

RESOURCE GUIDE

Surveys



What are surveys?

A survey helps gather information. Surveys are a good way to increase your knowledge and awareness of a wild place and what you find can be used to look after it. They are essential for assessing the status and needs of the natural environment and can be done by anyone -no matter what you are interested in or your level of experience.

You can take part wherever you live, throughout the country and whenever you have time. You can take part in a survey as an individual or as part of a group. The information can be fed back into many larger organisations that rely on the public to support them in gathering data.

Citizen science is the name given to scientific research conducted by crowdsourcing. It encourages people to move from watching nature to recording it. Field Studies Council has good resources to support you (field-studies-council.org) and in Scotland the Scottish Environment Web (environment.gov.scot) provides a list of useful organisations, and tool-kits including identification charts. Many free handy Apps can help record and submit valuable data through existing technology.

For information, training guidance and resources to inspire learners to make connections between STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) skills, wild places and outdoor learning approaches, see [STEM By Nature](#)

Useful Websites

This resource is by no means an exhaustive list but a starting point to give you an idea of the many and varied surveys available. If you want to be sure of what you have seen before you include it on your survey, then you can post your sighting for help identifying it on [iSpot](#) (and record on [iRecord](#)) or for bird identification see the [RSPB](#).

[OPAL](#) (Open Air Laboratories Network) – A variety of surveys covering tree health, climate, air, bugs and more.

[Scotland's Environment](#) – help out with one of the many citizen science projects that are running in Scotland.

[Natural History Museum](#) has its own list of surveys, nationally and for specific regions.

[Bioblitz](#) – fast, intensive surveys of all forms of life in a natural space. Join an event or get resources to run your own.

[Nature's Calendar](#) – spot, photograph and record the signs of seasonal change.

[Dark Sky Light Pollution Survey](#) – discover how dark your night sky is.

Birds, Insects and Animals

[Bumblebee Conservation Trust](#) – take part in Bee Watch or go for a monthly walk and record what you see.

[People's Trust for Endangered Species](#) – contribute to our knowledge of the wildlife and habitats under threat.

[UK Ladybird Survey](#) – record your ladybird sightings and see if you can spot 'the most invasive ladybird on earth'!

[Big Butterfly Count](#) – help take nature's pulse with accessible resources from Butterfly Conservation.

[Red Squirrels](#) – record sightings in [Scotland](#) and [Northern England](#)

[National Bat Monitoring Programme](#) and [Bats in Churches surveys](#)

[Bug Life](#) – Take part in a variety of insect surveys including pollinator hoverflies and glow worms.

[FrogLife](#) – Report frog and snake sightings and where they were seen.

[BirdTrack](#) and [Big Garden Birdwatch](#) – run by the BTO and the RSPB to build up a picture of birds in the UK.

[Fat Spider Fortnight](#) – seasonal tracking survey, run by the Natural History Museum

[UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme](#) – guidance on 10 minute Flower-Insect Timed Counts (April – September)

Plants / Woodlands

[Plantlife](#) – Every Flower Counts survey and seasonal wildflower spotter sheets

[The Woodland Trust](#) – Identification charts for woodland related topics. You can also hunt for ancient trees.

[TCV Dead Good Deadwood](#) – help record the state of these important micro habitats.

Marine and Freshwater

[Canal & River Trust](#) – Spot that Habitat survey, focused on canal wildlife

[Big Pond Dip](#) – from the Freshwater Habitats Trust

[Beach Watch](#) – take part in beach cleans and surveys throughout the year.

[Big Seaweed Search](#) – citizen science initiative from the Natural History Museum