

# Darwin the Collector

## Further Activity: Hula hoop quadrats

[www.darwinproject.ac.uk/learning/7-11/darwin-the-collector](http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/learning/7-11/darwin-the-collector)

### How long will activity take?

- 40 mins

### What do I need?

- Ball of string and pair of scissors
- 1 hula hoop per group
- Notebook to record findings
- Classification Key/Identification guide

N.B. The Field Studies Council produce helpful guides: [www.field-studies-council.org/publications/fold-out-charts.aspx](http://www.field-studies-council.org/publications/fold-out-charts.aspx)

Darwin was fascinated by the types and amounts of weeds that grew in his garden. He cleared a small wild patch of ground, then observed and counted all the weeds that grew, noting how many survived over time.

You can do a quick and simple experiment to find out how many different types of plant exist in a patch of your school grounds by using a quadrat to isolate a small area. A quadrat is a frame to put on the ground, but why not use a hula hoop as your frame?

### What do I do?

- 1) Place the hula hoop on an area on a wild patch of ground, such as a playing field.
- 2) Divide the hoop into quarters using 2 pieces of string.
- 3) Count the number of different plants growing in each quarter.
- 4) Using the key, try to identify as many of the weeds/ grasses/ wild flowers that you find.
- 5) Compare the results within each quarter of the hula hoop, why might they vary?
- 6) Compare your results with a group working on a different patch of ground. Why might the results be different in different areas?

