

YOUNG ARCHER

Wyld Court Rainforest

By Diana Cormack

Did you know that you can make a journey of less than two hours and visit a rainforest?

It's not a virtual reality programme; you can get there by car, so all you need to do is to persuade a parent to take you. After all, rainforests are in the National Curriculum and it's educational as well as being a different day out.

In their welcome booklet they say, "Wyld Court Rainforest helps raise awareness about the world's rainforests by allowing visitors to experience the sights, sounds, smells and other sensations of a living tropical forest. The rainforest environment is a highly important ecosystem made up of interactions between an amazing variety of plants and animals. Although it is almost impossible to recreate the complexities of a rainforest ecosystem, Wyld Court Rainforest endeavours to offer you a taste of the real thing."

Wyld in the country

A marked trail will guide you through the plants and animal life and watch out for a sudden shower! There is a café to revive you afterwards and one of the best souvenir shops I have seen for a long time.

Directions: Take the M4 and leave at Junction 13. Follow the brown "Rainforest" signs. Address: Wyld Court Rainforest, Hampstead Norreys, Nr. Newbury, Berkshire RG18 0TN. Tel: 01635 200221 or 202444, Fax: 01635 202440, Email: wyldcourt.rainforest@lineone.net, Website: <http://www.worldlandtrust.org>

Chicken Jokes

By Diana Cormack

I had great fun on holiday making up chicken jokes. Here are a few eggsamples!

Which weekly paper do East Finchley chickens read?

The Hendon Times

What is a chicken's favourite tube station? *Cockfosters*

What do chickens say to each other before an exam? *Good cluck*

What do you call a brave chicken? *Plucky*

Which comedian makes chickens laugh? *Lenny Henry*

What job in the house do chickens find the hardest?

Laying the table

Why did the chicken stop crossing the road?

Because it was egghausted!

If you have any chicken jokes, we would love to hear them. Prizes will be given to the best/worst. Please send them, with your name, age and address to:- Young Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-mail them to TheArcher@England.com

Chick chat

By Diana Cormack

I probably have the largest collection of chickens in East Finchley. Or, to be more precise, of hens, cockerels and chicks.

They're not pecking around in my back garden, but are dotted about on display in my house. When I buy one it has to look right, with an accurately shaped beak and a proper looking eye. I would never want a cartoon chicken, but when the film "Chicken Run" was on at the *Phoenix*, I went to the first showing.

I couldn't believe that anyone would make a film about chickens, but I am delighted because I have always had a very special feeling for them which started in my childhood. My grandparents in Wales kept hens and, in the holidays, I loved to pick the new laid eggs from the nesting boxes and put them gently into my collecting basket. Eventually I got brave enough to remove the eggs from under a sitting hen. They usually ignored my hand searching through their soft, warm feathers, but not if they were broody (wanting to hatch chicks). Then they would give me a warning peck, so I learned to recognise that the comb on the top of their heads got redder when they were broody and left them alone!

Squawk talk

The hens were fed with Indian Corn, which we now know as sweet corn. When I called them at feeding time, the hens would hurry towards me as I scattered it on to the ground. The big old cockerel always had first go,

leaving the hens to cluck and pick their way through what was left. This was when I discovered that they could talk, for if I made similar noises, they seemed to answer me.

I began to go down to the chicken run for a chat. The odd hen would come up to me and we would cluck and croon and squawk away to each other. I knew when I had said the wrong thing though, because the hen would put her head on one side and give me a very strange look from her beady little eye! So when I saw "Chicken Run" I wasn't at all surprised to see chickens with different characters, definite personalities and the ability to communicate. I'd seen it all before!

What is Yellow?

What is yellow? The duck is yellow,
Swimming in the pond.
What is purple? The plums are purple,
All ripe and round and squidgy.
What is green? The leaves are green,
Twirling in the wind.
What is brown? The tree is brown,
Its trunk long and wide.
What is white? The clouds are white,
Floating in the sky.
What is black? The bird is black,
Flying swiftly by.
What is blue? The sky is blue,
All bright and clear.
What is red? The picnic mat is red,
All checked and spotted.

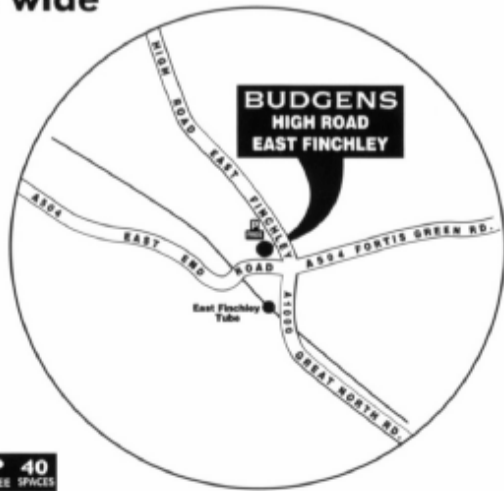
By Freya Randall aged 7 of Summerlee Gardens, N2

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SMTV Live

A group of Year 6 children from Martin Junior School took part in a recording of this popular Saturday morning programme.

Real excitement

Edwin Fairbrother, aged 11, writes: -

"Firstly we went to a small room where they told us what to say and do, then we went to the studios to rehearse for nearly an hour and a half. It was really exciting seeing the real studio of the show that I watch every week. When we saw J and Cat we were really excited because they were famous; everybody was talking to them during the breaks. The guests were The Venga Boys, Alice DeeJay and Girl Thing. Their performances were louder than on the TV. I loved Alice DeeJay and The Venga Boys' performances and I liked dancing along.

They told us to make a lot of noise when cheering and taught us how to do the "Ring to Win" tune. The highlight of my visit was that we could speak to J and Cat during the break. I talked to them a lot. Other people asked them questions and spoke to them too. They were very chatty".

The very best time

Katie Phillips, aged 11, reports: -

"When we arrived at Waterloo tube station we had to walk to the studio for rehearsals. Then we went into the main studio where SMTV is filmed and met the gorgeous J from 5ive and Cat Deely.

Just when I thought things couldn't get any better, J started talking to me and I was gobsmacked! The Venga Boys came on and sang their song "Kiss (When the Sun Don't Shine)" and after their performance Kim waved at me. Girl Thing came on as well and they were really nice, especially Jodie and Nikki.

In between the breaks they gave us sweets, which I thought was very nice. When the show finished there was no time to spare, so we had to rush out of the studio because of the CD: UK audience, plus on the way out I met Terry from Damage. It was the best time of my life!"