



Riparian Land

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Habitat Health Survey

Vegetation habitats are valuable because they protect waterways from activities occurring on the adjacent land, such as land clearing and pollution. Healthy habitats provide food and are areas of shelter for animals to rest or hide from predators.

It is important to establish the presence and extent of the plant habitats within wetland areas, both in the water and on the floodplain. Two methods that can be used to determine what plants are in a wetland and their changes that occur over time are; photopoints and transects.

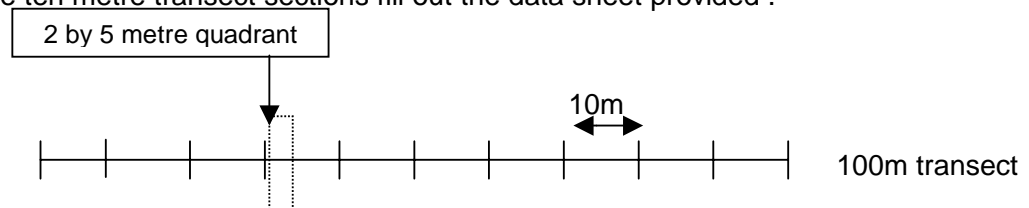
Field Work

Transects

Equipment: measuring tape, pegs, data recording sheets,

Mark the transects across an area that has a variety of plants and habitats.

To mark a transect use the tape to measure 100 metres. At each 10 metre interval use the tape measure to mark out a quadrant area of 2 by 5 metres as shown below. At each of the ten metre transect sections fill out the data sheet provided .



This survey can be repeated at various positions around the wetland and/or at the same position at different times.

Classroom

1. What plant most common to all of the sections?
2. What plants have the greatest percentage of cover in each of the sections?
3. How does the plant community change as you move away from the waters edge?
4. How would this change in vegetation affect which animals may be found there?

Create pie or chart graphs to display the results.

Data Sheet

Transect No _____ Quadrant distance (10 metre intervals) _____ (2 by 5 metre quadrant) Date ___/___/___

TREES	height (< 2m, 2-4 m, > 4 m)	age (seedlings, saplings, young, mature, old trees)	health (good, fair, poor, dead)	% cover (estimate of ground covered by vegetation type)
red gum				
black box				
coobah				
other				
SHRUBS				
prickly pear				
lignum				
emu bush				
other				

Transect No _____ Quadrant distance (10 metre intervals) _____ (2 by 5 metre quadrant) Date ____/____/____

GROUND COVER	height (< 2m, 2-4 m, > 4 m)	age (seedlings, saplings, young, mature, old trees)	health (good, fair, poor, dead)	% cover (estimate of ground covered by vegetation type)
soft couch				
spiny couch				
reeds				
bulrush				
sedge				
other				
AQUATIC PLANTS				
water ribbon				
water primrose				
azolla				
other				

Transect No _____ Quadrant distance (10 metre intervals) _____ (2 by 5 metre quadrant) Date ___/___/___

WEEDS	height (< 2m, 2-4 m, > 4 m)	age (seedlings, saplings, young, mature, old trees)	health (good, fair, poor, dead)	% cover (estimate of ground covered by vegetation type)
burr				
dodder				
thistle				
horehound				
other				
SPECIAL FEATURES				
nesting birds				
barriers to flow				
willows				
salinisation				
other				