

Observe soil and collect evidence of life

In this experiment you will be looking for soil organisms in soil samples. By finding and identifying soil organisms you can answer questions like 'Why is soil a habitat for living creatures?'

Materials

1. Two 2 litre plastic containers (empty ice cream containers are ideal).



2. A small spade or garden trowel.



3. A magnifying glass and camera (a phone camera will be okay).



Method

Fill one container half full of topsoil. Most soil organisms live in the top 15 centimetres of soil.

Take a photograph of where you got the topsoil from.

Look through the topsoil and pick out any living insects and animals you find. Place the insects and animals in the second container.

Identify the soil organisms you have found using the website resource through the website link in the slater image in the Finding soil life experiment. You can use a magnifying glass to get a close up look, or you can use a camera on a phone to take pictures and then magnify the image.

Record what you do. You will need to show others what you did and what you found.

For an interesting comparison collect topsoil from different places and compare differences in the number and type of soil organisms you find in each sample of topsoil.

Review your findings and consider how you can publish your conclusions and evidence.