



Catching water bugs

Water bugs, otherwise known as aquatic macroinvertebrates, are found in most creeks, rivers, lakes and wetlands. They are easy to catch and come in a variety of weird and wonderful shapes. People of all ages love looking at them, so they are a great way to stimulate interest in environmental issues.

Macroinvertebrate monitoring is relatively simple using a net that you make yourself (see below). They are known as bioindicators, because they can tell us how healthy a waterway is. Some macroinvertebrates are tolerant to pollution whilst others require pristine waters to survive. So by measuring the abundance and diversity of macroinvertebrates, we can get a fairly accurate indication of water health.

How to make a stocking net

You will need:

- a pair of pantyhose (or a stocking)
- a wire coat hanger (or strong wire)
- a pair of pliers (or strong hands).

How to make it:

1. unbend the wire coat hanger and form a circular shape
2. thread wire through waistband of pantyhose
3. rewind coat hanger to form handle and tie knot in pantyhose.

OR

1. Cut part of the leg (the widest part) and stitch around the wire coat hanger (bent into circular shape).
2. Knot at bottom.

For both cases, wind masking tape around the handle to provide a more comfortable grip.

