

April 17, 2023

Dear Rising 7th Grade Students and Parents,

As in previous years, rising 7th grade students will be required to create a nature collection for their Life Science class. I am sending out this information now so that students can get started on their collections over the summer, since this is the best time to find bugs and leaves. The collection will be due on August 21, 2023. Students may bring in their collection as early as August 16, 2023 (Open House) if they would like. This project will count as two test grades.

Students have two collections to complete. Collection 1, students will collect ten *different* insects as specified in the included directions. Collection 2, students will collect ten *different* tree leaves.

Collection #1 Insects-

Students will collect 10 insects. They must have 5 different orders of the following orders and no more than 2 different insect specimens from an order:

- Coleoptera (beetles)
- Diptera (flies, mosquitoes, gnats)
- Lepidoptera (moths, butterflies)
- Orthoptera (grasshoppers, crickets, katydids)
- Hymenoptera (ants, bees, wasps)
- Odonata (dragonflies, damselflies)
- Hemiptera (stink bugs, cicadas, leafhoppers, scale insects)

Students will need to keep track of each bug with the **common name, location at which the bug was found and date the bug was found**. *Students will be creating labels for each bug with the **order, scientific name, common name, location found, and date found**.* **Please note that adult insects have six legs; spiders do not qualify. Also, please do not kill praying mantises.

Collection #2 Leaves –

Students will collect 10 tree leaf specimens (a bush is not a tree). Students will be required to keep track of the **date and location found for each leaf**. Each label should contain the common name, location and date the leaf was found, and category of leaf blade (either simple leaf or compound leaf). Compound leaves should have all leaflets.

Format for each label (bug and leaves)-

Example:

Common Name: Black Locust
Scientific Name: *Robinia psuedoacacia*
Leaf Blade Type: Compound
Collected at Anchor Park
September 19, 2017

The two collections must be completed neatly and with correct identification of the specimens. There are identification field guides available at school and at the local libraries in limited numbers. Field guides can also be purchased at local bookstores and even at Green Valley Book Fair.

Labeling – READ CAREFULLY!

- Common name must be written or typed
- Scientific names must be written or typed but both methods must include the Genus and the species name.
- The Genus name is always capitalized and the species name is not.
- If typed the scientific name should be italicized. If hand written the scientific name should be underlined.

Example: Domestic dog *Canis domestica*

Collecting/Presentation –

Attached is information, which explains the proper method of killing and pinning insects. Do not leave insects in the killing jar long after they are dead; they will begin to mold or fall apart. Take them out of the killing jar. For large insect specimens, pin them immediately after removing them from the jar. For small specimens, glue and mount them. This way the insects can dry before molding. The specimens need to be identified by the location and date of their collection.

Leaves should be pressed between the pages of a book until dry and stiff, then glued onto thick paper which can then be slipped into a loose-leaf protector page and put into a notebook. Magnetic-type photo albums also work well for this purpose. The common names, location and date found and leaf blade type should be recorded where the student is able to identify them.

I hope the nature collection will be a good learning experience for the students, as well as an enjoyable one. Please do not do the project for your child! I look forward to working with each of the students as we learn about our wonderful God and His marvelous creation.

Warmly,

Stephanie Dimeo
7th Grade Life Science Teacher
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Example page for Leaf Collection:



Common Name: Maple
Scientific Name: (*Otype here*)
Collected at Gypsy Hill Park
September 20, 2019