Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies

FIELD TRIP PREPARATION

YES-Net Program

Before students arrive it is helpful to have a few things done to save time. While three hours for a field trip seems like plenty of time, once you factor in moving kids around, getting in and out of the stream, and general student management, it is really not that long at all.

In the field

- **Leaf Pack Users:** collect leaf packs and bring them in the lab – it is really hard to get the leaf packs once you have all the kids down at the stream. I usually use small buckets (labeled Riffle 1,2,3 and Pool 1,2,3). I like to leave the leaf packs intact so that I can show the kids what they look like after they've been in the stream for three weeks. It's also nice to have a dry leaf pack so that they can compare the before and after.
- **Kick Net Users:** collect half (1 pool and 2 riffle or 2 pool and 1 riffle) or all (3 pool and 3 riffle) of the kick net samples immediately before the field trip and bring them in the lab – this will ensure that the students who are in the lab first will have samples to sort.
- Have boots, nets and other equipment in an accessible place, I usually have the kids carry the boots to the stream and put them on once they get there. That way they are not walking/hiking in boots that probably don't fit them. Also if they fall in they have dry shoes to change into.

In the lab

Materials:
white dish pans
yogurt cups or petri dishes
larger white containers
Plastic spoons
pipettes
pencils
datasheets
sorting sheets
Macro ID resources

- Have dishpans set up on lab benches and filled with about an inch of water. I put out one dishpan per two kids, if necessary you can fit three kids around one dishpan, but two is ideal. So if you have thirty kids in a class you'll need 15 dishpans. If the class is really small it's possible there may only be one kid per dishpan.
- I usually put the dishpans on the sorting sheets that come with the leaf pack starter kit. These are nice because they have decent illustrations on them of the most common orders of macros. They also match the illustrations on the data sheets. (Cary has a bunch of these if you need to borrow some). They also delineate the workspace nicely.
- At each dishpan station I also put: Two (or three) white plastic spoons, a pipette, one larger white plastic sorting dish filled with about an inch of water (the plastic, white, rectangular containers that you get Chinese food in work great), at least three white yogurt cups (or petri dishes), data sheet, pencil.
- It is also good to have available some keys or field guides to ID macros (we've printed and laminated these http://watermonitoring.uwex.edu/pdf/level1/riverkey.pdf)