

# Insect Monitoring

Insect monitoring is an important part of IPM. Pest monitoring can be used to determine crop risk and help make management decisions. Monitoring for beneficial insects can be useful to understand the impact of management practices and to assess the level of natural pest control.

*For more information, visit: [ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/encyclopaedia-of-pests-and-natural-enemies](http://ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/encyclopaedia-of-pests-and-natural-enemies)*

## Pitfall traps

### Method:

1. Choose a suitable site for your trap. Catches will be higher nearer to undisturbed habitats (e.g. field margins). Choose somewhere where it won't be disturbed by walkers or wildlife.
2. Dig a small hole with the trowel and place the empty cup inside
3. Ensure the top of the cup is **level** with the soil surface so that invertebrates are more likely to fall in. Backfill the hole around the cup and replace any disturbed surface debris around the edge.
4. **If leaving <24hrs** place some small rocks in base of the cup to act as shelter for smaller insects (otherwise the beetles might eat each other!). It is best to leave overnight as many species are nocturnal. Ensure the rocks cannot be used by the beetles to climb up and escape.
5. **If leaving for more than 24hrs**, half fill the cup with water and a drop of washing up liquid/detergent. This will break the surface tension so that any insects falling in will drown quickly. This method is likely to catch more insects as fewer will escape.
6. Mark the location of the trap so you can easily find it.
7. When collecting, empty the trap into a Tupperware container to easily see what has been caught.

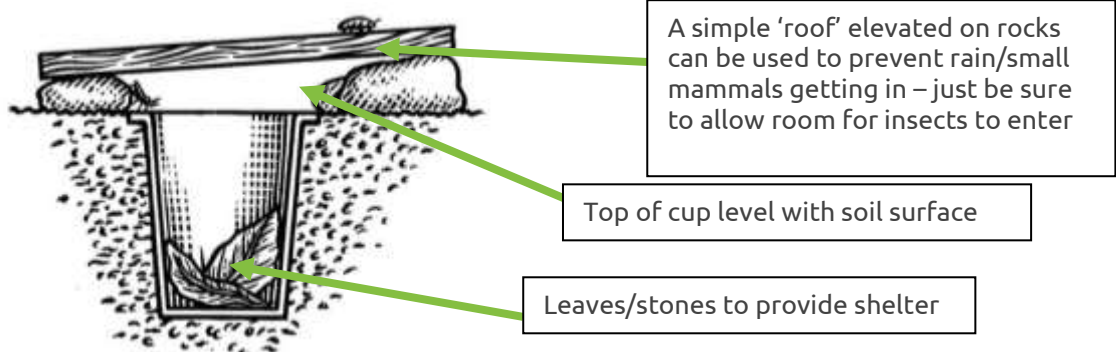
### USED FOR:

Ground active insects (mainly beetles and spiders)

### EQUIPMENT:

Plastic cup, hand trowel, plastic container (or similar), washing up liquid and water (if leaving >24hrs)

*It is not recommended to leave traps for more than a few days due to the risk of them overflowing or attracting other wildlife.*



## Sticky traps

### Method:

1. Choose a suitable site for your trap. For aphid monitoring, place traps approx. 5m into a cereal crop, ideally on a field edge adjacent to a hedgerow or woodland. For monitoring beneficial insects and pollinators, catches will be higher nearer to undisturbed habitats (e.g. field margins).
2. Ideally choose a day when flying insects are likely to be active (e.g. >10C, no rainfall, no high wind)
3. For aphid monitoring, place traps horizontally on the soil surface and secure in place with stakes.
4. For other flying insects, traps can be attached vertically to a stake/cane and placed at the height of the crop/vegetation, or hung from a low branch.
5. On collection, try to assess traps straight away. If this is not possible, traps should be placed in clear plastic document sleeves and stored in the freezer

### USED FOR:

Flying insects (e.g. aphids)

### EQUIPMENT:

Yellow sticky traps,  
wooden/plastic/metal stakes

*If is not recommended to leave traps for more than a day or two due to the risk of attracting other wildlife*



## Water traps

### Method:

1. Choose a suitable site for your trap. For aphid monitoring, place traps approx. 5m into a cereal crop, ideally on a field edge adjacent to a hedgerow or woodland. For monitoring beneficial insects and pollinators, patches will be higher nearer to undisturbed habitats (e.g. field margins).
2. Choose a day when flying insects are likely to be active (e.g. >10C, no rainfall, no high wind)
3. Place dish on soil surface if no vegetation, or raised up to the level of surrounding vegetation.
4. Part fill the dish with water and washing up liquid, this will break the surface tension so that any insects will drown quickly.
5. When collecting, empty the trap into a large Tupperware container to easily see what has been caught

### USED FOR:

Flying insects

### EQUIPMENT:

Yellow dish (e.g. painted plant saucer, Frisbee), washing up liquid & water, large plastic container

