

Data Collection Protocol 2008

Equipment:

- clip board with data sheets
- pedometer
- ID materials (booklet, crib sheet, photo handouts)
- Specimen collection materials (1 white bag, a few Ziploc bags, labels, red marker)
- Collection point marking equipment (GPS, flagging tape, flags)
- Optional: Compass, binoculars, pocket knife

For your assigned two miles:

1. Based on your map, drive or hike to one end of your segment.
2. Note on the datasheet the location of the end that you start at (e.g., 'trail head on 7 Lakes Drive,' 'on Laurel Pond Trail, at intersection with Wingdam Rd Trail' etc.).
 - a. If your segment begins at a road or parking lot, walk in to the forest 30 feet
3. Label the first data point on the first data sheet with the trail segment name and '01'. Fill out the information at the top of the first data sheet.
4. Take a GPS reading for the point.
 - a. Record the accuracy value on the GPS on the data sheet.
5. **IMPORTANT:** if you can't get a GPS reading, mark the point as described, and make a note on the data sheet.
6. Place a flag off the trail, about 1 foot into the vegetation.
 - a. For the first 11 points you will also put pieces of flagging tape around 3 plants close to the flag (the nearest trees or hanging from a bush).
7. Face the right side of the trail (from the direction that you're hiking).
 - a. Record on the data sheet the compass direction you are facing (N, E, S, W).
8. Lay out your ropes: 10 foot ropes on either side of the flag point, and each 6 foot rope going into the vegetation from the 10' rope ends (i.e., mark out a rectangle 20 ft x 6 ft, centered on the flag).
9. Observe the vegetation within the rectangle. Look by layer: for example, look first at the trees, then shrubs, then herbs, or vice versa. For trees, binoculars may help you see the canopy leaves. For all species observed, confirm the identification
 - a. Take a specimen if this is the first of that species you have found (instructions are below)
 - b. Enter the species code in the data sheet. Mark the 'distance' column with 'T=TRAILSIDE'.
 - c. Make a judgment about the abundance of the species within the rectangle:
 - i. F = 'Few' = less than 3 individuals of the species'
 - ii. S = 'Some' = more than 3 individuals, but less than complete cover
 - iii. M= 'Many' = ground is completely covered by this species
10. Observe the vegetation directly behind the rectangle (estimate where the back line of the rectangle is located). Without going off the trail, scan for our species as before. Record all species observed on the data sheet with the distance code 'D=Distant.' Estimate the abundance as above. Don't go off the trail to check the species.
11. For points with no exotics observed, enter the data point number and write 'NONE' across the data line.
12. Repeat steps 7-11 for the left side of the trail. Before starting the plant observations, note the compass direction you are facing in the "Trail Side" column.

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13. Observe all land-use indicators on either side of the trail, any distance. Record the point number (trail code plus data point number) and check off all indicators observed. If you see none, write "NONE" across the data line.
14. Hike 0.1 mile to the next point. Use the pedometer to determine your distance.

Validation trail (completed as soon as possible after your 2-mile segment)

There are separate 'validation' trails for Wawayanda and for Bear Mtn.-Harriman. Go to the one for your park (see separate sheet). Each is approximately 1 mile long, with 11 data points marked with flags along it.

1. Locate the 'start' flag. It will be like those you used, but will say 'start' (or X1 or Z1)
2. Start data collection at the 'start' flag.
 - a. Follow the same methods you used earlier, except no flagging needed!
 - b. **NOTE:** if you do not find any of our species, simply make one entry for that point and write "none" in the species column.
3. Complete the remaining points.

Once you have completed both your 2 mile segment and the validation trail mile:

1. Return the data sheets and your GPS unit to the trail conference office.
2. Keep the plant press and materials and return these at the debriefing workshop.

