

What's Under the Trees?



Find out what's
at your site!

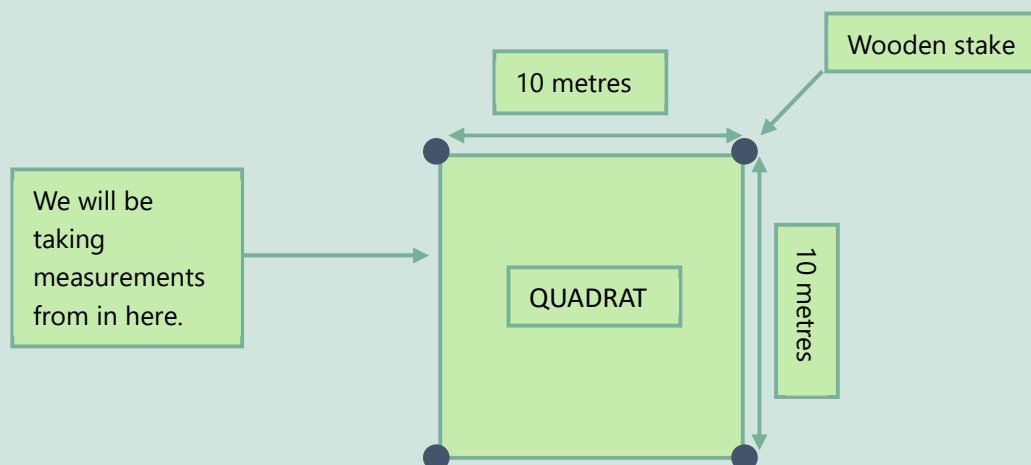
The "understorey" is the plant layer of grasses, sedges and shrubs that grows under the trees. It also includes leaf litter, logs and mosses and lichens.

What you will need:

- Measuring tape (50m)
- Some wooden stakes

What to do:

1. Mark out a 10m x 10m quadrat at your site. A quadrat is a space within which we take a measurement. You can mark out the four corners of your quadrat using wooden stakes, and use the measuring tape to measure the distance between each stake. Set up 1-3 quadrats at your site.



2. We will focus on plants that are less than 6 metres tall in our quadrat – the "understorey". Use the list on the next page to see which layers of the understorey are present at your site. Place a tick in the box if you can see them in your quadrat.

These different layers all provide habitat for different types of wildlife. Some sites may have lots of different types of layers and some may only have a few.

You may have less layers if your site is "disturbed" (eg. through clearing trees, fire, flood), or some habitats like grasslands don't have any trees or shrubs present.

Trees less than 6m tall	Shrubs less than 6m tall	Grasses
Sedges	Creepers	Herbs*
Leaf litter	Bare ground	Fungi
Logs	Moss/Lichen	Rocks

*Herb = plant with a non-woody stem that is not a grass or sedge.