

Citizen Science: Testing the Water

Joining in with the survey is fun and simple. As part of the Heritage Lottery funded Brecks Fen Edge and Rivers (BFER) Landscape Partnership Scheme, the Freshwater Habitats Trust's project Citizen Science: Testing the Water is looking for volunteers to help map the extent of clean, unpolluted water in the Scheme area.

Using cutting edge rapid water quality test kits to sample ponds, streams, ditches and river headwater streams, we are able to make visible pollution that is otherwise invisible and largely unknown.

Results will be mapped to identify water quality in the project area to facilitate improved awareness and better conservation management practices.

Summary of the steps involved

- Identify the body of water you want to test.
- Take a water sample (see Health and Safety Info Pack).
- Measure the amount of two nutrients in the water, nitrate and phosphate, using the kits.
- Fill out a survey sheet for each site.
- Tell us what you've found - enter the data online so that it contributes to the national survey database or email us your results.



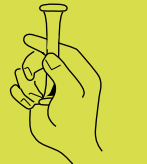
Using your clean water kits

You use one phosphate and one nitrate tube for each water sample (marked N for nitrate or P for phosphate on the tab at the base of the tube)

- 1 Pull out and discard the yellow pin leaving a small air hole
- 2 With the air hole pointing upwards, use your finger and thumb to squeeze out the air



- 3 Keeping the air squeezed out, turn the tube upside down and insert below the water



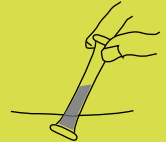
- 4 Gently release the pressure and suck up enough water to fill the tube just over half way

Keep the pin hole upwards and squeeze out the air

- 5 If you need to, turn the tube upright again, squeeze out a bit more air to suck up more water to just over half way

Still squeezing, turn tube upside down and insert below the water and squeeze out the air

- 6 Gently shake the tube to mix the water and powder inside



- 7 Make a note of the time and wait for the colour reaction

Let go, to suck up just over half a tube of water

Nitrate: 3 mins

Phosphate: 5 mins

- 8 Compare the tube with the colour chart immediately when the time is up, as the colour will continue to develop.



Leave for the set time and compare with the colour chart



- 9 Record the results below and enter them online or via email



Recording your Testing the Water results



Surveyor names(s) - your name and anyone with you collecting the sample e.g Anne Smith, John Smith

Recording Group - if you are collecting results on behalf of a group, enter the name e.g. Wild About Cheshire

Email - Please supply your email address to receive the online results for your survey.

Grid reference e.g. SP 3212 6543 or nearest postcode

If you don't know either of these, make notes of the waterbody location (e.g. name of nearest road), so you can find the site later on a map. See the website for more help.

Date

What type of waterbody did you sample? (please tick one)

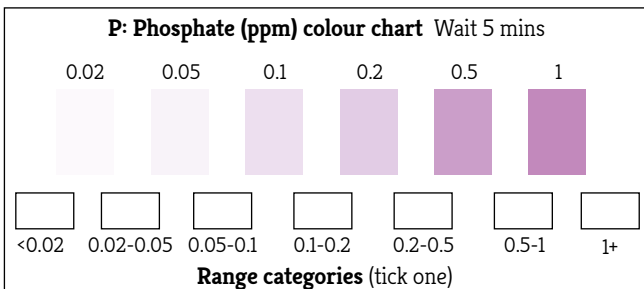
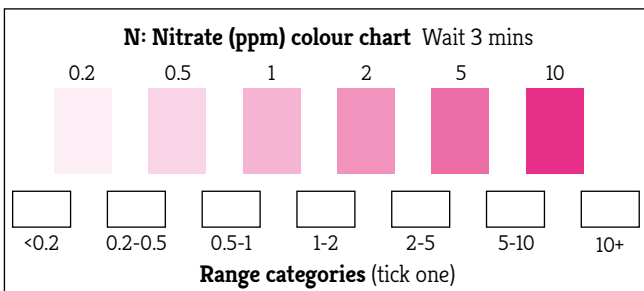
Garden pond Other pond Lake Ditch River Stream

Other (please state)

Name of waterbody e.g. Collier Pond, or Pond in Stubbs Wood (if pond name not known)

Recording the level of nutrients

- 1 Once the development time is up, compare your N or P tube with the corresponding chart (right).
- 2 The chart is based on ranges e.g. my colour falls between 0.5 and 1. Tick one.
- 3 If the tube hasn't changed colour at all - tick the lowest range category <0.2 N, or <0.02 P
- 4 If your tube matches one colour exactly, tick the higher range e.g. if recording 0.5, tick the range 0.5-1.



Submit your results online using the Testing the Water hub: <https://bit.ly/BFERCleanWaterDataPortal>