Week Nine and Ten

Plant Surveying and Biodiversity

Find a patch of grass. With some sticks mark out roughly a metre square.

Look closely at what you can see in the square. Many of the things, especially if it is short grass, will be very hard to identify, so name what you can e.g. daisy and make up a name for the others or research using books and the internet.

Then work out very approximately what percentage the plant covers, or if you want to start training as a plant surveyor then use the DAFOR scale. Writing down whether a plant is **Dominant/Abundant/Frequent/Occasional/Rare**

If your square has 100% of one plant then the species diversity is low (each different type of plant is a species). If it had a100 different types of plants each taking up 1% of the space it would have very, very high species diversity. Another name for this is biodiversity.

Biodiversity on our earth is declining rapidly due to human activities and we need to reverse this process. We can make a small contribution to this by making our parks, green spaces and gardens more biodiverse.

One way we can do this is to allow grass to grow long during spring and summer.

<https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/curriculum-collections/biodiversity-counts/plant-ecology/how-to-calculate-a-biodiversity-index>

<https://www.globalissues.org/article/170/why-is-biodiversity-important-who-cares>

<http://www.botanicalkeys.co.uk/northumbria/dafor.asp>