



Albert Botka

**IMPRINT:**

© 2025, Albert Botka

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Print and distribution in the name of the author:

Buchschmiede von Dataform Media GmbH, Wien

Julius-Raab-Straße 8, 2203 Großebersdorf, Austria

Contact according to EU Product Safety Regulation:

Kontaktadresse nach EU-Produktsicherheitsverordnung:

info@buchschmiede.at

ISBN:

978-3-99165-760-6 (Paperback)

978-3-99165-759-0 (E-Book)

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# Experience our forest up close!

ALBERT BOTKA

In this book we show you the fun way you can experience in our forests up close. Experiencing the forest is much more impressive than walking through it, driving past it or hearing or seeing pictures, films or lectures about it.

The friendly forester Albert leads us on adventures in the forest that are fun and convey forest knowledge. In addition to his work in the forest, he has already made many of these forest trips with a wide variety of people. Sometimes it is quiet and relaxed, sometimes it is very lively and exciting.

We don't have to travel far for this. Such experiences can also be found in a nearby forest. This book invites you to witness this journey of discovery with a group of ten schoolchildren, the ranger and his assistant.

These discoveries are quite astonishing even for many adults. Everyone is dressed appropriately for the weather, wearing long trousers and waterproof shoes, as well as a backpack with a snack and rain gear. Just imagine yourself as part of this nice group as best you can. You will be amazed at how good these forest experiences with nice people.



# 1 The greeting at the edge of the forest

“Beep, beep, beep,” the ranger whistles with a special pipe. We all look at him.

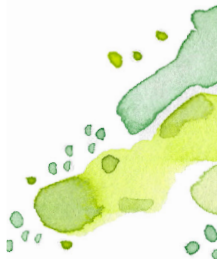
“Greetings, children. I’m glad that we’ve gathered here at the edge of the forest to discover and experience lots of things in the forest together. My name is Albert and I’m a ranger. With my guests I like to go on trips like this. Some of you I know a little because your school friend Ida is my granddaughter, and I sometimes pick her up from school. Of course she’s here today. I asked Paul’s mother to come with me, so we have an adult helper. Her name is Maria, and she has been on my trips several times. During the welcome circle in the forest, we will learn all your names. I don’t want to talk too much because we’ve come to explore the forest and not to hear lectures. Is everyone ready or is there something that still needs to be clarified? Only Maria and I have the cell phones switched on. To be on the safe side, we’ve also saved all your parents’ phone numbers. Please follow three important rules:

1. When I call with my whistle, everyone comes to me, then we have something to talk about or look at." We also learn straight away that deer communicate with this whistling sound as Albert does, especially during the rut — that is the mating season for deer in the summer — and when the young fawns are born around Pentecost the following year.

2. "Just go as far away from me as you can still see and hear me well, so that no one gets lost!

3. And the third rule concerns snacking. You can drink whenever you want, but we want to have a snack together later. Does anyone have a question?"

"Are there any dangers for us here in the forest?" asks Sebi. "It's good that you ask. We will never lose sight of each other, but everyone must pay close attention to the ground when walking so that no one trips or slips dangerously. This way we can prevent the most common accidents in the great outdoors. Maria and I are concerned about your safety. I know the forest very well and have already walked our path this morning. Later, we'll find out everything important about the small and large animals living here in the forest. If there are no other questions, let's get going."







## 2 We are moving into the forest

“Please be very quiet for a few minutes and follow me in a single file. Maria goes last. That way you can fully focus your senses on the forest. I have one question before we start: what senses do we have?”

We quickly listed the five most important ones: sight, sense of hearing, sense of smelling, sense of touch and taste.

It's unusual how we all enter the forest so quietly and slowly, one after the other. There are still thick bushes at the edge of the forest, so we must be careful not to hurt the child behind us with the branches snapping back. But then we're deep in the forest. There's a bit of a cracking sound from the twigs and branches we step on. Leni lets out an “oops” as she tripped over a root and almost fell over. Some of the children laugh, then it's very quiet again.

We are slowly getting in touch with our feelings. It is completely different to our usual surroundings, and it is difficult to say why the forest impresses us so much. People have been very familiar with the forest for ages. Forests were on our earth long before humans. They covered most of our land. We see old, thick trees with large gaps between them, but also dense bushes,