



Collecting specimens for Bush Blitz

Bush Blitz scientists are looking for new plants and animals that they don't know about yet, and for known plants and animals that they haven't seen around here before.

Many of these plants and animals look similar to each other, so a photo isn't always enough to identify them. Sometimes the scientists can just take a small bit of skin or blood to test, but sometimes they need to take the whole animal.

Scientists only take an animal when it's really necessary. They have to get permission first, and make sure the animal doesn't suffer pain.

Here's a summary of what they do. If you want more information, you can also read the *Bush Blitz Vouchering Policy*.

Plant specimens

The scientist takes a branch of the plant with leaves, flowers, fruit and seeds. They press this between newspaper and cardboard to make it flat and dry it.

Then they take the plant and put it in a plant library (herbarium) with lots of other plants. They record where it came from and its name.



Animal specimens (vertebrates)

Vertebrates are animals with backbones, like mice, lizards and frogs. If the scientists kill an animal, they put the dead animal in a jar of ethanol or formaldehyde to preserve it. They take it back to a museum with lots of other animal samples.

Note: They don't do this very often. Usually they just catch the animal, photograph it and maybe take a small skin sample, then let it go.



Animal specimens (invertebrates)

Invertebrates are small animals without backbones, like butterflies, grubs and bugs.

Some of the ways scientists catch these animals can kill them. They might use a light at night that attracts insects, which then drop into a trap and die. Or they might put up a net for them to fly into.

When scientists collect insects or grubs, they either put them in a small jar with ethanol, or they pin them on a board.

