

Museums Worcestershire Make-athon Challenges

Herbarium: Create your own

Learn what a herbarium is and create your own herbarium diary.



We hold a wonderful collection of pressed and catalogued plants at Museums Worcestershire, including plants, lichens, fungi and ferns.

Discover 5 Herbarium facts:

1. A Herbarium is not just a collection of pressed plants, they include the name of a plant, plant collector and details of where/when the plant was found. This means they can be used by scientists and botanists in their research.
2. The study of natural history was very fashionable in the 1800s and Worcester was an important centre of learning at this time. Plant collecting was a very popular hobby and plant collectors gathered, exchanged, and purchased different plants from across Britain and Worcestershire.
3. The plant specimens were often treated with chemicals (sometimes poisonous) to help with their preservation and presentation. Therefore, we have to wear protective clothing when working with the specimens!
4. The labels can be just as important and interesting as the plant themselves - some of our plants are attached to letters, cut-out adverts and receipts. Perhaps the plant collector had to rummage through drawers and pockets to find a scrap of paper to attach the newly found plant?
5. Our Herbarium is a really important resource for studying the changes to our local habitats and the plants that can be found. We are currently creating an online catalogue of this vast and very special collection which will be shared in the future.

Explore:

See highlights of our wonderful Herbarium Collection online

www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk/avada_portfolio/herbarium/

Explore the lovely plants growing in your garden or nearby. Take note of their colour, shape and scent! Always collect wildflowers responsibly and legally - we advise that you ask permission to pick plants (some may be poisonous or someone's best plant!)

Create a Herbarium Diary to record the plants that grow in your garden or nearby.

Press Flowers by picking a small section of a plant (ask permission if it's not yours!), opening a book and lining it with newspaper, placing the plant specimen inside flat, then closing the book and weighing it down (a stack of other books is best for this). Store in a warm, dry room - it should only take a couple of days to dry, and the colour of the plant will be better preserved if it is dried quickly.

Make a Herbarium Diary

Using PVA glue, fix your pressed flower on some card & record the name of the plant, the collector, where/when the plant was found, in your best handwriting! You can gather your pages and make them into a booklet - use a hole punch and ribbon to secure the pages together.

Happy collecting, pressing and recording!



To find more exciting make-athon ideas visit
www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk/collections/activities/