

3 WEEKS IN THE RAINFOREST

ACTIVITY KIT

Make Your Own Flower Press

While the method on page 32 of *3 Weeks in the Rainforest* is great for a big team to quickly preserve lots of specimens, it's a lot for one scientist gathering wildflowers. Make this quick and easy flower press to take along on all your outdoor adventures!

Materials

- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Rubber bands
- Tissue paper or blotting paper
- Markers

Procedure

1. Cut two identical pieces of cardboard, approximately 5"x11". Take care not to cut a piece that includes a crease, tear, or other structural flaw.
2. Decorate one or both of the cardboard pieces with marker. You might write "Andrea's Flower Press," "Flowers of Central Park," or simply draw a flower on the front.
3. Cut several sheets of tissue or blotting paper so that they fit neatly between the cardboard pieces with no edges sticking out. Layer this cardboard and blotting paper sandwich and secure it with a rubber band on each end.
4. Bring the flower press along on your nature walks or when you play in your backyard. When you see a flower you'd like to sample, if you have permission, use garden clippers to remove it or ask an adult to help you safely take the sample. This is your specimen.
5. Place the specimen in your press, sandwiched between two layers of blotting paper, and close the press by wrapping it with rubber bands again.
6. To add a new specimen, stack it atop the other specimens, tucking each specimen between two sheets of blotting paper. This will keep specimens from sticking to each other.
7. Between nature walks, keep the press in a dry, undisturbed place. You can speed the process by stacking a heavy book on top of the press. Your specimens will be ready in approximately four to six weeks.