

Class Herbarium

Description:

Students will view works from the Plymouth State University Herbarium that are showcased in *Endangered, Invasive, and Undiscovered (Species)*. Students will each collect and dry one plant sample, then research and identify the plant. Each student will complete an herbarium sheet label for the plant researched. All herbarium sheets can be compiled to make a class herbarium.

Materials: Scissors, journal, liquid glue, paper, binder or other binding materials, library access or computer with internet access, materials listed in either video

Procedure:

Part 1: In the exhibit *Endangered, Invasive, and Undiscovered (Species)*, have students view the section titled [Plymouth State University Herbarium](#). They can click through the photos at the top of the section and scroll down the page for more. Students should read about the herbarium and the plants it showcases. Depending upon the age of the students, it may be beneficial to conduct a whole-class guided tour of this section of the online exhibit.

Part 2: Go to a place where various plants can be found and harvested. This could be the schoolyard, a riverside, your town forest, or other places where you are allowed to bring students. If your class is unable to travel and you feel that there will not be a sufficient selection of plants on school property, you could find and collect plant samples yourself and bring them to your classroom. Bring scissors to make harvesting easy and neat. Students should also bring journals—This way, they can record notes about the plants to help with identification later. They should write down what they notice about the plants they collect, such as:

- How big or small is this type of plant?
- What colors do you see on the plant?
- How many leaves, petals, etc. does the plant have?
- What is the plant located in or near? (e.g. marsh, sand, shady area)
- What interests you about the plant? What do you wonder?

Part 3: Referring to their notes and the plant samples they've collected, students use the internet or school library to research and identify the plants they've collected. Print and cut the herbarium sheet labels (attached below) for students to fill out as they research.

Part 4: Watch both of the following videos to decide how you'll press your plant samples. You may even want to try both! Materials and processes are shown and described in detail in both videos. If you want the plant samples dried and pressed quickly, use the microwave method (second video). If you have time to wait for the plants to dry and be pressed, use the book method (first video). If you have no preference, you could allow students to choose a method.

- [Pressing Plants - A Simple Way to Dry Flowers](#)
- [Learn How to Press Flowers...In the Microwave!](#)

Part 5: Once students have pressed and dried their plants, they will arrange them on pages along with the accompanying herbarium sheet labels. Use liquid glue to secure dried plant samples to the pages. Let dry, then compile the class's herbarium sheets in a binder (or use other binding materials) to complete the class's mini herbarium!

Scientific Name: _____

Common Name: _____

Location/Habitat: _____

Collector Name: _____

Collection Date: _____

Additional Notes: _____

Scientific Name: _____

Common Name: _____

Location/Habitat: _____

Collector Name: _____

Collection Date: _____

Additional Notes: _____

Scientific Name: _____

Common Name: _____

Location/Habitat: _____

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