

Student Instructions

Describing Habitat Structure



Estimating Land Cover in Your Point Count Circle

The following technique can be used to estimate the land cover in your 20m radius (40m diameter) circular study area:

- 1) Take two pieces of string and divide the plot into 4 equal sections, so the strings cross in the middle.
- 2) Mark the string every four meters. Start marking the first string at meter zero, and the second string at meter 1. (This staggers the points along the strings to provide 20 total marked points)
- 3) At each point place a meter stick. In the first column of the data table, record the type of cover beneath your feet and less than 0.15m (ground cover). Also, in the appropriate column, record any vegetation that is between 0.15m to 1.5m tall (shrubs) and any which is taller than 1.5m (tree). Only write down the type of land cover that is at that point and touching your meter stick. The land cover type can be "building" or "cement" as well as plants.
- 4) For each type of cover, add the number of times it was recorded, divide by the total number of points and multiply by 100. For example if you recorded "shrubs" at 5 of the points and there were 20 points, then shrubs would be 25% of the land cover ($5/20 \times 100$).

Student Data Sheet

Describing Habitat Structure



Data Table for Describing Land Cover in your Point Count Circle

Point	0-0.15m				0.15-1.5m Shrubs	> 1.5m Tree Canopy
	Lawn	Gravel or Soil	Pavement or Building	Other Vegetation		
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						

Totals:

Lawn _____ x 100 = _____ %
20

Other Vegetation _____ x 100 = _____ %
20

Gravel/Soil _____ x 100 = _____ %
20

Pavement/Building _____ x 100 = _____ %
20

Shrubs _____ x 100 = _____ %
20

Tree Canopy _____ x 100 = _____ %
20