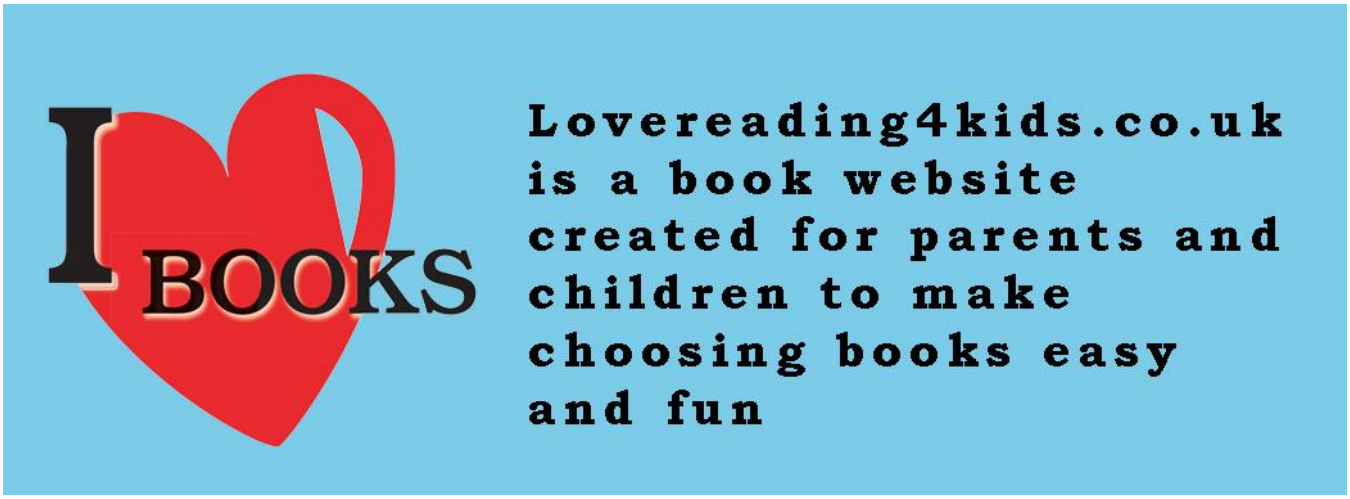


Opening extract from

Wild Adventures

Written & Illustrated by

Brita Granstrom & Mick Manning

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To Melker and Kristina Granström for happy times
and wild adventures shared in Lapland – *Mick and Brita*

This book contains some potentially dangerous activities. Please note that any readers, or anyone in their charge, taking part in any of the activities described, do so at their own risk. YOU MUST therefore follow the common-sense SAFETY TIPS which appear throughout the book. Neither the authors nor the publisher can accept any legal responsibility for any harm, injury, damage, loss or prosecution resulting from the activities described.

It is illegal to carry out any of these activities on private land without the owner's permission, and there are laws relating both to the protection of land, property, plants and animals, and to the use of weapons.

JANETTA OTTER-BARRY BOOKS

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The illustrations in this book are in pencil and watercolour.
Mick has done most of the natural history drawings while Brita has drawn the people, a selection of the plants, some seaside creatures and the hand lettering.
Find out more about Mick and Brita's books at: www.mickandbrita.com.

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WILD ADVENTURES



Mick Manning & Brita Granström

FRANCES LINCOLN
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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Introduction

In this book we want to share some of the ways we have fun outdoors exploring nature through play and activities with our own four children. We'll show you how to build dens and make secret signals; how to recognise star constellations and cloud shapes; how to encourage wildlife into your garden. We'll even catch you a fish, cook it on a campfire and then bake you a cake in an empty orange skin... You'll need to have grown-up help with some of the projects and you must always follow the safety guidelines, but if you follow the pages in this book, then together we can have some wild adventures!

STAY SAFE

Always follow the safety advice in the red circles. Please note that many of the traditional activities are intended to be done as a family or with adult help. So follow all the instructions very carefully, and wherever we say "with adult help" make sure a grown-up is helping you. And after all that, remember to have fun!

Woodland Adventures

Trees to climb, animals to spot, dens and hide-outs to make... There is so much going on in the woods – stop and listen to the sounds of bird calls and the creak and rustle of leaves and branches. What could be a better, ever-changing setting for wild adventures – at any time of year? There are many woodland parks and nature reserves you can explore, as well as wild woods.

The Cycle of Life

Dead and fallen trees provide food for fungi and bacteria, and these nourish a world of mini-beasts, who enrich the soil for new trees to grow. Small insects and micro-organisms also live in the leaf litter, and become food for many birds and small mammals.

This is a long-eared owl.

Many sorts of owls love woodland, catching the small animals that live there. Owls often nest in woods too.

I can feel it's a birch tree!

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Have you ever drummed on a hollow log? Woodpeckers do it – so have a go yourself and listen for a reply!

Meet a Tree

Trees are amazing, living things, and no two trees are the same; crooked or creaky, mossy or smooth, each tree has its own personality. You need at least two people for this adventure and you have to be among trees. Take turns and blindfold one person with a scarf, then take them to a tree. Without peeping, using only their senses of touch, hearing and smell, they must get to know their tree... After five minutes they are taken away a short distance and gently spun around. Take off the blindfold! Now, can they find 'their' tree?

Climb a Tree

Tree climbing can be fun – oak trees are great for this.

Has it got rough or smooth bark?

