

Create a biodiverse summer collage

Kew scientists are working with partners in over 100 countries to discover new plant species and look after biodiversity. Biodiversity is the name we give to the variety of all life on Earth. From wild rainforests to our local gardens and parks, ‘biodiverse’ habitats are ones that are full of life, with many different types of plants and insects. Be inspired by Kew’s diverse collections and create a colourful summer collage using pressed flowers.

You will need:



Collecting bag



Selection of flowers



Books



Newspaper



Card or paper



Glue

1 As a family, go for a walk in your local woodland or park, or visit Kew Gardens or Wakehurst. Find an area where lots of flowers are growing.

Q? Is the area neat and tidy, or wild and messy? Is there a range of species, of all shapes, colours, sizes and smells? How many different insects can you spot? Carefully collect a variety of flowers.

! **Remember:** For wildflowers, follow the ‘1 in 20’ rule. If there are less than 20 flowers, choose another spot.

Q? **Did you know?** Many plants and insects have a two-way relationship. Flowering plants attract pollinating insects with scent and bright colours. The insects drink the flowers’ nectar, pollinating them at the same time.



2 When you get home, it’s time to make your flower press. Open a book – the heavier the better. Line the pages with some newspaper and lay the flowers down as flat as you can. Carefully close the book and weigh it down. Leave for 7–10 days.

★ Top tip: Place it in a warm, dry place and check your flowers daily.

3 Taking inspiration from your walk, arrange your pressed flowers on some card. Try experimenting with different colour combinations. Once you have decided on your design, stick it down carefully with some glue. You can use your designs as a card or even a bookmark!

Share your photos: @kewgardens



Taking it forwards:

Kew’s Herbarium houses over seven million specimens from around the world. The oldest is an Indian sample dating from 1696! Use one of your pressed flowers to make your own herbarium specimen. Glue your flower down carefully. Record the plant’s location, the date of collection, your name (as the collector) and the name of the plant, if you know it.