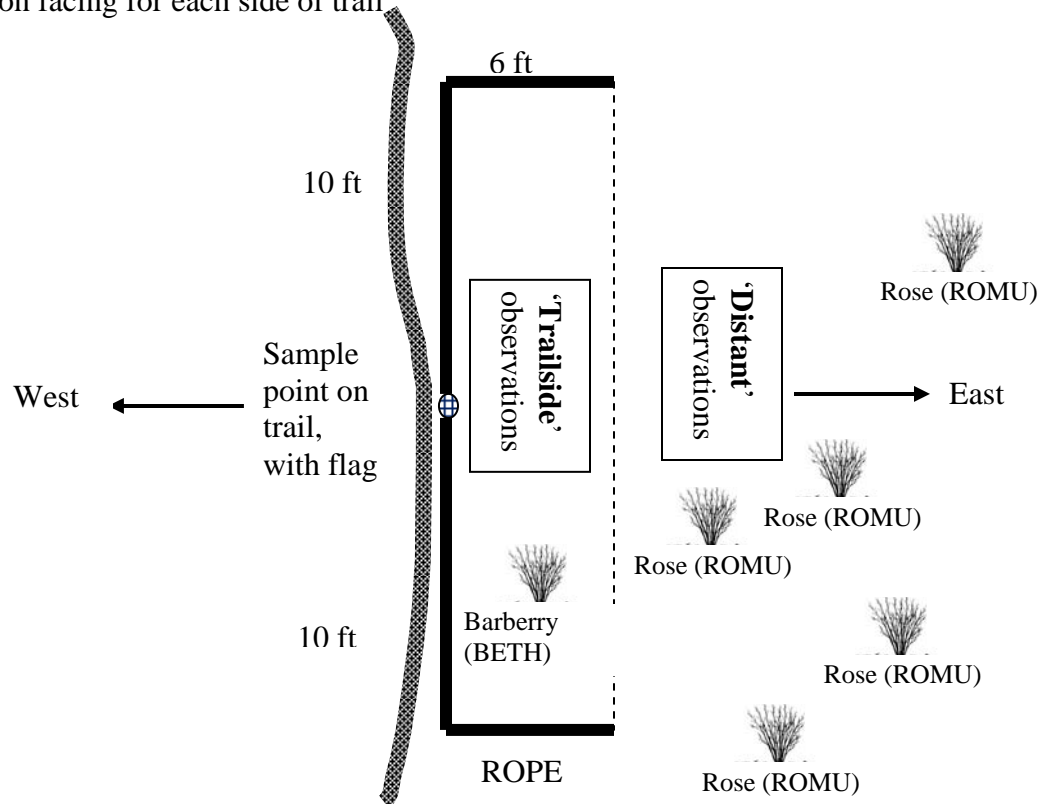
PLANT PRESS--VERY IMPORTANT:

The first time you identify each exotic species:

- clip a piece that is long enough to allow verification of the identification
 - (10 – 15 inches, with leaves and buds of woody plants and vines; a whole plant for herbs).
- Place a piece of tape around the stem with the point code (08-Park code (W – Wawayanda or H – Harriman)+trail code+point number) written on the tape
- Place the labeled sample in a Ziploc bag.
 - Place the Ziploc bag in the white bag.
- when you return home:
 - Open the plant press
 - Unfold a segment of newspaper, revealing 2 sheets of paper towel
 - Remove one piece of paper towel
 - Layout the specimen on the other sheet of paper towel
 - Lay it out fully as possible, so that leaves and stems are clearly visible.
 - Write the same information from the label onto that paper towel
 - Replace the other paper towel sheet and re-fold the newspaper
 - After you have prepared all specimens:
 - Replace the top board
 - Tighten the straps sufficiently that the papers and boards won't slip.
- Return the plant press at the debriefing session

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Diagram of sampling protocol: do one side of trail, then on the other.
 Note direction facing for each side of trail



This would result in the following data:

POINT #	TRAIL SIDE	DISTANCE	SPECIES CODE	ABUNDANCE	Notes
	compass direction	T= trailside D= distant		F= few S= some M= many	
O1	E	T	BETH	F	
	E	D	ROMU	S	