

# Bug Hunting with a difference – Setting up a Pitfall Trap

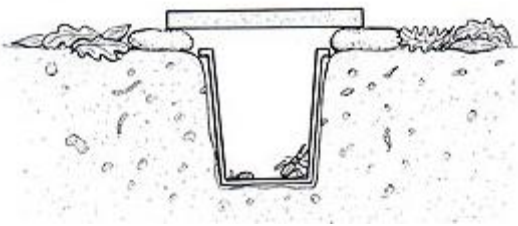


How do you fancy trying a different style of bug hunting? This activity explains how you can set up a booby (pitfall) trap to find some quick crawling mini-beasts that live in the undergrowth of your garden.



No bugs should be harmed during this activity/ experiment ;O)

1. Find a suitable collection pot, e.g. a large empty yoghurt pot, an ice cream tub or a disposable plastic drinking cup.
2. With some help from an adult pierce some small holes at the bottom of it to allow any rain water to drain out, but not too big - otherwise your bugs will escape.
3. Choose a quiet area of your garden to set up your pitfall trap. You're most likely to catch something interesting if you place your trap somewhere with varied vegetation. Next to dead wood or in a wildflower patch would work well. You're unlikely to find much in the middle of a normal lawn with short grass
4. Dig a small neat hole – just the right size for the collection pot that you're using and place your pot in the hole so that its rim is absolutely level with the soil surface.
5. Place some small stones and a little dry grass or leaves in the bottom of the trap for the mini-beasts to hide in but don't put in too much or they will be able to climb out.
6. Cover the trap with a piece of wood, tile or a slate, but make sure that you raise it up a little above the ground using a couple of stones so that the mini-beasts can crawl underneath.
7. Try to do this activity when there is no rain forecast (not that easy in Scotland I know!). Set up the trap in the morning and check it that evening or, set it in the evening and check it the next morning. **Don't leave them trapped for too long.**
8. After you have recorded the mini-beasts in the trap, please safely release them back into your garden.
9. You could set up several traps around your garden and add in some treats, e.g. a slice of apple, a piece of meat, to increase the chance of catching some interesting mini-beasts.



Here are some of the mini-beasts you might find:



Ground beetle



Rove beetle



Centipede



Ant