



Examining Biodiversity in Your Own Backyard

You're on a Quest!

Go on a biodiversity hunt in your backyard! With family and friends, follow the steps listed below to gain greater understanding of the wide variety of organisms that can be found just outside your door.

A Gather the following materials:

- 1 clean empty yogurt cup (8 oz size) with lid
- 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of cardboard (recycled cereal boxes work well)
- Bait of your choice (corn syrup, small bits of meat or cheese, fruit, small pieces of baked potato, etc.)
- (optional) Small digging tool, such as a trowel or spade

B Follow these procedures to collect your specimens:

1. Select an area in your yard where your trap will be undisturbed by humans or pets.
2. Add approximately 1 tablespoon-sized amount of the "bait" you have decided to use in the bottom of the yogurt container. Snap the lid back on.
3. Dig a hole big enough to bury the container so that its top is level with the ground.
4. Place the yogurt cup in the hole. Pack the surrounding dirt tightly around the edges of the container. Carefully remove the container's lid. Try not to knock dirt and debris into the cup! Save the lid for later.
5. Place the cardboard loosely over the opening of the trap. Anchor the cardboard by placing small stones gently around the edges. This will serve as a "roof," keeping out rain and larger animals.
6. Return to the trap 24 hours later.
7. Secure your collection of "found" organisms by snapping the lid back on the yogurt container. Fill in the hole; place the stones and cardboard back in their appropriate locations.
8. Identify the organisms that have found their way into the container. Use library and online resources to help you during this process.

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