hour at a steady pace.



Getting to the start (by car)

Boars Hill lies to the south of Oxford. At the ring road junction with the A34 to Abingdon take the road signposted Boars Hill and Wootton (Hinksey Hill).

At the top of the hill, turn right. After a mile, turn right again onto Berkeley Road.

Parking: Parking available in the layby next to Foxcombe Hall (OX1 5HR)

Share your experience:

Twitter:@OxfordPresTrust or Facebook

1. Start at the kissing gate into the Old Berkeley Golf Course by the information board.

2. Bear right, following a well-worn path that initially runs parallel with Berkeley Road. The path bends to the left and towards an impressive copse of Scots Pine. Head down the gentle slope to a gated pedestrian footbridge.

3. Cross the footbridge and walk straight across the field to another pedestrian footbridge.

4. Walk diagonally right to a gate on the bridleway. Follow the bridleway and through a second gate..

5. Bear left and walk to a gateway in the hedge. Once through the gate, walk up the gentle slope to the crest of the hill—aim for the right-hand end of a stretch of hedge.

6. When you reach the top of the hill you will see the Signal Elm tree (really an oak), which inspired Matthew Arnold in 1865 to write *Thyrsis* when he was out walking.

7. Before getting to the Signal Elm, walk along to the bench and enjoy the 'dreaming spires' views, again made famous by Matthew Arnold.

8. Walk through the small enclosure around the Signal Elm and straight ahead, parallel with the fence on your right to join the bridleway at the end of the field.

9. At the bridleway you can choose two options:

(a) turn right and follow the path down to Chilswell Farm. At the bottom, do not leave the field but turn right and walk with the hedge on your left. This is the bridleway mentioned previously. At the second gate (mentioned in point 4) retrace your steps back to the start.

(b) turn left and follow the path up to The Ridgeway. Follow the bridleway between the fields, undulating through some woodland. After walking next to a stretch of brick wall on your left, you will come to The Ridgeway (a private road). Turn left and walk with care to the end of the road near Foxcombe Hall and your starting point.