What sort of sound does it make?

Has it got a scent?

STAY SAFE

Never climb on rotten or mossy wood. Avoid horse-chestnut trees and willows, as their branches can easily snap.

Never climb too high or stretch too far...

Yee-hah!

and always hold on with at least one hand at all times...

In the woods, look for the signs of animal feeding activity.

Hazelnuts eaten by:

1. Mouse

2. Nuthatch

3. Vole

Squirrels leave gnawed cones lying around.

Beavers are common in many countries and have recently been introduced back into the UK... so if you are near water, keep your eyes open for the feeding signs left by their powerful teeth.

Games in the Woods

Secret signals, using patterns of sticks and stones, have been used for thousands of years by hunters and travelling people all over the world and, more recently, secret signs were re-invented by boy scouts and girl guides. You can have fun leaving secret signs and turn it into an exciting hide-and-seek game.

Turn left.

Go this way - over obstacles.

Collect some small sticks and pebbles to carry with you, to save time.

This way.

This way.

Turn right.



Don't follow this trail.

Go this way.

'Nature chase' is a good woodland game.

Message this way.

Gone home/ Back to base.

Hidden! Walk 6 paces in direction of arrow.

STAY SAFE

Don't cross roads or deep water.

Nature chase

Use your secret signs with this game. You'll need a family or a gang of mates. Choose two 'lone wolves' to start as the sign-makers and give them 20 minutes to get a good start. The lone wolves must leave a sign about every 50 paces. Twist and turn – don't go in a straight line – and then at the end, HIDE! Can your wolf pack find you? A variation is to make a trail ending in a hidden bag of sweets, and see if the others can find it by following your trail. Maybe you need to jot down a chart explaining each sign, in case they forget!



Shelters

Shelters and dens are great fun to make, and they keep you warm and dry too. If you have younger brothers and sisters, their shelter might become a sheriff's office or a bandit's hide-out. In fact your shelter can become anything you want it to be. Think up a password that you have to say before you can enter, so that only you and your mates can get in!







Make a Tent

You will need:

- Two poles about one metre/three feet high
- Tarpaulin or old sheet/blanket for a cover
- A groundsheet for inside
- Strong string or an old washing line (10 metres/30 feet)
- Wooden sticks or metal tent-pegs
- Strong string, non-plastic washing line or cord for the guy ropes

1. Hammer the two poles into the ground, about two metres/six feet apart (or find two trees about two metres/six feet apart). Stretch the string or washing line between the two sticks/trees and tie very tightly.
2. Stretch the poles taut with two long guy ropes pegged into the ground, one at each end of the tent.
3. Place your cover across the top of your string and then stretch and peg it tight with wooden sticks or metal tent pegs. To do this, you need to make some holes at the four corners of your cover, and tie on some short guy ropes, one at each corner. These keep the tent tight in the breeze. Put a plastic groundsheet inside your tent to keep out the damp when you lie inside.

Make a Den

You can make your den with brushwood, old sheets, tarpaulins, rope and grass – and imagination!

STAY SAFE

Don't use bracken for covering your shelter, as the fine spores of bracken can be harmful if you breathe them in.



Teepee-style

Gather branches of a similar length and tie them at the top with strong garden string. Cover with smaller branches, grass and leaves. For a waterproof finish, try an old sheet, groundsheet or tarpaulin on top.





Fishbone-style

If you find a tree with a fork, wedge a branch into the fork and place branches in a fishbone pattern. Cover with brushwood and straw or use your tarpaulin.





Lean-to

Wedge a branch against a large boulder, but be careful the rock isn't loose and that bits are not likely to roll down on you. If you choose bendy willow branches or other bendy clippings, you can weave them together, in and out, to make a panel. Cover as before.



Camping

Dens are fun, but camping in a real tent is something everyone should try at least once in their life! There is something magical about sleeping outdoors, 'under the stars'. A small countryside campsite with toilets and washing facilities is probably the best place to start, rather than out in the wilderness. Buy or borrow a small waterproof tent, pack a sleeping bag, a foam mat to lie on, a rucksack with some essentials – and you are ready!

Fresh water is important when you are camping.



STAY SAFE

It is dangerous to drink from pools and streams. This sort of water may make you sick, so take bottled water. Always boil any drinking water you collect from nature.

String



We've chosen flat, high ground to pitch camp.

You need to stretch and peg the cords to keep the fabric tight and waterproof.



Thermos flask

Hot drinks are very important when you are outdoors for many hours.



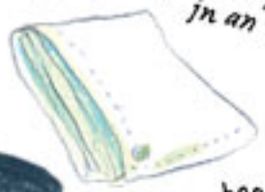
Bucket

A portable fire bucket for barbecues is safest.



Small tarpaulin

for a quick shelter to sit on, or keep you dry in an emergency.





Torch

Rucksack to hold all your gear

First-aid kit

Plasters, antiseptic bandages and sting creams



Frying pan





Cups and plates

Multi-tool



A pocket-knife, and a small axe are very useful when outdoors, but best used by grown-ups.

Waterproof bags

These are available from outdoor shops or online, and are very handy to keep your gear dry – especially cameras and phones.



Use Your Imagination

'Making-do' is fun when you are camping – for example, if you don't have an eggcup for your boiled egg, what do you do? Don't ask us – use your imagination! Try some scrunched-up paper towel, a sock, some moss or grass... it is all part of the fun of camping.