

1

Discovery Card

Catch your own minibeast

Time: Set traps on day one - 1 hour. Examine the finds on day two - 1 hour



Teacher Information

Catch your own minibeast (suitable for 7 - 12 year olds)

This activity gives children an opportunity to examine a selection of minibeasts and to investigate habitats. It can be adapted for younger children by setting up a tank in the classroom.

To set your "traps" outdoors you will need:

- a selection of empty yoghurt pots
- sufficient pieces of thick card to rest on top of each pot
- some large stones (to support the card)
- food to bait each trap. Suggested baits are cat food to tempt carnivorous invertebrates and pieces of apple or sweet things to attract herbivorous invertebrates.

Note: It is useful to experiment with different kinds of bait. Put meat baits and vegetarian baits in different pots to try to keep carnivores and herbivores apart. However as i) many invertebrates are omnivores (eating both plant and animal material) and ii) carnivores may crawl into the "vegetarian" pots, attracted by trapped herbivores - you may find a mixture of plant and meat eaters in any one pot.

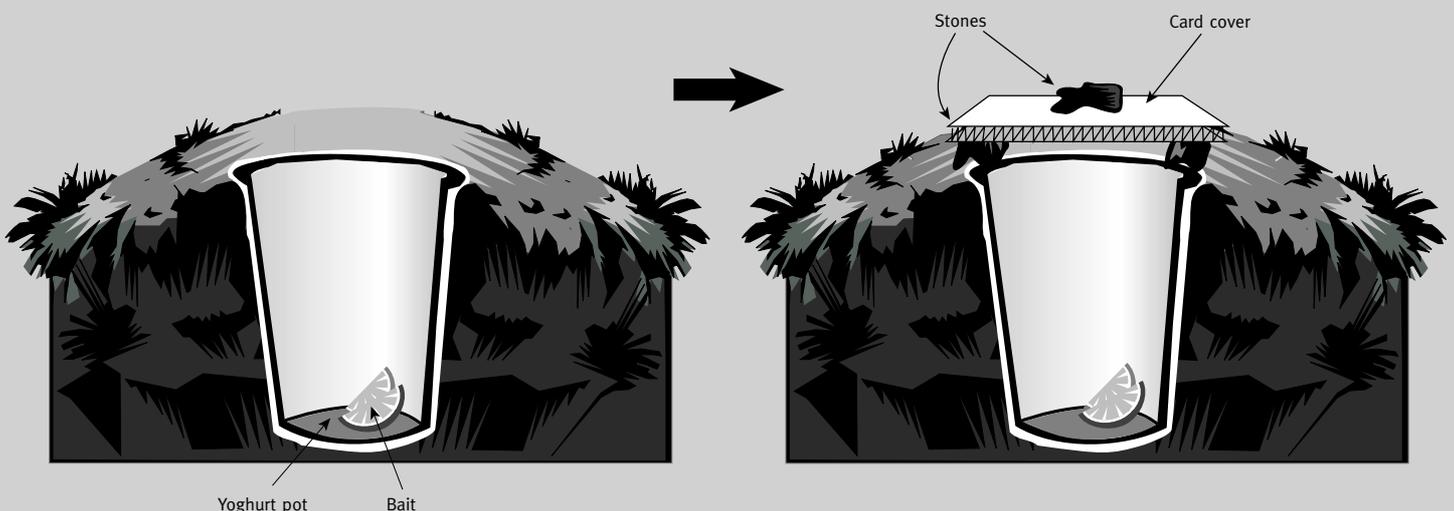
Try to choose contrasting locations around the school grounds for each trap.

Preferably set your traps the day before you intend to examine your find and leave overnight.

Discovery card 3 - Classification provides useful teacher information about the different invertebrate groups

The traps

1. Make two or three small holes in the base of each yoghurt pot so that if it rains, the rainwater is able to drain away and the animals you have trapped do not drown.
2. Dig a hole big enough for each pot to fit in and put your bait inside the pot.
3. Place four large stones around each pot and rest a piece of card on top to keep out "unwanted guests".
4. Secure with a large stone on top.



All animals taken from their natural environment for study should be returned as soon as possible.

1

Discovery Card (cont)

Catch your own minibeast

Time: Set traps on day one - 1 hour. Examine the finds on day two - 1 hour



Teacher Information

To set up this activity indoors you will need:

- A glass or clear plastic tank or aquarium filled with soil from a chosen location.
 - 2 - 4 yoghurt pots
 - 5 - 10 large stones
 - 2 - 4 pieces of card
 - bait
1. Fill the tank three quarters full of soil and add 1 to 3 cms of leaf litter.
 2. Place the pots in the tank so that the soil comes up to the rim of each pot.
 3. Bait the pots ensuring at least one contains meat only.
 4. Place four large stones around each pot and cover with card.
 5. Secure with large stones on top.

Remember to set up your tank in a cool area of the classroom. Cover the top of the tank with a fine mesh or a piece of punctured card to allow air into the tank and leave overnight.

How to use the minibeasts you catch

- You might ask the children to observe and draw individual minibeasts and use their observations as a basis for discussion (**suitable for 5 - 7 year olds**).
- Children might sort the minibeasts they find into groups using simple features e.g. number of legs, body shape, wings (**suitable for 5 - 7 year olds**).
- You might ask the children to group and classify their catches using the **BBSRC Bug Dials** included in this pack and **Classification Cards** as a source of information (**suitable for 7 - 12 year olds**).
- You might ask the children to think about the places where certain invertebrates were trapped and link this to preferred habitats. A table indicating the preferred habitat of a number of common invertebrates on **Discovery card 2** may help and the **Minibeast Wallchart** can be used to reinforce findings (**suitable for 7 - 12 year olds**).
- The children might use some of the minibeasts which they catch to complete the **“There’s no place like home!”** activity of **Discovery card 2** (**suitable for 7 - 12 year olds**).

