

Wetland Audit

Wetlands are areas of land saturated or flooded with water permanently or seasonally. There are a variety of wetlands including:

- **Inland wetlands:** marshes, peatlands ponds, lakes, rivers, floodplains, swamps, fens
- **Coastal wetlands:** saltwater marshes, estuaries, mangroves, lagoons, coral reefs
- **Human-made wetlands:** fish ponds, reservoirs, saltpans



Wetlands are a critical part of our natural environment. They protect our shores from wave action, reduce the impacts of floods, absorb pollutants and improve water quality. They provide habitat for animals and plants and many contain a wide diversity of life, supporting plants and animals that are found nowhere else.

The biggest threat to our wetlands is from Land Reclamation. Wetlands are drained and filled in to make way for development. Other threats include:

- river regulation and water diversion
- catchment disturbance
- introduction of weeds and pest animals
- climate change

Location	
Date and Time	
Weather Conditions	

Circle the number that fits your area best.

1. Land Use: What is the surrounding land used for?

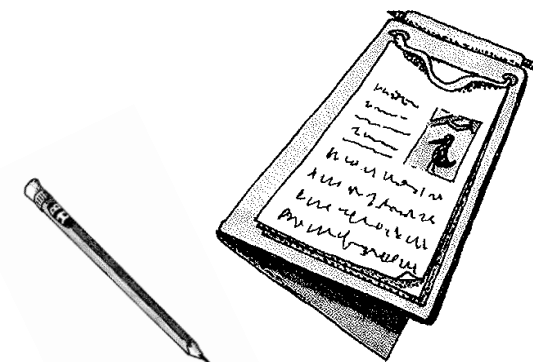
- a. Factories 1
- b. Houses and no trees 2
- c. Houses and parks 3
- d. Bushland 4

2. Rubbish: How much rubbish is there in the water and the surrounding area?

- a. A lot 1
- b. Some 2
- c. None 3

3. Smell: Sit by the water, close your eye and smell. What does it smell like?

- a. Strong and unnatural odour 1
- b. A bit smelly 2
- c. No smell 3
- d. Strong natural odour 3



4. Water Clarity: If it is safe to do so, collect some water in a clear container. What does it look like?

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| a. Dirty with scum on top | 1 |
| b. Murky | 2 |
| c. Clear | 3 |

5. Vegetation: How healthy do the plants look?

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| a. Unhealthy | 1 |
| b. Healthy | 3 |



6. Animals: Sit quietly and listen for bird and frog calls. Look around for scats (poo), tracks (footprints) or traces (feathers, burrows, webs, insect exoskeletons, chewed leaves, cocoons). Is there evidence of animal life?

- | | |
|---------|---|
| a. None | 1 |
| b. Some | 2 |
| c. Many | 3 |

What was your Wetland score?

Add up the numbers to work out the health of your wetland.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| If you scored less than 8 : | your wetland needs your help |
| If you scored 9 – 14 : | your wetland is on the way to becoming healthy |
| If you scored over 15 : | your wetland is healthy |

What can you do to help?

- Learn more about wetlands and the plants and animals that live there.
- Be careful not to impact the wetland environment when you visit by:
 - Staying on marked paths and boardwalk
 - Taking all your rubbish away with you
- Keep pets out of wetlands areas

