

# Hedgerows Grow West

## Surveying a hedgerow Workbook to help explore a hedgerow



Hedgerows Grow West is a partnership project across eleven councils in Northern Ireland that aims to restore and enhance hedgerows for the benefit of biodiversity through working with people and passing on vital skills in conservation. This Hedgerow Survey Workbook was created as part of this project, funded by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

For further information on biodiversity and hedgerows in Northern Ireland, this project and to contact your local biodiversity officer, please visit [www.biodiversityni.com](http://www.biodiversityni.com).

This document is available for download in various formats.



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## **Introduction**

Hedgerows are a wonderful part of our landscape and our natural heritage. They are important for biodiversity as they support over 170 species of trees, shrubs and flowers which in turn provide food and shelter for numerous birds, mammals and invertebrates. Hedgerows need to be managed, whether they are newly planted, ten or fifty years old. There are different ways to do this and depending on what condition the hedge is in, the way you manage will change. A good hedge for wildlife has a variety of native species, some tall mature trees, and a thick and wide base with a range of wild grasses and wildflowers. By carrying out a simple survey you can determine what type of management is required to renew a hedgerow.

## **What you need**

This workbook, pencil, a stretch of hedgerow, some basic identification skills (ID sheets included to help), camera, permission from the landowner. *Please photocopy the workbook answer sheets if you wish to complete more than one survey.*

## **3 basic steps to surveying a hedgerow**

1. Select a stretch of hedgerow that is accessible and safe. Ideally a 30 metre stretch should be selected but shorter is fine. You can survey at any time of the year, but from late spring to early autumn is the easiest and most accurate.
2. Follow the questions in this workbook to collect information about the hedgerow. This will cover measurements, structure, species present etc.
3. Take photos, some samples of leaves and sketches of anything you are not familiar with and identify them afterwards.

## **Health and Safety guidelines**

- ⊕ Do not survey alone and/or tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back
- ⊕ Always carry a mobile phone when surveying in remote areas
- ⊕ Wear appropriate clothing for the weather and reflective clothing if along a roadside
- ⊕ Beware of stinging nettles, thorns and prickly vegetation
- ⊕ If there is evidence of a bee or wasp nest, survey a different stretch
- ⊕ Only survey hedgerows that are accessible and safe, on public land or with landowners permission

## **Hedgerow survey workbook**

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Weather conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Hedgerow details**

4. Location of hedgerow – grid reference, address or description of place \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the average height of the hedgerow, excluding individual trees (metres) \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the average width of the hedgerow (metres) \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the length of section that you are surveying? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the total approximate length of the hedgerow of which you are surveying one section \_\_\_\_\_
9. Habitat/land use the hedgerow is in or near – please tick all that apply

	Arable	Grassland	Garden	Woodland	Waterway	Hard surface
Side 1						
Side 2						

Please add anymore information here about the habitat you are in

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10. Tick which best describes the hedgerow type

- a. line of shrubs
- b. line of tall trees
- c. line of shrubs with some tall trees

  
  

11. Tick which statements apply to the hedgerow section

- a. No gaps
- b. Some gaps
- c. Mainly gaps

12. What shape is the hedgerow; please tick the most relevant diagram shown



Trimmed and dense



Untrimmed and can have outgrowth



Tall and getting leggy



Intensively trimmed



Laid

If the hedgerow differs from those shown above, please describe it;

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#### **Species present along survey section**

13. Please tick all the species present that you can identify. Use the attached identification sheet for help. Please use the space at the end of the table to include any species not listed.

Species	Present	% cover in hedge	Or No. of individual trees
Alder			
Ash			
Beech			
Birch			
Blackthorn			
Broom			
Cherry			
Crab apple			
Dog-rose			
Dogwood			
Elder			
Field maple			

Gorse			
Guelder Rose			
Hawthorn			
Hazel			
Holly			
Horse Chestnut			
Lime			
Oak			
Rowan			
Sycamore			

14. Please tick all the species present that you can identify. Use the attached identification sheet for help. Please use the space at the end of the table to include any species not listed

Species	Present	% cover in hedge
Bluebell		
Bracken		
Bramble		
Buttercup		
Cleavers/Goose grass		
Cow parsley		
Dandelion		
Docks		
Foxglove		
Greater stitchwort		
Hedge bindweed		
Herb Robert		
Honeysuckle		
Ivy		
Lady's Smock		
Lesser celandine		
Lesser stitchwort		
Lords and Ladies		
Nettle		
Primrose		

Red Campion		
Thistle		
Violet sp		
Wild strawberry		
Willow herb sp		
Wood anemone		

15. Please record any other wildlife noted during your survey. This may be birds, insects, mammals or other and can also include evidence of wildlife present such as nests, mammal holes, hair on wire, etc.
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### What to do next

Keep a copy of your survey results and monitor your hedgerow in different seasons. You may spot something different. You can also survey your hedge annually to monitor any changes over time, particularly if there is a change in hedge management. For advice on how to manage your hedgerow better for wildlife, refer to our Hedgerow Heroes leaflet, downloadable from the [www.biodiversityni.com](http://www.biodiversityni.com) website or seek further advice from the following sources.

Your local Biodiversity Officer would be delighted to receive your survey results. Simply tear out the results pages, 3 – 6 and drop them in the post. You can contact your Biodiversity Officer through your local Council or visit the Biodiversity Northern Ireland website: [www.biodiversityni.com](http://www.biodiversityni.com).

### Web resources

Hedgelink - [www.hedgelink.org.uk](http://www.hedgelink.org.uk)

Hedge Laying Association of Ireland - [www.hedgelaying.ie](http://www.hedgelaying.ie)

Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland - [www.cvni.org](http://www.cvni.org) and

[www.cvni.org/treenursery](http://www.cvni.org/treenursery)

## **Hedgerow tree and plant identification sheet**

Nb: This ID sheet only shows a sample of the more common hedgerow trees and plants. Please refer to an ID book or online for further help



Alder	Beech	Gorse	Hazel
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Elder	Blackthorn	Hawthorn
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Holly	Oak	Rowan
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Foxglove

Cow Parsley

Ivy



Dog Rose

Cleavers

Greater Stitchwort



Herb Robert

Bramble

Honeysuckle



Primrose

Red Campion

Wood Anemone