Unit: Native Plant Communities

Activity: Plant Community Herbarium Collection

Developed by: Heidi Bohan
Activity Length: 30-45 min. Prep time: 0-15 min (prep paper for presses) Review: 0-5 min.

Guiding Questions: What plants are in the plant communities on EAS school grounds or restoration projects?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brief Description of Activity: Students will gather plants from existing plant communities and press them for other activities.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Materials: Herbarium press, Plant ID cards</td>
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<td>Teacher Provided: pruning shears, Plant of the Pacific Northwest, absorbent paper for press (bathroom roll paper towels work well, they do not have texture and are absorbent and cheap. Precut to length).</td>
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**Activity**

- Go to several different plant communities on school grounds, Big Finn Hill, or other sites (especially a restoration project).
- Collect plant specimens and press them in the herbarium press

1. Use pruning shears to carefully cut samples from a plant. Include at least one full leaf, if possible include a stem with several leaves, and flowers or seeds/fruit. Collect as many samples as needed for the activity you plan to use them for.
2. Place samples carefully between absorbent paper in herbarium press. Lay leaves flat and arrange so that plants do not touch each other.
3. Use a pen to mark the paper next to the plant with information such as plant name, (if known), where, and who collected the plant.
4. Layer plants as needed. For plants that are especially moist be sure to add several layers of absorbent paper between plants so they do not mold.
5. When all plants have had samples collected, compress the upper and lower herbarium press as tightly as possible, and bind with strap. Add extra weight in the classroom in needed (use books, etc.)
6. Store until dry, usually about one week at room temperature.
- Identify the plant community the plants were collected from using the plants as indicators.
- Use in the following activities or create herbarium sheets for future Plant ID.