SCOUTS BUSHCRAFT

Leave No Trace and Woodland Conservation

60-Minute Outdoor Lesson Plan

Suggested group: Scouts (adapt to age, experience and support needs) **Duration:** 60 minutes **Setting:** approved woodland or outdoor site

Topic	Responsible outdoor practice and woodland care	**Group size**	Adapt to available supervision
Prior knowledge	Basic outdoor awareness; no specialist knowledge required	**Approach**	Discussion, observation and practical conservation activity

Learning objectives

• Explain the purpose of Leave No Trace and describe practical ways to reduce impact outdoors.

• Recognise why deadwood, plants, water, soil and wildlife habitats need protection.

• Identify responsible choices for camping, waste, water use and movement through woodland.

• Take part in a small, approved conservation task and reflect on its benefits.

Equipment and preparation

• Site permission and current site rules; a site-specific risk assessment and emergency arrangements.

• Gloves and litter pickers for a supervised litter check; suitable bags or containers for collected waste.

• Tree / wildlife identification sheets, pencils, clipboards and a simple observation sheet.

• First-aid kit, charged phone or agreed communication device, drinking water and weather-appropriate clothing.

• If undertaking habitat work, use only tasks and materials approved in advance by the landowner or site manager.

Session plan – 60 minutes

Time	Stage	Leader guidance and learner activity
0–5 min	Welcome and safety brief	Introduce the session. Explain boundaries, group signals, buddy arrangements, hazards, toilets, water and what to do if separated or injured. State that site rules and the leader's instructions take priority.
5–15 min	What does Leave No Trace mean?	Ask Scouts what impacts people can leave behind. Introduce the seven principles: plan ahead; travel and camp on durable surfaces; dispose of waste properly; leave what you find; minimise fire impacts; respect wildlife; be considerate of others.
15–25 min	Woodland observation	In small groups, observe from an established path. Look for habitats such as leaf litter, deadwood, trees, water and woodland edges. Record signs of life without collecting, disturbing or damaging anything.
25–45 min	Practical conservation task	Choose one pre-approved, low-impact task: collect litter using gloves and litter pickers; check a path for avoidable trampling; make a wildlife observation record; or identify a habitat feature and explain why it should remain undisturbed. Do not handle unknown waste or carry out unapproved habitat work.
45–55 min	Review and share	Groups share what they noticed, what impact they avoided and one action that would help protect the site. Reinforce that deadwood, nests, plants and natural features are not souvenirs.
55–60 min	Commitment and close	Each Scout names one Leave No Trace action they will use on the next outdoor activity. Check everyone and all equipment are accounted for; remove collected litter through the site's agreed waste route.

Key teaching points

• **Take only photographs and memories:** leave plants, fungi, stones, deadwood and other natural features where they are unless the site manager has authorised a specific activity.

• **Protect wildlife:** observe quietly from a suitable distance; never approach nests, dens or resting animals.

• **Waste:** pack out litter and food scraps. Use the site's toilets and follow its instructions for grey water and human waste; there is no single disposal method suitable for every site.

• **Fire:** this lesson does not require a fire. If fire is part of a separate activity, it needs explicit permission, a separate risk assessment and compliance with site rules and current fire restrictions.

• **Foraging:** identification is not permission to pick or eat. Do not sample plants during this session; follow landowner rules and relevant wildlife protection requirements.

Safety, inclusion and adaptations

Complete a site-specific risk assessment before the activity. Check weather, ground conditions, access, boundaries, water hazards, falling branches, plants that may irritate or sting, ticks, insects, allergies and any individual support needs. Maintain appropriate supervision and headcounts. Do not use tools, enter water, light fires, remove vegetation or handle hazardous litter as part of this standard lesson. Stop and move to a safe location if conditions become unsuitable.

Adaptation: use a short, accessible route and close observation points where needed. Offer picture-based identification, paired recording, seated observation or a supervised indoor alternative. Give Scouts clear roles such as observer, recorder, route checker or litter spotter.

Assessment and follow-up

Check learning: ask each Scout to name two Leave No Trace principles, identify one woodland habitat feature and explain one way to protect it. Review group observation sheets and the practical task.

Extension: create a woodland care pledge, produce a simple habitat map, or arrange an approved conservation activity with the landowner or site manager.

Leader reminder: This is a teaching plan, not a substitute for the organisation's rules, local site instructions or a completed activity-specific risk assessment.