

Recognise Plants



Learning Guide

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Student name:.....

Student number:.....

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Recognise Plants*. This learning guide covers the process of recognising plants that are commonly seen in conservation and land management situations. For example you might need to be able to identify plants when working for councils, carrying out bush regeneration work, ranger work or when managing your own country.

Training for this learning guide should be completed on the job or out in the field in various habitats such as wetlands, woodlands and mangroves. Whilst it is preferable to focus on native plants, the training is about how to recognise plants, so non-native species can also be used, for example weeds growing in your local area.



EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

To complete this training you will need the following:

1. Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
2. Safety gear for field work including first aid kit, maps and water.
3. A hand lens, sketch pad, pencils, pens, eraser and ruler for recording information about plants in the field.
4. A plant press and materials for collecting and mounting plants.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are three assignments you will need to complete.

Some of these assignments may go towards your final assessment.

Section	Assignment	Competent (C) Not yet competent (NYC)	Date Achieved
Getting Prepared	Assignment 1. Project Risk Assessment		
Recognising Plants	Assignment 2. Plant Information Sheet		
Pressing and Storing Plants	Assignment 3. Plant Collection (Herbarium)		

1A. COLLECTING INFORMATION

Information about recognising and identifying plants can be obtained from many sources. There are a few excellent books available for the NT that will help you (see References on page 26).

There is also a wealth of information available online.

1. For information on local Northern Territory plants go to the Northern Territory Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport. They are responsible for naming, describing, surveying and storing the flora of the Northern Territory.



www.nretas.nt.gov.au/plants-and-animals

2. For Australia wide information on plant classification, plants names and identification go to the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

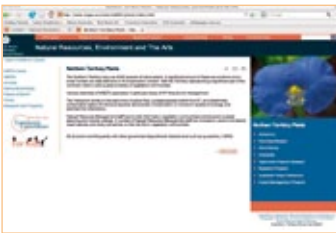


www.anbg.gov.au

3. For plants of the Darwin region this is a great website based on colour of the flower.



www.users.on.net/~bennnez



1B. PERSONAL SAFETY

When collecting plants it is recommended that you use sunscreen, wear a hat, and have sturdy shoes. It is also a good idea to wear a protective long-sleeved shirt and long trousers to keep the sun off. This is called Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

It will also be essential to carry plenty of water for drinking and also for washing hands, especially if handling poisonous or irritating plants.

Remember some plants are very poisonous or should not be handled for spiritual reasons. Always ask your elders or trainer first before handling any plants. Gloves are also recommended when collecting plants as some sap, fruits, seeds or dust from dried seeds can be toxic and may also cause allergic reactions on the skin. A hard hat may also be useful as there can be dangers from falling branches or fruit.

Make sure that you are familiar with your organisation's occupational health and safety policies and procedures before doing any work. When collecting plants in the field always inform your trainer or supervisor about where you are going and when you expect to return. Ideally you should not go out into the field with less than three people. Always carry a first aid kit and maps with you. Make sure your vehicle is properly maintained. Check all safety equipment such as radios and mobile or satellite phones before you leave to see if they are working properly. Before you set off also check the weather, road and fire reports for your local area.



Before you begin, use these checklists to confirm you have followed good safety procedures and that you have everything you need to start recognising plants.

SAFETY CHECKLIST ACTIVITY



Long trousers, shirt and boots		
Hat (hard hat if necessary) and gloves		
Sunscreen, insect repellent and sunglasses		
Water		
First aid kit		
Notified others and have phone/ 2 way radio		
Checked weather, road and fire reports		
Permits (if required) and maps		

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST ACTIVITY



Student folder and notebook		
Hand lens for looking at plants		
Sketch pad, pencils, pens, eraser and ruler and books about local plants		
Plant press and collecting materials (see Section 3)		



Cycads are threatened species



1C. PERMITS AND PERMISSION

Before collecting any plant you will need to get permission from the landowner. Most landowners are generally helpful and you can collect plants without too many problems but always ask first. In many communities you may also need permission from local traditional owners before collecting any plants. Some plants may have special significance and should never be touched (e.g. totemic plants, local restrictions, local protocols etc.). Always seek local advice before you start collecting plants – not afterwards.

Various laws protect all plants listed as threatened, and some common plants which are harvested from the wild. The main laws are the Australian Government’s *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the NT Government’s *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2006*. These acts conserve biological diversity, and prevent the extinction and promote the recovery of, populations of threatened animals and plants and ecological communities. They also aim to stop processes that destroy or threaten the survival of these threatened plants and animals. Information on threatened plants can be accessed online.

 www.nretas.nt.gov.au/plants-and-animals

The Northern Territory Government has restrictions on what native plants and seeds can be collected and has a permit system for collecting wildlife, including plants. See this website for the latest details.

 www.nt.gov.au/nreta/wildlife/permits

ACTIVITY

Find out who you need to get permission from to collect plants in these areas:

Aboriginal owned land	
Roadsides	
Private land	
Pastoral properties	
National or conservation parks	
Council reserves	

ACTIVITY

In your group talk about why you might need to be able to recognise plants in your own area.

1D. WHY RECOGNISE PLANTS?


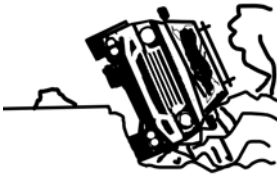



When looking after parks and gardens or larger areas of country, or when you need to grow your own plants, it is very important be able to recognise different plants. Being able to recognise a plant will help with learning more about the plant.

Some plants are used for food or medicine or for making items like baskets and tools. Some plants are weeds and need to be killed. Knowing what the plant is will help with looking after the area and using plants for the right purpose.

PROJECT RISK ASSESSMENT



- Stop and think before starting work.
- What needs to be done so you can work safely?
- Complete the **What to do about it?** column – we have written one thing in each box – try and think of some others.
- Fill in all of the last row by adding a new hazard.

HAZARD and what can happen = the risk	What to do about it?
<p>SUN EXPOSURE </p> <p>Risk of: Heat exhaustion, dehydration and sunburn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a hat • • •
<p>ROAD TRAVEL </p> <p>Risk of: Injury in vehicle accident</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-departure vehicle check • • •
<p>POISONOUS AND PRICKLY PLANTS </p> <p>Risk of: Poisoning or skin injury</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear gloves • • •
<p>TRIP HAZARDS </p> <p>Risk of: Injury from falling over</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look before walking • • •
<p>LOOSE BRANCHES </p> <p>Risk of: Being injured by falling branch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look above for any loose branches • • •
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •