

Age range:



Time needed:



Resources:



**We can't save the natural world without understanding it. Become a citizen scientist to help us learn and plan for the future!**

**You will need:**

- Survey guidelines
- ID guides (often available online)
- Map or GPS device
- Pens or pencils
- Notebook or record sheets
- Computer, tablet or phone to input your results

## OVERVIEW

Taking part in a citizen science project can make a real and lasting contribution to our understanding of the environment, and the impacts of human activity and the changing climate. There are loads of projects to choose from - some are open all year round and others take place at a set time each year.

You could make your observations during a session, camp or trip, or you could ask the group to collect them over a period of time and bring them together to discuss and share.

Some projects that you could get involved with include:

### BIG GARDEN BIRDWATCH (RSPB)

This takes place annually, usually around the last weekend in January.

- 1.** Find a place to watch the birds from. Most people sit inside and watch birds in their garden through the window.
- 2.** Watch the birds for one hour.
- 3.** Record the maximum number of each species you saw at any time – so if you see a group of 5 house sparrows together, then later on you see 3, the number you record is 5 so that you



don't double count any birds.

**4.** Visit the Big Garden Birdwatch page and submit your records. Even if you didn't see anything, this information is still valuable!

## Great Eggcase Hunt (The Shark Trust)

You can record eggcases that you find washed up on beaches all year round.

- 1.** If you have a day at the beach, look out for shark or ray eggcases, often called 'mermaids purses'.
- 2.** If you find any, take a photo (with something like a coin to show the size) and record where you found it (GPS or a grid reference)
- 3.** Check on the website for the ID guides to find out what sort of egg case you found.
- 4.** Record this on the Great Eggcase Hunt page.

## Project Splatter (Cardiff University)

Analysing roadkill can help understand animal populations, but also show where tunnels or warning signs on the road network could protect nature.

- 1.** Keep a lookout for roadkill on any road trip, walk or cycle ride.
- 2.** Record what you saw, with a rough location - if you can't identify the species a rough description will do, or you can report a UFO (unidentified furry/feathered object).
- 3.** Share your sightings with the research team via their website.

### TAKE IT FURTHER...

Your group may be keen to follow up on the research that was conducted with the data that they collect - but you could also share what has been learned from other citizen science projects, particularly those that have been running for some time:

[naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk/analysis/](http://naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk/analysis/)  
[rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/results/](http://rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/results/)  
[www.bigbutterflycount.org/2019mainresults](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org/2019mainresults)

You could also do something to support the population of the plants/animals that you have been observing, like making bat/bird boxes, or planting polinator-friendly wildflowers.

You can find a list of some citizen science projects that are suitable for Woodcraft Folk groups on our website at [link to Susan's table online].