



Learning  
through  
Landscapes

# S1 School Grounds and Habitat Survey



## About you

Name of your school

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How many participants are in your survey group?

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What country are you participating from?

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What is the average age of the participants?

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## Aims

- To become familiar with habitats in your school and their role in supporting wildlife
- To understand how to differentiate between trees and shrubs in your school
- To begin differentiating between species of trees and shrubs using various features
- To learn about differences between flowers and fruits on different trees

## What you will need

### Essential

- 'Practitioner Guidance' document
- Pen, pencil and eraser
- Clipboard/suitable alternative

### Helpful

- Print-out of your school map
- Ruler
- Identification aids (see practitioner guidance)

## Funders and partner organisations

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



The National Lottery  
Heritage Fund



Leicester  
City Council



Wildlife  
Gardening  
Forum



Co-funded by  
the European Union



LUND  
UNIVERSITY



Naturskolan i Lund



LUNDS  
KOMMUN

## Survey preparation

Have you made or are planning school grounds changes for wildlife?

Yes ☐ (See end of survey)

No ☐ (Ignore next question)

Is this survey before or after these changes?

Before ☐

After ☐

1. Record the date on which the survey was completed (e.g. 01/01/21)

00	00	00
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2. Record the time that you started the survey (e.g. 10:25 AM)

00:00	AM/PM
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3. Use Google Maps to find the coordinates of your school grounds (see practitioner guidance).

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4. If you know the (approximate) size of your school grounds write it here \_\_\_\_\_m2

If you do not know the size of your school grounds, discuss together how you might estimate or measure it (see practitioner guidance). You may need a printed off map of your school and a ruler.



## Survey method




### Step 1. Habitat Survey



If school has no trees or shrubs, conduct this survey in school grounds for data collection. Then repeat exercises in a nearby green space to aid learning.

Split into groups of 3-4

Use the habitat guide (next page) to fill in Table 1, noting what habitats you can find in your school grounds.

Table 1. Type of habitat			Habitat present?
<div>Food resource</div> <div></div>	Plant beds or flowerpots		
	Tall grass, wildflowers		
	Trees and shrubs		
<div>Nesting places and shelter</div> <div></div>	Bare ground (soil, sand, gravel, etc.)		
	Number of man-made homes overall -----	Bird homes (e.g. bird boxes)	
		Wild bee homes (e.g. bee hotels)	
		Honeybee homes (e.g. bee hives)	
		Minibeast homes (e.g. bug hotels)	
		Others (e.g. rubble stone walls, hollow stems, dead wood) Specify below:	
	Damp places		
<div>Other</div> <div></div>	Short grass (e.g. mown as lawn)		
	Bare walls or fences		
	Concrete or tarmac		



From the habitat survey in Table 1, which habitat type below is the most dominant, and second most dominant in your grounds?

## Feeding Habitats

### Flower beds or pots



Includes flowers in planters or pots, raised beds and borders

### Tall grass and wildflowers



Includes wildflower meadows and grassy verges

### Trees and shrubs



Includes trees, orchards, shrubs, bushes and hedgerows

## Nesting Places and Shelter

### Bare ground



Includes exposed flat or raised ground with low vegetation cover

### Man-made homes



Includes bee hives, solitary bee hotels, bug hotels, bird boxes etc.

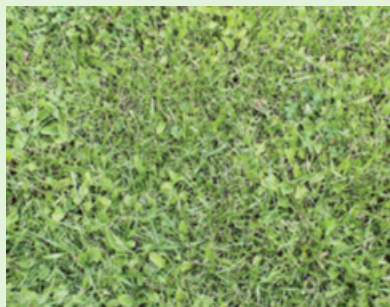
### Damp places



Includes ponds, ditches, compost heaps and log piles

## Other:

### Short grass



Areas where grass is mown, or grazed by animals

### Bare walls and fences



Includes brick or stone walls and wooden or metal fences

### Concrete or tarmac



Includes paths, roads, car parks and playgrounds

### Step 2. Survey of Trees and Shrubs



We are interested in biodiversity, do not worry about identifying to species. If you can, great but prioritise looking for differences!

1. Walk around the school grounds and count how many different species of trees\* and shrubs (bushes) you can find.
2. Focus on buds, leaves, flowers, fruits, and the whole tree shape. If possible, take photos to aid with identification.
3. Use identification resources e.g. field guides or apps as aids to differentiate species (see guidance).
4. If you cannot identify a species: try to fit it into a group or write 'Unknown' and give it a number. Differentiating between trees is more important than identifying them.
5. If you can distinguish whether it is a Tree (T) or Shrub (S) put this in the leftmost column, if not put Unknown (U).
6. Count how many individuals there are of each species, record this in Table 2 (next page).
7. Once finished, summarise your findings in Table 3 (next page).

\* Trees are >5 m and have a trunk



## Table 2. Species of Trees and Shrubs

Ex. 1: You were able to identify the tree or shrub species.

Ex. 2: You were able to identify the tree or shrub group.

Ex. 3: You did not know what the tree was but saw 9 that looked very similar and so you grouped them together (this is perfectly acceptable!).

Tree/Shrub/ Unknown	Species/Group	How many?
T	Ex. 1: Common Oak Tree (Quercus robur)	2 or
T	Ex. 2: Oak tree (Quercus spp.)	3 or
U	Ex. 3: Unknown 1	9 or

## Table 3. Summary of Trees and Shrubs

If you were unable to distinguish between trees and shrubs fill out the unknown column.

	Trees	Shrubs	Unknown
Total number of tree and shrub individuals (to estimate total tree cover)			
Total number of different tree and shrub species/groups (based on shape and colour of leaves, flowers, fruits etc.)			

Step 3. Extension Activity – Flowers and Fruit

- 1. If you have time walk around and look at the trees again.
- 2. Study the flowers and fruits (if present) on the branches.
- 3. Count the number of different flowers and fruits (see guidance). Tally this in Table 4 below.
- 4. For flowers use: number of petals, flower colour, flower shape.
- 5. For fruits use: fruit clustering, fruit colour, fruit shape.

Table 4. Flowers and Fruit

	Trees	Shrubs	Unknown
Number of different flowers (pollinator food)			
Number of different fruits (bird food)			

**If you answered yes to making/planning school grounds changes earlier, detail these changes below.**

If changes were made - did they result from Natural Nations resources? Yes ☐ No ☐

If changes are planned - was this a result of Natural Nations resources? Yes ☐ No ☐



## Feedback

Thank you for completing this survey

Please rate this survey out of 5 stars.



Please describe any issues or practical problems that arose during the survey process.

Please also let us know if you have any questions and/or comments regarding survey content.

Name:

