



## Weed weasel sampling method

**Where you are:** Freshwater ecosystems  
**What you're looking for:** Submerged aquatic plants, floating-leaved aquatic plants  
**What you need:** Weed weasel  
**Note:** Weed weasels are simple to make yourself. Instructions are available on the *Vital Signs* website.

1. Stand on shore.
2. 1 scientist holds on to the weed weasel line so it doesn't end up in the water (use the handy foot-loop).
3. 1 strong scientist throws the weasel underhand into the water.
4. Wait for the weasel to sink to the bottom.
5. Pull the weasel back to shore slowly.
6. Lay the weasel and all of the plants it caught on the ground.
7. **Write in your Field Notes** how many times you throw the weed weasel. We encourage you to throw it *only once or twice* in the same area. Weed weasels disturb the sediment, and can fragment plants. Many invasive aquatic plants love reproducing by fragmentation.
8. Use your species cards to determine whether you think you found, or think you did not find the species you are looking for. Support your claims with written and photo evidence.

**Note:** If the weed weasel comes up empty, a typical reaction is "Hey, this thing doesn't work!" But what else could it mean? It may mean that there is a sparse submerged plant community in the pond or lake you are sampling. Or that An empty weasel is an important result to write in your **Field Notes**. It means that you did not find the submerged plant you were looking for.