



# Guidelines for the Packaging and Posting of Insect Traps and Specimens for Study and Identification

Dead insects, sent as collectables for study and identification purposes are allowed to be sent through the post under UK and International Law.

## Materials needed:

- Rigid box
- Traps/specimen
- Coin boxes or small plastic vials or tubes
- Small, soft paint brush
- Tweezers

## Insects stuck on blunder or sticky traps

### Do

- ✓ Ensure the traps are adequately protected. Use a suitably sized rigid outer box to house the traps. Select a box large enough to snugly accommodate the traps.
- ✓ Stack fully constructed traps in the box one on top of each other. The tighter packed the traps, the less risk of movement and damage occurring.
- ✓ Pad any remaining space in the box with crunched up tissue, to prevent the movement of the traps within the box.

## AF Demi Diamond traps

### Do

- ✓ Remove the sticky pad from the plastic dispenser. Attach the sticky pad to a piece of card, using pressure sensitive tape around the edges to secure it to the cardboard. Ensure that any labelling is visible on the cardboard.
- ✓ Lightly attach the covering sheet to the sticky pad without damaging the insects.

### Do not

- ✗ Place traps into envelopes without any physical form of protection. Mail goes through rollers, which will crush the trap, rendering the insect unidentifiable.



### Do not

- ✗ Place transparent sheets/coverings firmly over insect traps. This squashes the insect, obscuring it, rendering specimens unidentifiable.



## Individual Specimens

### Do

- ✓ Ensure the specimen is adequately protected. Coin boxes or vials can be used to physically protect loose specimens. Some insects such as mealworms are too large for coin boxes, in these cases plastic vials or tubes can be used.
- ✓ Insert crushed tissue paper into these containers to stop the insect moving around and losing bits. A soft paint brush or tweezers can be used to pick up specimens without damaging them.
- ✓ Indicate the location the insect was found. Specific information on the exact location of where an insect was found is beneficial, such as near a drain in a basement.
- ✓ Physically label each of the containers with object accession number (if specimen came from an object), or the area where the specimen was found.

### Do not

- ✗ Place specimens directly into an envelope without some form of crush-proof protection. Mail goes through rollers, which will crush the specimen, rendering the insect unidentifiable.
- ✗ Place a protective covering over insect specimens, such as pressure-sensitive tape or sticky back plastic. Insects taped to index cards or mailed loose in envelopes will disintegrate and cannot be identified.



## Postage and Labelling Recommendations

- 1st class should be used as the minimum service for dead insects
- Clearly mark outer packaging **'NON-HAZARDOUS BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES FOR STUDY PURPOSES'**
- Clearly indicate sender's name and address on the outer packaging
- Ensure the traps or specimens are boxed and packaged sufficiently to protect them from becoming damaged
- Include a note within the box, stating:
  - Name of individual, name and address of organisation and a contact email address to send identifications
  - The date the traps were laid and removal date
  - If the specimens are to be returned to sender
  - The location the insect was found

## References

Post Office. 2023. Live creatures; insects and invertebrates. Letters and Parcels. Prohibited and Restricted Items. Available at: [Prohibited And Restricted Goods | Post Office](#) [Accessed 06.08.2023].

