

SCIENCE EYE -- PREPARATION - HOOP PLOTS



Middle School Students – Repeatable and Random Sampling (An introduction to scientific surveying)

To better prepare your students, please briefly go over what type of scientific survey they will be conducting, why, and how.

- Explain that they are going to use a type of scientific survey, the hoop plot
 - A hoop is “thrown”/placed in a partially predetermined area, data (plant identification & abundance and depth) will be collected
- Hoop plots are used to estimate population size, determine a dominant species, record, map and study various vegetation species &/or habitats, determine areas of special interest, calculate percent cover of vegetation both as overall vegetation and broken down by species, calculate species composition, determine changes in total vegetation cover, etc...
- During the field experience students will work together to sample data with only four hoop plots – more is better (gives a better understanding of the area because a larger area is sampled), but time is limited
- What to expect/how to do a hoop plot: hoops are set out, they are separated into quadrants, students identify and count the vegetation that is within their quadrant, then add their data together to record on the data sheet; depth is taken at the center of the hoop (this will only be gone over briefly at the site):

