**Pitfall Traps**

In this video today we're going to be looking at how to use pitfall traps to sample invertebrate populations in an area. It would be impossible to count and identify all of the bugs and beasts on the ground around me here today, so by using a pitfall trap we can get an idea of what's around. In order to do a pitfall trap, we need to dig a small hole in the ground in which we insert a pot, such as a yoghurt pot level with the ground, and then above that we want to place a small cover to protect it from predators and rain, but we want that cover to be raised so that the bugs and beasts that we're wanting to trap can get in and fall into the pot.

Another thing we need to think about is asking permission from the landowner to dig the hole; and we also will want to be wearing rubber gloves to protect our hands from anything in the soil that might hurt us or cut us.

So what we need to do is take a trowel and dig a hole the same size as the pot we're going to be using, in this case that's the pot. It needs to fit into the ground with the top level with the surface so that the insects and the invertebrates can crawl in and fall in. We also want to put in some dead leaves, in this case, and a couple of twigs to act as cover for the insects - not so much that they can crawl out again. And then lastly we want to put a lid over the top: in this case I'm using some twigs and a tray, but you could use stones and a piece of wood or a slate to cover the trap, and then you'd leave that for twelve hours.

So twelve hours later we return to the pitfall trap; remove the lid; and need to take out the leaves and cover for the insects and what we can see in here: we've got several ground beetles in the pot here; what we want to do is make sure we record them having identified them, and then having done that want to release them back into the wild.