



Bug Bunkers



Have you ever wondered where insects go over Winter? Do they all hibernate? How can adults be ready to appear as soon as the sun comes out in Spring?

There are several answers to the above questions. Many insects hibernate over Winter (for insects this is called 'diapause'), and lots of insects remain active using leaf litter for insulation and shelter! It is very common for gardens to be kept clear of the shelter that insects need over the colder months, and so the Buzz Club wants to find out whether we can create a bug hotel ('a Bug Bunker') that effectively provides this.

Last year, we ran the 'Ladybird Local' project in which we investigated the effectiveness of hotels in supporting overwintering ladybirds. The results showed that they are rarely used by ladybirds, however one of our designs proved to be a very effective bug hotel for a wide range of ground dwelling insects and other invertebrates e.g. snails, spiders.

This year, the Buzz Club would like to investigate the uses of this hotel further. We would like to find out what range of invertebrates occupy this hotel, and whether it can be used as an effective surveying tool.

We want to find out:

- 1) What bugs can be found in this hotel throughout winter?
- 2) Does the design allow for an easy survey?
- 3) Does the location of the hotel change the occupancy?



Any questions? Contact us!

Email: buzzclub@sussex.ac.uk
Website: www.thebuzzclub.uk



The Design

There is a video on our website showing you how to make this hotel.

Equipment Needed:

- 2 flower pots (same size)
 - Sticks/bark
 - Stones
- Dead Leaves
 - Card
 - Scissors
- Sticky Tape

Optional:

- Something to prevent the hotel from rolling in wind e.g. two bricks either side.

Instructions:

You will need to make two identical hotels, so repeat the instructions below twice.

- 1) To create a door: place your flowerpot face down on your card and draw around it. Cut the circle out and then cut slits into your circle – 1cm in height (see photo below). As you will need to replace your door throughout the winter, repeat the steps above 5 times to make 6 doors in total.
- 2) Lay your flowerpot on its side and place materials inside. The layers must be as follows: bottom layer = stones; middle layer = sticks/bark; top layer = dried leaves.
- 3) Secure door onto flowerpot using tape with the slits running horizontally. Save the extra doors for if you need to replace the current door in bad weather.



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Instructions

1) Sign up to the project via the button on our website. You will then be sent a welcome email.

1) Create your hotels

2) Choose where your hotels will go.

Select an option below that is best for you. We want to compare a dark shrubby area, with a sunny open area:

- If you have a shrub in your garden e.g. a bush/hedge
 - Place one hotel under the shrub, in the shade
 - Place one hotel in an open sunny area of the garden e.g. on lawn
 - Ensure hotels are at least 2m away from each other.

- If you do not have a shrub in your garden
 - Place both hotels in an open area of the garden e.g. on lawn
 - Ensure one hotel is in a shady area and one in a sunny area
 - Ensure hotels are at least 2m away from each other.

2) Fill out your location data form

You will get this sent to you with your welcome email.

3) Survey your site once a month from November onwards.

To survey your hotel, carefully take it apart and tip contents into a tray. Count what you find and fill out the form sent to your emails.

Put contents back into the pot – try to roughly keep the layers of material the same. If you need to replace a door, please do so and then put the hotel back into its position.

Repeat monthly for both hotels. If you find no insects, this is important data, so please do let us know.

Use the guide on our website to ID what you find in your hotels (this is being made and will be ready for the first survey in November). If you don't know what the insect is, take a photo and send it to us!



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