

Glossary

Abundance - an estimate of the number of individuals of a species in a population

Biodiversity - the number and type of different species in an environment

Bivalve - a shellfish with two distinct shells, joined with a hinge

Data - a word used by scientists to describe information collected from research

Density - a measurement of population per unit area

Ecosystem - a community of living things and the environment in which they live

Environmental Indicator - a species whose abundance or presence can be used to help assess the general state of the environment

Gastropod - Any of various molluscs of the class Gastropoda, such as the snail, slug, cowrie, or limpet

Habitat - the natural environment influenced and used by an animal or plant

Kaitiakitanga - the responsibilities of people to take care of the environment

Monitoring - repeated comparable surveys over a regular time period

Natural Variation - the natural increases and decreases in a population size, due to a range of environmental factors that effect reproductive success and mortality, for example temperature, currents that effect food supply

Quadrat - a square frame used for sampling, with an exact known area

Sample - a small part of the population. Counting and measuring all the shellfish on the beach would be impossible. A sample is a representative subset of manageable size. We collect many samples to make estimates about the population.

Shellfish - an animal with a shell and no backbone that lives in the water

Species - traditionally defined as the name for a group of animals or plants that can breed together and produce fertile offspring, now more precise or differing measurements are often used such as similiarity of DNA or morphological traits

Survey - a one-off investigation into the number, size or variety of species. A series of comparable surveys could be used for monitoring

Transect - a line used by scientists for surveying a given area, it is normally a specified length (for example 200m)

Trend - the general direction/change in data - can go up or down or remain the same, over time or over distance

Univalve - a shellfish whose shell is in one piece e.g. gastropods