

**Use your imagination to draw the world under your feet.**

What creatures live down there?

What roots grow down through the dirt?

## **Under Your Feet**

One of the most important parts of any garden is right under your feet!

Soil keeps plants alive by letting their roots grow deep into the mud where they absorb nutrients and water to grow.

Under the ground there is a whole ecosystem of mini beasts, bacteria, and micro-organisms. One teaspoon of soil can contain more living organisms than there are people in the world!

Without this soil and the creatures living in it there would be no life on earth. You can help by composting your kitchen and garden waste at home.



## Plant Collectors

When our original fernery was built, in 1873, people loved collecting ferns. Ferns are ancient plants without flowers, dating back hundreds of millions of years, even before dinosaurs. 'Fern Fever' took over most of the UK with hundreds of people hunting for plants in the wild.

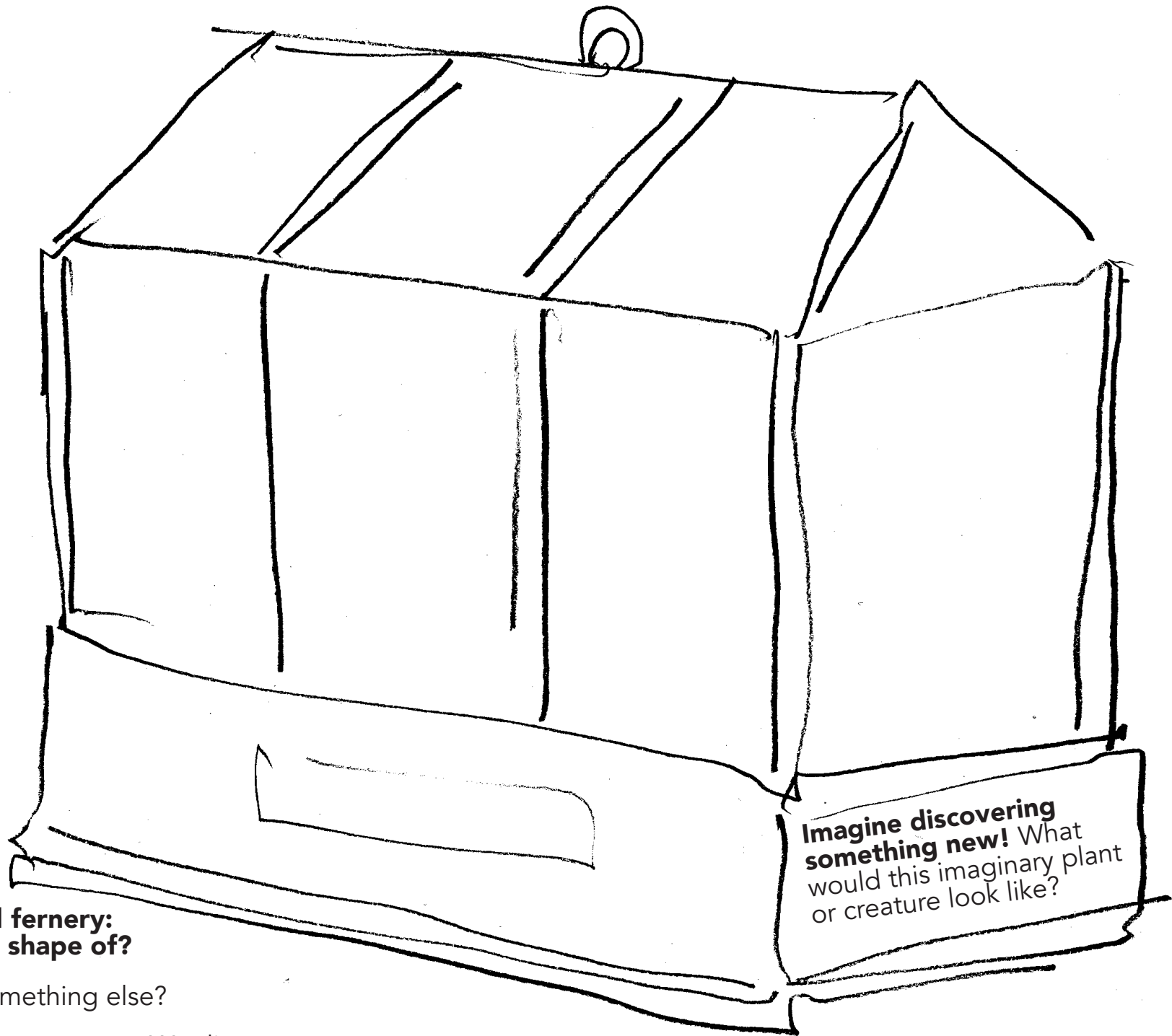
Once ferns were found they would be transported in a special glass box called the Wardian case. Plants found in the wild would be sealed inside and transported by ships and steam trains to the ferneries.

Collecting plants from the wild in this way did a lot of damage with some species becoming extinct. Nowadays it is better to collect plants just by looking and not touching.

**Look around the garden and fernery:  
are there plants you like the shape of?**

Are there any that look like something else?

Draw your favourites inside your very own Wardian case.



**Imagine discovering something new!** What would this imaginary plant or creature look like?