Establishing a Permanent Transect

Learning Objectives

At the end of this field activity, students will be able to:

- To identify corals that are easy to recognise and suitable for future monitoring.
- Take GPS co-ordinates for future reference.
- Take photos and measurements for future reference.

Equipment

- Booties, hat and sunscreen
- Waterproof slate with pencil
- Waterproof DATA slate (see picture) with pencil
- Underwater camera (if available)
- Viewing tube (if available)
- Waterproof ID guide (if available)
- GPS (if available)
- ID reference books
- Computer

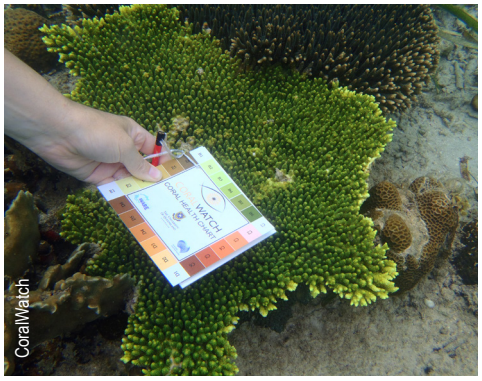
Instructions

Look for corals that you could recognise easily again when you revisit the site. They stand out from others because of their special features, such as their size, colour or shape. You can use them to set up a permanent transect, allowing you to monitor these specific corals over time.

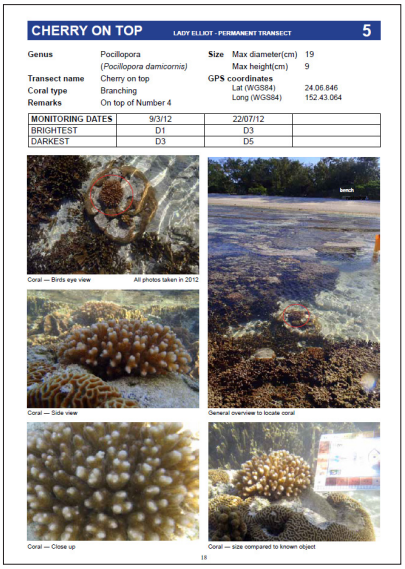
1. Find an easy to identify coral.
2. Take a GPS coordinate of the coral.
3. Identify the coral type.
4. Measure coral health score.
5. If possible, identify the coral genus or species, and list the scientific and common names.
6. Take photos: general overview to locate the coral, closeup, side view, top view, and one with the chart to give an indication of size.
7. Measure the size of the coral.
8. Record all information in an Excel sheet.

Teacher notes

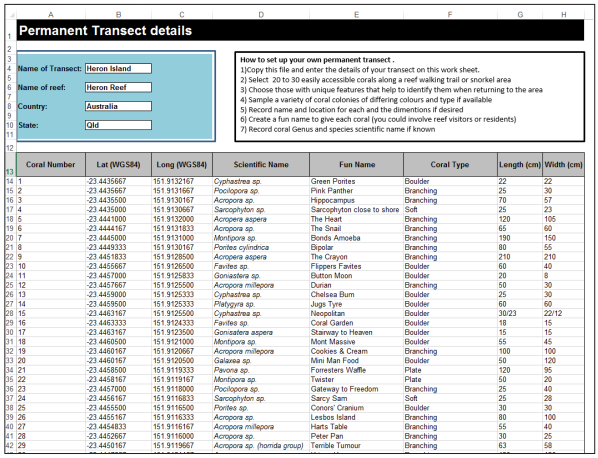
- *This activity should be conducted on the reef flat at low tide.*
- *Allowing students to select their favourite coral colony and choose a name can make this a fun activity for students.*
- *CoralWatch has established two permanent transects, located on Heron and Lady Elliot Island. Help us to collect more data. Visit www.coralwatch.org/web/guest/education-materials to download:*
  - 'Heron Island Workbook' (PDF) and 'Permanent Transect data entry Heron Island individual corals' (Excel)
  - 'Lady Elliot Kit' (PDF) and 'Permanent Transect data entry Lady Elliot Island individual corals' (Excel)
  Excel sheets and individual coral ID pages can also be used as a template for your own transect, see next page.

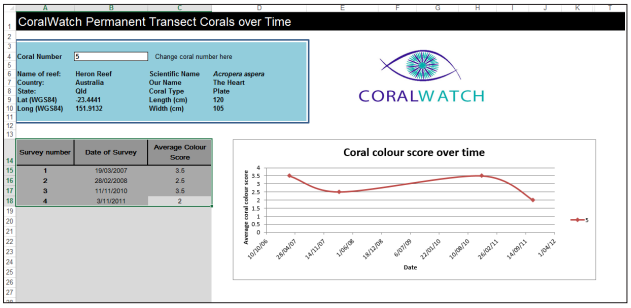


When you take photos take one with the chart to provide an easy reference to size.



The booklets from Heron and Lady Elliot Island - available for downloading - will provide all existing survey details. We would like to invite you to visit these transects and add more data to our excell sheets.





The Excel sheets allow you to add data and view coral colour score over time for each individual coral.