Scoring

1. On the table below, circle the sensitivity scores of the identified insects.
2. Add up all of the sensitivity scores.
3. Divide the total of the sensitivity score by the number of groups identified.
4. The result is the average **score**, which can be interpreted below.

GROUPS	SENSITIVITY SCORE
Flat worms	3
Worms	3
Leeches	2
Crabs or shrimps	7
Stoneflies	14
Minnow mayflies	6
Other mayflies	13
Damselflies	4
Dragonflies	7
Bugs or beetles	6
Caddisflies (cased & uncased)	9
True flies	2
Snails	4
TOTAL SCORE	
NUMBER OF GROUPS	
AVERAGE SCORE (Divide 'Total score' by 'Number of groups')	

Interpretation of the miniSASS score:

Although an ideal sample site has rocky, sandy, and vegetation habitats, not all habitats are always present at a site. If your river does not have rocky habitats use the **sandy type** category above to interpret your scores.

Ecological category (Condition)	River category	
	Sandy Type	**Rocky Type**
Unmodified (NATURAL condition)	> 6.9	> 7.9
Largely natural/few modifications (GOOD condition)	5.8 to 6.9	6.8 to 7.9
Moderately modified (FAIR condition)	4.9 to 5.8	6.1 to 6.8
Largely modified (POOR condition)	4.3 to 4.9	5.1 to 6.1
Seriously/critically modified (VERY POOR condition)	< 4.3	< 5.1

mini SASS

RIVER HEALTH

A community river health monitoring tool for Southern Africa

Version 2   January 2009

miniSASS can be used to monitor the health of a river and measure the general quality of the water in that river. It uses the composition of macroinvertebrates (tiny insects) living in rivers and is based on the sensitivity of the various animals to water quality. (note: miniSASS does <u>NOT</u> measure the contamination of the water by bacteria and viruses and thus does not determine if the river water is fit to drink).

How to make your own net

Take any piece of wire, for example an old clothes hanger, and bend it into the shape of a net. Then tie the netting (which can be any porous material) to the wire with a piece of string. And you have a net!
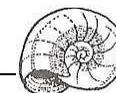
Method

The best sites are those with rocks in moving water. Not all sites have rocks (**rocky type** rivers), but may be largely sandy (**sandy type** rivers).

1. Whilst holding a small net in the current, **disturb** the stones, vegetation, sand etc. with your feet or hands.

2. You can also lift stones out of the current and **pick** insects off gently with your fingers or forceps.

3. Do this for about **5 minutes** whilst moving across the river to **different habitats** (biotopes).

3. Rinse the net and turn the contents into a plastic tray and **identify** each group using the identification guide (see insert: you could start with the dichotomous key and then use the identification sheet for more information).

4. **Mark** the identified insects off on the identification guide.

5. **Add up** the scores to determine the average score (see back page).