

Constructing a Plant Press

Objective: Build a plant press to use when collecting plant specimens for mounting.

Materials and Equipment:

Two plywood boards (16 in. x 12 in., 1/2 in. thick)
Ten to 20 pieces of corrugated cardboard (16 in. x 12 in.)
Newspaper
Rope

Procedure:

1. Alternate 8 to 10 pages of newspaper with the pieces of cardboard.
2. Put the stack between the boards.
3. Position the plants inside the folded newspaper, which acts as a blotter. More newspaper may be needed around juicy specimens. Special care should be taken when positioning the plants, since the appearance of the plants cannot be changed when they are dry because they become brittle and break easily.
4. Tie the rope tightly around the entire stack (see the illustration of a completed plant press below).
5. Set the press in a warm, dry area for several (4 to 5) days. If the stems and leaves are thick, the plants will take longer to dry. Remove the plants when they are dry.

