

Mark and recapture garden snails

You will need:

- an area of garden or pond

- tub or pot



- waterproof paint (non-toxic)



- small paint brush



- pad and pen



- 1 In your chosen area, find as many snails as you can and collect them in a tub. Write down how many you find.



- 2 Place a tiny dot of paint on the shell of each snail. Don't let the paint touch their bodies, and don't use too much.



Small dot to avoid attracting predators

- 3 Release the snails back where you found them, and leave them for a few days. Return and do another search - count how many are with and without a paint spot.



You can work out how many snails might be living in your chosen area with this sum:

$$\text{No. of snails in the area} = \frac{\text{No. of snails in first visit} \times \text{No. in second visit}}{\text{No. of marked snails in second visit}}$$