



# Wetland Sampling Steps to Success: Collecting Macroinvertebrates Using a Dip Net Measured Sweep



**Standard Sampling Season:** June and July  
**Other information collected at each site:**

- Physical/chemical water characteristics using hand-held meters
- Water grab samples for analysis at the lab
- Algae samples (phytoplanktonic and epiphytic)
- Description of the site and its surrounding habitat and land uses

## Macroinvertebrates

- Collect from areas not disturbed by other sampling
- Complete all sweeps in areas of emergent vegetation or macrophyte beds having similar habitat representative of the overall site.



## Dip Net Measured Sweep:

- Using a 600 micron D– frame net, sweep through the water for 1 meter– measured using a yard stick held above the water’s surface
- Bump net against bottom substrate 3 times (beginning, middle, end), to dislodge and collect organisms from the sediment
- Keep the net submerged during the entire sweep
- Complete sweep in approximately 3 seconds
- At the end of the sweep, turn net so the opening is facing the surface of the water and lift the net quickly out of the water - so no organisms are lost out of the opening
- If net becomes clogged or if it was prevented from thoroughly contacting the bottom substrate - discard the sample and start again in an undisturbed location



- Transfer all material collected in the net into a 600 micron sieve bucket by placing the bucket halfway into the water and turning the net inside out into the bucket
- Place material in and on the net into the water in the bucket
- Visually inspect the net and remove any clinging organisms
- Examine, wash, and discard any large pieces of vegetation, woody debris, and stones– remove and retain any aquatic macroinvertebrates observed
- Retain fine plant material and detritus



- Drain water out of sieve bucket and transfer all material collected into 1 quart wide mouth canning jar - none of the jars should be more than half full
- Preserve samples in 95% ethyl alcohol for later sorting and taxonomic analysis in the laboratory
- Repeat process to collect a total of three replicate samples



For further information, please refer to the [Biomonitoring Homepage](#)