

COMMUNITY WETLAND MONITORING

Is your wetland restoration project going well? If so, do you know how well it is progressing, and could it be doing even better? Effective monitoring can help answer these questions and WETMAK is the perfect tool for the job.

Snapshot

- Community resource
- Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Kit (WETMAK)
- Designed and published by NZ Landcare Trust
- Monitoring kit comprising of seven modules and additional datasheets and templates
- Available online from NZ Landcare Trust website: www.landcare.org.nz/WETMAK

Why Wetlands?

Wetlands are valuable environmental resources that provide sanctuary for a variety of native flora and fauna - many of which are rare or threatened. They also provide a range of important ecosystem services of benefit to people, such as trapping sediments, flood protection and cleaning and purifying water by removing nutrients and other pollutants. Wetlands are especially good at removing nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen which are both strongly associated with agricultural run-off.

After 150 years of abuse, which has seen the loss of more than 90% of wetlands in New Zealand, the tide appears to be turning. Increased awareness and education has resulted in growing support for wetland protection and restoration, often involving volunteers from Landcare and community groups.

Waiwhakareke Natural Heritage Park - 60 hectares of wetland, lake and planted native forest - on the edge of Hamilton. Photo: Karen Denyer



WETMAK

The growth of community involvement in wetland restoration work has driven the need for a tool to provide information that helps people better understand how their work is progressing and to help prioritise future work. WETMAK is based on robust scientific protocols and can be used throughout New Zealand for freshwater wetlands and for estuary margins. It provides a toolkit of useful monitoring techniques and methods that have been designed to help people assess the impact of their restoration work. The kit is available in a modular format to suit specific needs.

WETMAK Modules

1. Creating a Management Map
2. Photopoints
3. Wetland WOF Check
4. Mapping Wetland Vegetation
5. Weed Survey
6. Vegetation Plots
7. Animal Pest Monitoring

You can choose to download the entire resource or alternatively you may prefer to focus attention on specific modules. Either way you will find the material easy to use. In terms of technical difficulty, again the decision is yours with simple monitoring options available alongside more technically demanding investigation.

Download WETMAK, print out a few datasheets, pull on your gumboots and head out with friends and get measuring. Increased understanding of your restoration work will bring huge rewards and provide useful information over time, for future planning.

Setting up a vegetation plot. Photo: Karen Denyer



WETMAK In Action

The resource has been designed for ease of use; however some of the more involved modules can be easier to master with a little guidance. To that end, NZ Landcare Trust works with the National Wetland Trust of New Zealand to deliver WETMAK training days as required. In addition, a Wetland Monitoring Hub has been created to provide practical online assistance. The hub complements WETMAK and answers the common questions asked by users of the resource, and includes video clips and links to useful information.

A stream and wetland area form the focal point for the biodiversity restoration work of the Mangaiti Gully Restoration Group in Hamilton. The group's aim is to restore the native flora in a two hectare area of gully, returning it to pre-European settlement condition. The group have used WETMAK as part of their work and are featured in a video clip explaining how to use the WETMAK Module 2 Photopoints - see the Wetland Monitoring Hub webpage.

Further information

WETMAK

www.landcare.org.nz/WETMAK

Wetland Monitoring Hub

www.landcare.org.nz/WETMAK/hub

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