



Biodiversity
Conservation
Trust

Sward Height Ruler

See reverse side for steps to measure
average bulk sward height of native
grasses.



20cm

A vertical ruler scale on an orange background. The scale consists of horizontal white lines of varying lengths, with the longest line at the top. The text "20cm" is written in large white font to the right of the scale.

10cm

A vertical ruler scale on an orange background. The scale consists of horizontal white lines of varying lengths, with the longest line at the top. The text "10cm" is written in large white font to the right of the scale.

5cm

A vertical ruler scale on a dark brown background. The scale consists of horizontal white lines of varying lengths, with the longest line at the top. The text "5cm" is written in large white font to the right of the scale.

Measuring Sward Height

1. Place the Sward height ruler vertically onto the soil surface. Do not push it into the ground or sit it on top of dead pasture.
2. Slide your thumb down the ruler until it reaches the average height of the bulk of the grass (including leaves) taking care not to measure the stems or flower heads.
3. Measure the average height of the grass at an appropriate number of sites to get a good sample of the grass representation.



Figure 1. shows the correct point to measure for average bulk sward height.



Figure 2. shows the incorrect point to measure. Measuring to the top of flowers or stalks will give an inaccurate average bulk sward height.