

Heritage & Habitat in Your Community



An educational project of Donegal County Council, Donegal Education Centre & The Heritage Council

Fieldtrip to a Hedgerow Habitat

Basic Details

Names of Students or Team :	1		
Date of Fieldtrip:			
Time Fieldtrip		Time Fieldtrip	
Started:		Finished:	
Name of Study Site:			
Location of Study Site	:		
Tide Condition:		Weather Condition:	

Exercise 1: Is this Hedgerow Good for Wildlife?

The best way to tell whether a hedgerow is valuable is to count the number of woody (tree or bush) species it holds. Measure out as many 30m stretches of hedgerow as you can (they don't have to be straight). Along each stretch, record the presence of woody species. If you have 6 or more species in your stretch, then you have a species-rich hedgerow. (Hint: for recording lots of any one thing, use vertical lines up to 4 with another line across to record 5, rather than numbers to record the count. Then add them all up at the end. e.g. IIII IIII =13).

Woody species name	Number in 30m stretch

Exercise 2: Vegetation Study

We are going to use the quadrat to assess the various plant species that may be found at and near a mature hedgerow. Firstly, lay down a 5m transect (a measuring tape or marked rope will do) in a straight line into the field, perpendicular from the hedgerow. At 50cm intervals place the quadrat beneath the transect and record the plants found within it. Start on the field side. If a species such as primrose is found, write its name in the left-hand column and then put a tick (\checkmark) in the appropriate column. If you have a light meter, record the light intensity over each quadrat. Use the table below to record your results. What do you notice as you get nearer the hedgerow?

Quadrat Number

Plant Species	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
-										
Light Intensity										

Exercise 3: Living Things in Our Hedgerow

Hedgerows are of crucial importance for our birds, mammals and insects. They are what we call 'wildlife corridors' - that is, many species use them to get from other habitat areas. They provide food, shelter and protection from predators for hundreds of species. Bear in mind that some hedgerows are hundreds of years old and provide lasting linear 'nature reserves'.

You may not be able to identify all of the birds you see but try and determine how many species you see. How many different calls or songs can you hear? You can also take notes of the birds' description and look this up later. Pay attention to where you see the birds. In what part of the hedgerow are most found?

Rabbits, foxes, mice and badgers are some mammals that live in and depend on hedgerows. Look for burrows, mammal runs (paths) where vegetation is worn away and there is bare earth. Both rabbits and foxes leave their droppings prominently on hedgerow edges. Walk the entire length of the hedgerow and see what you can find.

Bees, wasps, spiders, flies and beetles are found in hedgerows. Look on the underside of leaves to find bugs. Shake overhanging branches over an opened upturned umbrella. Have a look at the insects and other invertebrates that fall in. If you have a net, sweep it through the non-woody vegetation under the hedgerow.

Record your findings in the boxes below. Don't forget to add any significant findings to your map.

Birds we saw or heard (describe if you can't identify them)	
Mammal tracks or signs found	
Invertebrates we found	
Invertebrates we round	