

Indicators of stream health

These are the tools the class will use to test how healthy the stream is:

Macroinvertebrates (bugs) are indicators of stream health. If you find lots of mayflies, caddisflies and stoneflies it means your stream is healthy. This is because these creatures can only live in clean water.

The clarity tube is used to see how clear the water is. If you can see the black disk at 80 – 100 cm, it means the water is very clear.

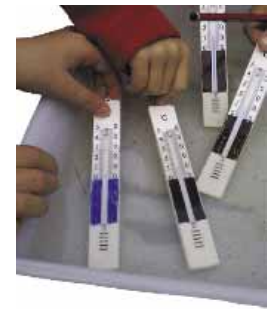
Algae are the tiny plants (or slime) that grow on the stream bed. A thin covering of slime is good. But, if you find long strands of algae, it means that there are too many nutrients in the stream. High nutrient levels are often caused by fertilisers entering the stream. Fertiliser is a pollutant.


















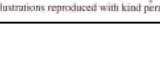




A thermometer is used to measure temperature. The colder the stream, the better. Stream dwellers prefer cold water and cannot survive large changes in temperature. Stream cover and stream depth are two things that affect stream temperature.

You will use your nose to check for water smells and your eyes to look for any unusual sights or colours in the water.

That's a lot to remember – so we'll give you a worksheet (**BLM 12**) on the day. At the end you can tell us what overall score you gave the streams.

You'll also look for stream cover and erosion. We enjoy taking you out on the field trip, and so have all the students who have come along already. We hope you have as much fun as we do.



Mayflies		
		
4	4	4
Large Stoneflies		Small Stoneflies
		
4	4	2
Uncased Caddis		Cased Caddis
		
3	3	1
Purse Caddis		
		
		1
Dobsonfly		Beetles
		
3	2	2
Dragonflies		Amphipods
		
2	2	2
Snails		
		
		1
Water Boatmen		Worms
		
1	1	1
Flies		
		
1	1	1

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