

Invertebrate “bug” catching

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What lives in a stream?

- Fish – Eels, kokopu, inanga (also known as “whitebait”), bullies
- Freshwater invertebrates (eg mayflies, dragonflies, koura)
- Aquatic plants and algae

What are invertebrates?

- Animals without a backbone

Where would you find most of them in the stream?

- In the shallow, stony riffles where the water is flowing fast
- Along the banks, especially in overhanging vegetation and rootmats
- Holding on to woody debris submerged in the water

What can invertebrates tell us about a stream?

- Some invertebrates are “sensitive” to pollution, and will only be found in clean streams.
- Other types of invertebrates can tolerate pollution better, and will be found living in both good and polluted streams
- Finding Mayflies, Stoneflies and Caddisflies is an indication that the stream is “healthy” and unpolluted, as they cannot tolerate pollution.

Collecting bugs:

1) One person holds the net in the water, with the bottom of the net sitting on the rocks. The other person carefully turns and brushes down stones above the net entrance, so that any bugs that were on the rock wash into the net (remember to put rocks back as you found them, as they are the home to many bugs)

2) Take the net out of the water - it should look like there are heaps of twigs and leaves and some bits of stone in the net. Carefully put all of this into a white tray filled with water. (Remember to check the net for bugs, as many hold onto the net)

3) You can also collect for bugs under the stream banks. Jab the net into the roots and plants just below the water surface and sweep net upstream (Not downstream, or the bugs might swim out!)

4) Watch the white tray for a few minutes, keeping nice and still, and you will start to see things moving. Look out for the small invertebrates that look like moving sticks – these are caddisflies living inside stick cases!

5) Gently pick out one of each type of invertebrate you can see, and use the identification guide to work out what it is. Record the results.



Please look after us bugs!



Be gentle!



We don't like to be left in the sun



Put stones back gently, the way you found them. Stones are my home!

If you are quiet and still, you might see me better!

