

School Grounds Habitat Mapping

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A basis for school ground development, helping wildlife and creating teaching resources.

Creating a habitat map of your school grounds can provide a structured frame work for scientific study, be used to further develop school grounds, help pupils understand the grounds connectivity to the surrounding area and create a resource that can be added to over future years.

School grounds habitat map can be used to support the following.

Creates a frame work for scientific study and use of scientific and investigation skills. Especially useful to support proposing and proving pupils hypothesis regarding wildlife in the grounds.

Understand the connectivity of the habitats within the school grounds and with the area surrounding the school. Helps support long term investigation of the school grounds that can be added to by classes over many years creating a resource. The map can also be used to help investigate and plot seasonal changes.

Knowledge gained through the topic based investigation of the school grounds can lead to awareness of areas that could be further improved for wildlife, which in turn will lead to an increase in the potential for scientific and cross curriculum learning in the school grounds. E.g. the best place for a bee garden or bird feeders.

Habitat map can be used to help evaluating school grounds development through curriculum study. E.g. evaluating the success of the new bee garden (has it attracted more bees). How successful are the new bird feeders – have they attracted more birds, more species?

PowerPoint Habitat mapping links the use of IT, pupils recording observations using video cameras, still photographs, creating a virtual tour of the school grounds that can be used by younger classes and much more. The map can form the basis for cross curriculum work (literacy, maths, geography, art etc.) The map can also show any heritage features (trees, walls etc.) that pre-date the school being built.

A few examples and further information can be seen on the following pages.

School Grounds Habitat Mapping with PowerPoint



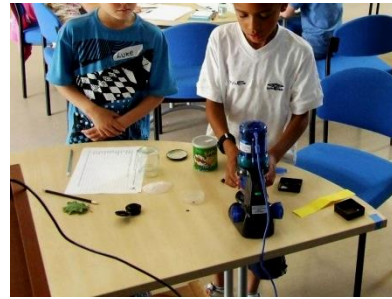
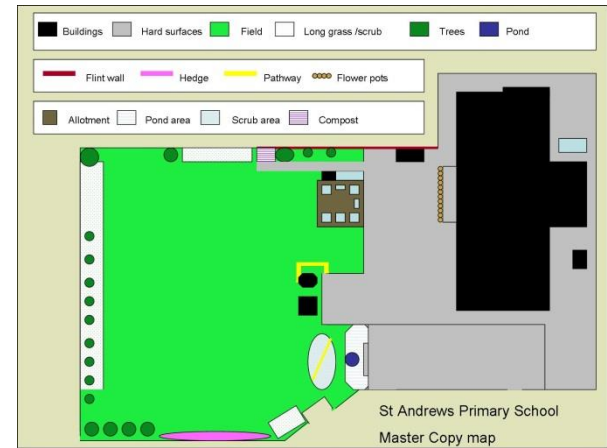
Full school grounds habitat mapping is especially useful for urban schools. This creates a visual map of the grounds and the opportunities for wildlife including both natural and man made structure.

The habitat map can be used to plan further development based on the animals recorded in the grounds and the surrounding area.

I have been developing a PowerPoint mapping project which greatly increases the educational value of a habitat map by integrating multimedia. This method allows children to record their observation using digital photography, movie clips and sound files (animal sounds or narration) all of which can be linked to the habitat map presentation.

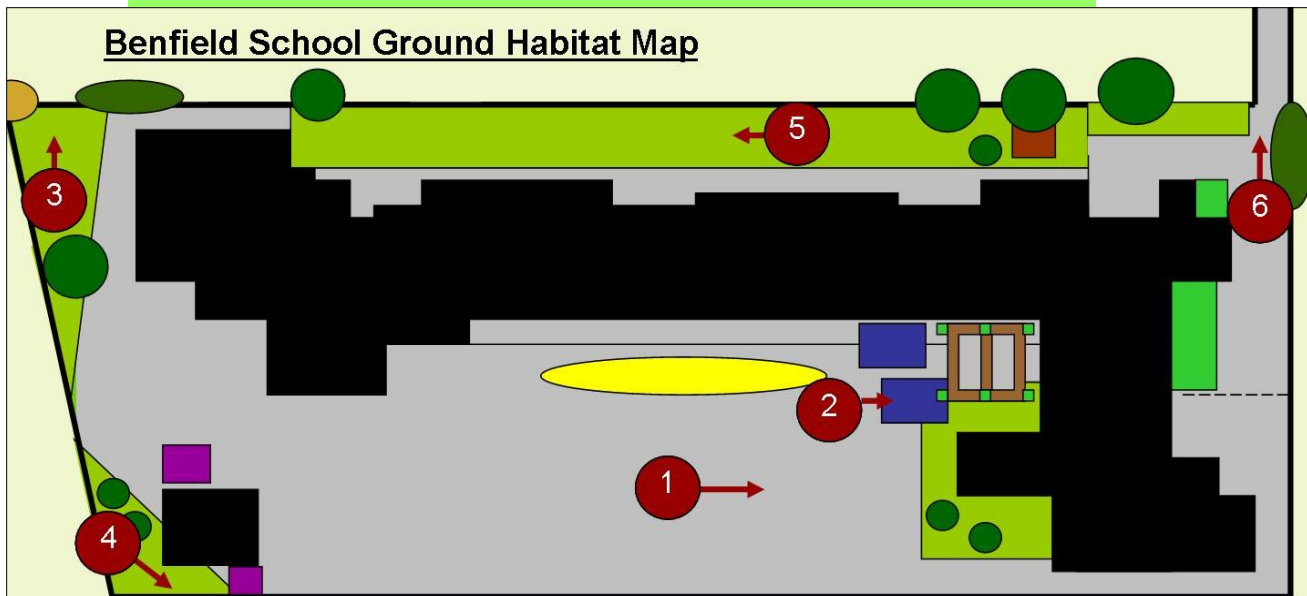
This can also be used to compare locations of different species found in the grounds – allowing children to speculate why this is using scientific techniques and higher thinking skills.

The habitat map can be used or contributed to by after schools clubs (such as environmental clubs, science clubs, gardening clubs etc). This can also be a great project to for Gifted and talented as it provides the opportunity to stretch pupils or inspire the less able.



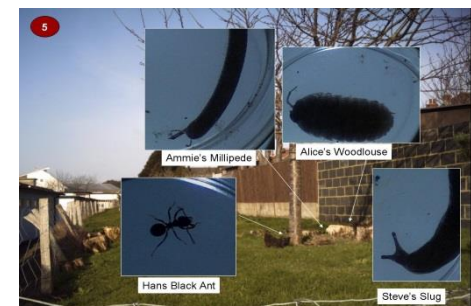
For further information, please contact Stephen Savage, biologist, author, environmental educator at steve.savage@ntlworld.com

Benfield School Example showing linked images



Key

	Buildings		Grass		Asphalt/paths		Hedge
	Trees		Shrubs		Play equipment		Bush
	Pagoda		Sails		Shed		Logs



“ We found out how the birds visiting our school enter and move around using bird flight paths. This will help with the development of our grounds for birds. We will add water, bird feeders and nest box in places we have seen the birds – on these bird flight paths through the grounds” (Pupil)

“It was good to show children the importance of mini-beasts” (teacher)

“We got some great ideas to follow up with the eco-club” (Pupil)