

'HOW TO' GUIDE:
SEAGRASS SURVEYING

www.seawilding.org

SEAGRASS BOUNDARY MAPPING

Equipment:

- 2 paddle boards or other suitable small craft
- GPS device - eg smart phone or GPS watch
- Waterproof Camera - eg Olympus Tough or GoPro
- Clothing - Appropriate for conditions, snorkel mask to aid viewing.

Method:

- Choose a site for your habitat survey
- Online aerial maps can help you spot where seagrass might be - eg Bing maps.
- Make sure your site has safe, legal access, assess for hazards
- To locate the seagrass bed, paddle abreast 2-4m apart.
- Once a seagrass bed is located, assign one person as the scout who goes first and one as the recorder who follows with the GPS.
- The scout confirms the seagrass boundary, while the recorder follows the boundary with the activated GPS.
- It is not critical that the scout remains on the boundary, as long as the recorder does.
- Take regular photos of the seagrass or seabed to confirm habitat type.
- After the survey, import the .gpx files to a viewer such as STRAVA or Google MyMaps.

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SEAGRASS COVERAGE

Equipment:

- Waterproof camera - eg Olympus Tough or GoPro
- GPS device - eg Smart phone or GPS watch
- Quadrat - attached to a marked line and float
- Transect line - 25m diving reel, marked every 2m, with 1kg dive weight at end
- Snorkelling equipment - Appropriate for the conditions

Method:

- Place the weighted end of the transect line at the edge of the seagrass bed.
- Record the start position of the transect using a GPS device.
- Unroll the transect line across the seagrass bed
- At every 2m marked on the transect line, place the quadrat on the seabed and take a photo.
- Take a photo of the seagrass height against the marked line on the quadrat.
- Repeat until the end of the 25m spool of line, (12 quadrats)
- Record the finish position of the transect using a GPS device.
- After your survey use your photos to record % cover, # seed bearing spathes, and height of seagrass in each of your quadrats.

Top tips:

- Calm weather and low tide to make it easier to do your surveys.
- Only undertake surveys within your skills, don't go out if you are unsure about the conditions or your safety.
- Always work in buddy pairs and look out for each other's safety.

Disclaimer: Activities on and around the water have inherent dangers and are undertaken at your own risk and discretion. Seawilding takes no liability for your actions.