

# Build a Plant Press

Make a tool to preserve berry plants!



Botanists collect roots, leaves, flowers, and seeds from plants so they can study them. They often use *plant presses* to flatten and dry the plant material, making it easier to store and study. Each specimen is labeled with the plant's name, where and when it was collected, and who collected it.

## Materials Needed:

Cardboard, newspaper or other absorbent paper, popsicle sticks, rubber bands, glue, markers.

## Instructions:

**Step 1:** Cut two cardboard squares of the same size. Glue popsicle sticks in a solid row to one side of each cardboard square. These will be the covers.

**Step 2:** Once the glue is dry, decorate the covers with markers. Be creative!

**Step 3:** Cut two squares of newspaper, the same size as your cardboard squares.

**Step 4:** Assemble your plant press: lay one cover on the table, wooden side down. Add two pieces of newspaper, and top with the other cover, wooden side up.

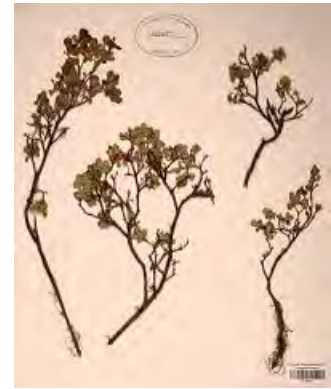
**Step 5:** Wrap two rubber bands around the plant press to hold it together. You're ready to collect some plants!



See the next page for how to use your plant press!

# How to Use Your Plant Press

- When collecting plants, only take one so that the rest can grow. If a plant is rare or endangered, do not collect it.
- Place a leaf, flower, or other plant material in between layers of newspaper. For berries, you may want put them in a small envelope to dry. You can later tape the envelope to your plant specimen page.
- To dry multiple specimens, add additional layers of newspaper and cardboard in this order:
  - Newspaper square
  - Plant specimen
  - Newspaper square
  - Cardboard square
- Wrap the rubber bands around the covers.
- Write a label for your specimen. The information on the label often determines how useful a specimen is!
- Let the specimen dry for about a week.



Bog Blueberry (*Vaccinium uliginosum*) specimen.  
UAMN Herbarium 74275.

## Plant Label

Name of Plant:

Date Collected:

Where Collected:

Name of Collector and Number:

(Example: "J. Smith 1" is the first plant J. Smith collected.)

## Plant Labels

### Plant Label

Name of Plant:

Date Collected:

Where Collected:

Name of Collector and Number:

*(Example: "J. Smith 1" is the first plant J. Smith collected.)*

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Name of Plant:

Date Collected:

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