

Spotting a wetland on your land



Identification Guide

Included in this guide:

Where to start page 1

Permanently wet wetlands

- Plants to look for page 2

- Photo guide pages 4-8

Intermittently wet wetlands

- Plants to look for page 9

- Photo guide pages 11-15

Advice and support page 16



A simple question to begin: Is the area wet?

If you discover a wet, soggy or spongy patch on your land it could be a wetland.

Wetlands are found wherever the water table is close to the soil surface, or in areas prone to flooding. They can be areas where ponding occurs and remains, and where springs emerge.

It's worth keeping an eye out for wetlands on your land. They're an important part of our landscape that need our protection.

So important that we offer funding and advice to protect them –
www.gw.govt.nz/healthy-waterways



Yes, it's always (or frequently) wet

Can you see these types of plants?

- Pukatea and swamp maire trees
- Bushy shrubs like mānuka and hukihuki/swamp coprosma
- Kiokio/*Blechnum* ferns
- Harakeke flax
- Raupō reeds
- Oioi rushes and rush-like *Isolepis* and *Eleocharis* sedges
- *Carex* and *Cyperus* sedge tussocks

To identify these: www.gw.govt.nz/wetlandplants

They're a good indicator of a **permanently wet** (or **frequently wet**) wetland.



Permanently wet wetlands

The following photographs are examples.

Compare them to your property - do you have a wetland?



Permanently wet wetlands



Old river oxbow: dominated by coprosma shrubland and surrounded by raupō reedland and *Carex* with pockets of harakeke flax and toetoe.

4

1 Raupō

2 Toetoe

3 Coprosma

4 Harakeke Flax

5 *Carex*

Permanently wet wetlands



Stream edge swamp wetland dominated by raupō with an area of mānuka scrubland.

Permanently wet wetlands



Natural depression with standing water.

6

- 1 Tī kōuka/cabbage tree
- 2 Mānuka
- 3 Raupō
- 4 *Carex*
- 5 Isolepis
- 6 Toetoe
- 7 Harakeke flax

Permanently wet wetlands



Kahikatea and pukatea swamp forest.

1 *Carex*

2 Swamp maire

3 Tī kōuka/cabbage tree

4 Pukatea

Permanently wet wetlands



Seepage wetland fed with underground water - they are always wet or damp.

Yes, but it dries out during certain periods

Can you see these types of plants?

- Kahikatea and Tī kōuka/cabbage tree
- Bushy shrubs like mingimingi
- Kiokio/*Blechnum* and *Gleichenia* (tangle) ferns
- Wīwī/*Juncus* rushes
- *Carex* and *Cyperus* tussocks (cutty grass)
- Tall toetoe grass clumps
- Turf species

To identify these: www.gw.govt.nz/wetlandplants

They're a good indicator of an **intermittently wet wetland**.



Intermittently wet wetlands

The following photographs are examples.

Compare them to your property - do you have a wetland?

Intermittently Wet Wetlands



Carex sedge and *Juncus* rush-dominated wetland in a natural basin surrounded by sand dunes.

Intermittently Wet Wetlands



Kahikatea and pukatea floodplain forest wetland.

12

1 Pukatea

2 Kahikatea

Intermittently Wet Wetlands



Coprosma scrubland wetland with sedges and rushes.

Intermittently Wet Wetlands



Mānuka scrubland wetland with *Gleichenia* (tangle fern) understory.

Intermittently Wet Wetlands



A kettlehole depression turf wetland. Wet when visited but could be dry for one or more years.

15

1 *Juncus*

2 Turf species

Undecided if it's a wetland or not?

Wetland identification is often difficult so please contact us and we can help.

Get in touch with our staff for free specialist advice:

wetlands@gw.govt.nz or 0800 496 734

For more great information, or to access funding:

www.gw.govt.nz/healthy-waterways



Pass it on

We've made this guide from thick and durable material so that it will stand the test of time, especially out in wet places. Once you've got the knack of spotting a wetland, pass it on to another landowner, or back to our team so that someone else can use it.