



# TAKE A BACKYARD BUG CENSUS

Having lots of different bugs is a good indicator of the health of your backyard. By taking a bug census you will be able to see how many different species of bugs you have in your backyard. Remember, bugs don't like being disturbed, so don't take a census too often!

## **You will need:**

- An empty plastic bottle
- Scissors
- A magnifying glass
- A notebook and pen
- An adult to help you

## **How to make your census trap:**

- Make some holes in the bottom of your plastic bottle to let water out.
- Cut the bottle in half and turn the top half upside down so that it sits in the bottom half of the bottle. You will need to do this at the widest point so that each half matches up.
- Dig a hole in your backyard and put your trap in. Make sure the top of the trap is at the same height as the top of the soil.
- Leave the trap in place for an hour and go back to see what sort of bugs have been caught. Very carefully count and record them (date/species/number found). Then, release them back into the backyard.
- Remove your trap and keep it to do another bug census in a few weeks' time. Compare the data you collect to see if your bug population is growing!

Please be very careful when you are removing the bugs from your census trap. Rough handling may injure them or even cause them to die.

If you need help identifying your bugs more information can be found at <http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/science/plants-animals-fungi/animals/invertebrates/systematics>