

Fieldwork

By Corinne Muir

Hours in the rain to audit the plants in a square,
Rising before the dawn to count the chorus,
Walking the same transect year after year,
Just to find out that what's there is there.

Staying up past sunset to tally the bats,
Counting poo, though they call it scat,
Traipsing through the undergrowth,
Getting sunburnt, tired and scratched.

Standing in streams kicking samples into a net,
Enumerating flowers that we don't forget,
Travelling to places far and wide,
Statistical work stuck behind a desk.

Scientists, botanists, researchers, ecologists,
Volunteers, zoologists, fieldworkers, biologists,
Without them we wouldn't know what we've got,
Or perhaps more important, know what we've lost.