

HGF Shellfish Survey Procedure

Note: this is one method of shellfish surveying only, other valid options also exist. This is detailed in the accompanying powerpoint presentation.

1. Use a new data record sheet for each new sampling station along the transect.
2. Write the name of group, recorder name, transect survey site and point location (letter & number on flag), on the data record sheet.
3. Look around you and briefly record what you see at the sample location in the 'Site Description' box. Substrate type / composition and surface flora (eg seagrass, algae) should be observed and recorded to encourage participants to consider habitat conditions for shellfish.
4. Randomly place your quadrat - within about 2m of each sample station marker.
5. Clearly mark the quadrat outline by tracing around the outside edge of the quadrat with your trowel.
6. Use the trowel to carefully dig out your sample within the quadrat outline, to about 10cm deep, and put all diggings into the sieve or a bucket.
7. Shake the sieve in a nearby pool of water, or in the sea if it is close by. Alternatively pour a bucket of water through to help remove sand and mud.
8. Remove rocks, stones and (dead) shells from the quadrat.
9. Sort out the different species of live shellfish & identify them.
10. Count & measure all live cockles and/or pipi with the measuring device. Some cockles/pipi may look live, but are filled with sand, so watch out for blackish shells and try to open them to see if they are alive or dead (empty or filled with sand). Use a tally system to record numbers of cockles/pipi on data sheet.
11. Count all other live shellfish species, recording how many on data record sheet.
12. Total the number of each species. If you don't find any shellfish at all at a particular sample station, record zero or write nil, so that it is clear that this sample station was not overlooked.
13. Return all rocks, shells and live shellfish into the sampling hole after you have recorded everything.
14. Before moving to the next sample station check you have recorded ALL information correctly and that the recorder's name and sample station number are filled out at top of data record sheet.
15. Check that you have all items of equipment before moving to next sample station.
16. Reallocate jobs (i.e. data sheet recorder, water bucket filler, digger, sievers, shellfish sorter, shellfish identifier, counter and measurer) when you move to a new survey sample point.
17. Ask Hauraki Gulf Forum support staff for to help with advice and answering questions.

At end of surveying

- Do a quick check of data record sheets to ensure that all information is properly recorded.
- Bring marker poles and all other equipment (quadrat, trowel, bucket, measuring stick & clip board/ sheets) back to assembly area.