

## Wildlife Recording Kit: Plants

- Please ensure that all equipment borrowed is replaced; consider the people who are using the box after you.
- The borrower of the loan box is liable for the cost of any equipment lost or damaged.
- If anything is broken/lost, we would be grateful if you could let Surrey Wildlife Trust know as soon as possible so that we can replace this in time for the next people borrowing the box. You will be charged for any missing or broken equipment.
- Ensure that before surveying, you have the permission of the landowner to undertake these surveys.

### Why survey?

Conducting a plant survey can help you gain insights into the species that exist in your area and can help you work out the best management regimes for your green space.

Knowing the plant life in your area can also help you identify the potential invertebrates that inhabit it. For example, most butterflies have specific food plants.

Recording all this information can be useful when preparing management plans.

### About the kit

Before starting you must work out your survey technique. This could be a random survey, quadrat survey or a walking transect.

Once you have worked out the survey method, it is time to begin. Make sure you have a great ID book with you, because a lot of plants may not be in flower, but some can be done on the leaf structure. A top tip would be to learn a couple, to help with confidence.

### When to survey

When planning when to survey, it is much easier during the flowering season which in the UK is from late May-August.

### Equipment included:

What's included in the kit?	What you need to provide?
Quadrats x 4	Tape measure (if you want to complete a transect survey)
Magnifier x 2	
FSC Plant ID sheet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common grass</li> <li>• Orchids</li> <li>• Hedgerows</li> <li>• Flowers of walks and waysides</li> <li>• Non-native invasive plants</li> <li>• Grassland plants (1)</li> <li>• Grassland plants (2)</li> <li>• Woodland plants</li> <li>• Woodlands: trees, flowers and fungi</li> <li>• Common ferns</li> </ul>	

• Guide to plant galls	
Plant ID book	

### Instructions on use:

#### Random surveys -

- Random surveys are quite simple, you head to the survey site with some bamboo canes, or a squared quadrat and chuck either item in the air and then where it lands you can survey. Ideally it is best to survey 1m x 1m.
- Once you have placed a quadrat down, the idea is to try and identify everything.
- This can be repeated as many times as you like to get a clear picture of your site.

#### Quadrat survey -

- A quadrat survey is setting out an area with large tape measures, this could be 30m x 30m (or whatever works for your site) and then selecting quadrat points randomly in the square for example, 8m x 14m along the axis.
- Once you have placed a quadrat down, the idea is to try and identify everything within the quadrat.

#### Transect survey -

- Finally, you could lay a transect out, this can be as long as 200m (or whatever works for your site) and at every 10m point you can place a quadrat down and record the species in that quadrat.

#### Trees -

- If surveying for trees, we suggest a planned route through the area, stopping at each tree to identify it. When a tree is in flower or fruit, it is far easier to identify, however a lot of books will have a bud or bark guide as well.

### Using the equipment safely:

Before you use this equipment think about your risk assessment for the location and for the activities.

The following are some suggestions of hazards you might need to consider:

- Ground Surface – are there roots, holes, or kerbs to trip over?
- Weather – are participants appropriately dressed and have suitable protection from wet or hot weather?
- Plants and animals – brambles and stinging nettles can cause discomfort and participants should watch out for low branches.
- Germs – have participants got open cuts which might get muddy, and do they have an opportunity to wash their hands before eating?
- Using equipment – do you and other participants know how to use the equipment safely, is there a chance someone could hurt themselves?

- Appropriate supervision – are all children accompanied by a parent or guardian, and are they being appropriately supervised?
- Lone working – ensure you tell someone when undertaking surveys and they are aware of where you are and when you should return. Make sure you have a fully charged mobile phone and know where you can get signal.
- Group management – how will you ensure that participants don't get lost and are where you want them to be?
- Plan B – do you have an alternative activity or location if there is a problem with your planned activity?
- Ticks- Working in long grass or vegetation will inevitably lead to ticks, so once you have finished the survey, please do check your skin for ticks. Whilst carrying out the survey be sure to wear long trousers and walking boots and you can even tuck the trousers in to limit access.

### **Top tips**

- You shall also be given a magnifier. This is very useful to help identify plants if they have fine hairs growing up the stem. It will also allow you to look at the plant in great detail.
- If you find a plant you are not sure about, and it is growing across the quadrat you can always take a leaf and potentially look at it under a microscope or magnifier. Some plants might have hairs, or spikes or certain colours that can give you a positive ID.
- Take pictures of flowering plants, there are plenty of people within the Surrey Wildlife Trust that are interested in Botany and would be able to identify a lot of flowers from the picture.