

Make your own Seaweed Art

with Shetland Seaweed Growers

Pressing seaweed has a long history, botanists pressed seaweed to preserve specimens of each species but later it became trendy among the Victorians to collect seaweed and create scrapbooks of pressed specimens. You can collect seaweeds that are red, green or brown and while some are leaf-like others have very delicate branching patterns that you won't notice till you spread them out underwater. Seaweed pressing can help you reveal the hidden colours and patterns of seaweed!



Materials

- ◆ Wellies and a bucket
- ◆ Water colouring paper
- ◆ Scissors and/or sharp knife
- ◆ Tweezers, mounted needle, brushes
- ◆ Seawater and shallow tray
- ◆ Corrugated cardboard and newspaper
- ◆ Non-stick layer (e.g. synthetic cloth)
- ◆ Your freshly collected specimens!

Method

- 1) Go to your favourite rocky shore armed with a bucket and some scissors to collect your seaweed specimens. Make sure to check the weather forecast, tide tables and don't go alone.
- 2) Back home or in the lab pour seawater (or freshwater) in your tray, put a piece of paper in the tray and immerse your chosen specimen. Use brushes, needles and pipettes to adjust its position and reveal its shape, you can be creative here. Remove any blades if necessary, remember less is more!
- 3) When you are happy with your artwork slowly lift out the paper from one end of the tray to let the water run off. Your seaweed might have moved so use a brush or pipette for the final touch.
- 4) To press the seaweed place a piece of cardboard on the table, then a layer of newspaper and the non-stick cloth before placing your paper on it. Make sure the seaweed lays flat. Now add another layer of non-stick cloth followed by newspaper and finally cardboard. Carefully place all your presses in a neat pile in a dry, warm place and put some large, heavy books on top.

