

Quick Soil Assessment

Field Biology

1. What is the physical texture of the soil? Loose, grainy, mucky, oozy, etc.?
2. What size particles do you see? Large rocks, gravel, pebbles, sand, silt?
3. What color is the soil? Dark or light, brown, orange, red, gray, black?
4. What does the soil smell like? Earthy, musty, sulfury, nothing?
5. How moist is the soil? Damp, dry, wet?
6. Can you form a ribbon between your thumb and forefinger?
7. What types of organic material and living organisms can you see in the soil?
Leaves, twigs, bark, bugs, worms, etc.?
8. Does the soil leave a stain or residue on your hands?

Based on your answers to the above questions, estimate the following:

- a. Is the soil mostly sand, silt, clay, or some mixture?
- b. Is the soil a wetland soil or an upland soil?
- c. Is the soil highly biologically active?
- d. Is the soil high in organic material?