

Protocol for Herp Coverboard Monitoring

Scheduling Instructions

Scheduling spreadsheet, email

- Please give us ~48 hours notice
- Herp Coverboard Scheduling - Google Sheets
- You can use the scheduling sheet to pick some coverboards to monitor
- Email us at herps@egret.org, tell us:
 - o Your chosen coverboards
 - o Your planned date/time
- Let us know about:
 - o Any other hiking plans on the preserve
 - o if you plan to bring guests
- We will get back to you to confirm your plans. We will also send you an email after the hike to confirm you have uploaded your data

Preparation

Hiking

- Please only monitor the boards you have signed up for, since they are checked on a schedule!
- If you plan to do a longer hike while at the preserve, please let us know your approximate plans
- Be prepared for some light off-trail hiking to access some of the coverboards
- Recommended clothing
 - o Hiking shoes (preferable covers the ankles, has tread)
 - o Long sleeve pants/jacket
 - Must be sturdy fabric that can withstand thorny plants
 - Long sleeves/plants prevent ticks, poison oak exposure, and scratches from blackberry thorns

Tech

- Have the Survey123 app installed with our Herp Survey
 - o <https://arcg.is/z8PH8>
- Download the map here:
 - o [herp_map_georef_v1.pdf](#)



- o This map is compatible with AvenzaMaps

Field Protocol

Coverboards

-  Lift each board for 20 seconds of searching + time required for photography. Keep the board open for a maximum of about five minutes. *Look carefully for at least 20 seconds!*
-  Take note of the soil moisture.
-  Take one **overview photograph** of the plot, even if it's just a photo of a patch of dirt.
 - o This is one of our only forms of data quality assurance, and the photos can be used to resolve data entry mistakes (they happen to everyone!!)
-  Take **close-up photos** of any herp species you see
 - o Close-up photos of animals can help us identify them to species, and patterns on their skin can also be used to identify individuals!
-  Fill out the Survey123 Form
 - o If you can't identify a herp to species, be as accurate as you can. If you're not sure what kind of newt, use "newt". If you can't tell if it's a newt or a slender salamander, use "amphibian"
-  Gently lower the coverboard back to the ground

 *If there is a lot of overgrown vegetation under the coverboard that makes it difficult to survey, you can hand-pull the plants.*

End of Hike

- Please **upload your Survey123 Forms ASAP!**