

IPCC's Top tips for Leading a Trip to a Bog



1. Use sandwich formation when travelling to or from the bog site - i.e. one guide to the front of the group and a second guide or helper to bring up the rear.



2. Use Daisy flower formation whereby all participants stand or sit in a circle with you in the middle when you are making big points or delivering key messages. This means that everyone can see and hear you and any activity you are demonstrating.

3. If demonstrating something such as the amount of water *Sphagnum* moss holds or the air holes in the stem of bog cotton make sure everyone gets a chance to handle the specimens. If handing out samples to the group make sure to pass them to different sides of the group each time. Don't give specimens to the same person first each time. When finished with a moss plant show due care and return it carefully to its habitat.



4. Before you lead a trip do a pre visit of the site so that you are familiar with it and know what to expect. Decide where to make stops and what to demonstrate at those stops. It is a good idea also to know something about the structure

of your group in advance so that you get the pitch and activities right.



5. Don't talk in abstraction. Use props. For example if you are explaining bog formation use a model of the bog in the bottle to help you. Or if you are talking about a rare bird being present on the site be sure to have a photograph to show the group.

6. Walk the walk as well as talk the talk. Get into character! For example you might have a special outfit but by hanging a magnifying glass, binoculars or bug box around your neck you can stand out from others. The way you dress helps to hold attention.



7. Introduce surprise to the walk. If you are talking about the midges that are biting everyone, why not have a bug box with the aquatic larva of the midge with you to show the group.



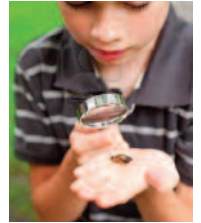
8. During the tour, ask questions, don't talk at people. Engage them by pointing out a few things and then let them take it from there.



9. Take a head count of the number on your tour at the beginning and end. Be aware of stragglers and allow time for them to catch up.



10. Make short stops frequently, so as to maintain the group's attention.



11. Summarise the key conservation messages that you made throughout the walk near the end using examples from the experience to illustrate your points. This could be a conservation message such as what's so special about the bog visited, who it is that protects it and how this is done.



12. Familiarize yourself with the principles of Leave No Trace (www.leave-no-traceireland.org) so as to avoid preventable impacts on the terrain, creatures, and artifacts you may see. This helps to keep the area pristine so that other visitors may enjoy the area as much as your group.



13. When the tour is completed, ask people what their favorite part was and note that for your next field outing.



14. Follow on. Help point people in the direction of further ways to help on site or to take action when they leave you. It could be more bogs to visit, making a donation, seeing an indoor exhibition or coming back to visit again for another event.



15. Decide what you're going to do after the nature walk especially if participants collected objects or filled in worksheets.

16. Advise participants on the walk of health and safety issues.