

Adders are Amazing! Gwiberod Gwych!

21. CLAY ADDER HABITAT TILES

INTRODUCTION

This is a great activity for older children, teenagers or adults. The activity could be built into a longer session, including a reptile ramble where the group could collect the plant materials (with landowners' permission) from adder habitat to bring back to decorate the tiles. You could also give a presentation on adder ecology whilst you wait for the tiles to air dry.

Although, the tiles are very striking, this is a relatively inexpensive activity (only costs around 70p per tile) and gives participants something beautiful to help them remember their special day!

MATERIALS:

- A small toy rubber snake
- Air drying clay – we use DAS modelling clay in 1kg packets
- Large sharp knife and board
- Plants from adder habitat (e.g. grasses, gorse, heather, bracken, hedgerow plants)
- Water colour paints, brushes and water pot
- Finger bowl of water
- Baking tray/s and lining paper to dry the tiles on (or bake on)
- Pictures of adders
- Oven (optional) – don't preheat

MAKE IT!

1

Start by cutting the clay into suitably sized tiles (a 1kg DAS block cuts neatly into six 9cm tiles, as shown below) – with a thickness of approx. 1cm

2

Using the bowl of water, dabble your fingers and use a small amount of water to smooth the clay's surface and edges



MAKE IT!

3

Turn the toy snake upside down and press it firmly into the clay in the final position. Lift off carefully and smooth any untidy edges.



4

Next, choose a small selection of plants from the adder habitat and lay them onto the tile in a way that looks appealing



5

One by one, press the plants into the clay, firmly pushing them in and rubbing the surface to emphasize veins and markings



6

Either leave the tiles to air dry in a warm spot for an hour or so, or put in an oven at its lowest setting (approx. 100°C) for 15-20 mins, then turn off to cool slowly. (Note: do not pre-heat the oven – put the tiles in, then turn on so they heat up gently).



7

Once cooled (if using oven), add colours to the tile. Start with the adder. Provide participants with pictures to help with markings.



8

Tiles can be covered in PVA glue for a shiny finish or left matt. Hang on a wall using a plate hanging disk, if desired or use as coasters (omit PVA for coasters).

