

# Fieldmaster® Plankton Nets

## Warranty and Parts:

We replace all missing or defective parts free of charge. For additional parts, use part numbers above. We accept Mastercard, Visa, American Express, checks, institutional P.O.'s. All products guaranteed free from defect for 90 days. This guarantee does not include accident, misuse, or normal wear and tear.

## Plankton Nets

**Use:** When a new line is attached to the net, it is best to calibrate it after the line is securely tied to the swivel ring. The first calibration mark should be made one-half meter from the large top opening of the net. If a calibrated line is used, tie the line so the first mark is one-half meter from the large opening.

The 8 oz. plastic collecting bottle provided should be screwed into the lower, small end of the adaptor before lowering the net. For weight in the bottle, add water before lowering the net.

The Fieldmaster® plankton net is primarily used for vertical water sampling, so the net is lowered to the desired depth (counting the depth marks as it goes below the water surface), and then raised at a slow and even pace. Since slight hesitations in line pulling can interfere with the proper collection of samples, it is best to practice for smooth motion. After the net is raised above the water, it should be raised and lowered a few times so that material collected on the sides of the net will wash into the bottle.

Make sure the mouth of the net does not go beneath the water surface during this process. A squirt bottle can also be used to wash the collection from the net and down into the bottle.

## Painter's pole

To collect plankton from shore, we recommended using a telescoping **painter's pole**. This pole can attach to a Turtox® tow net (426-series) or Fieldmaster® student net (78-series) to allow you to keep your feet dry while sampling from shore.

## Shallow waters

When the water is too shallow for either vertical or horizontal tows for plankton samples, hold or fasten the net ring vertically so that water will flow through it. Sample at several locations to get a full range of available plankton. This is a situation in which the Zo™ seine is particularly recommended. A dip net might also be used this way if micron size is acceptable.

## Sample transfer

Most **Wildco**® nets have a bottle or collection bucket with filter nets. The bucket contents are often transferred to a plastic bottle for storage.

When the plankton net has a collection bottle (without a filter net) the plankton will collect at the bottom of the netting; hold the net vertically and tip the bottle just high enough to pour all the water out of the bottle. Now fill a plastic squeeze bottle with water and direct a jet of water through the netting to wash the plankton into the collection bottle. Remove the collection bottle from the net and cap it to take to the lab for further study.

Repeat for additional samples.

## Care and Cleaning

### Daily maintenance

At the end of each sampling session, remove all debris. Rinse thoroughly in **fresh water** and allow to **air dry completely** before storing. Air drying should be done in a darkened or shady area out of direct sunlight with ample air movement - **not** in a closet.

If you must travel before cleaning is possible, then keep the nets damp and clean of debris. Rinse and air dry them as soon as possible, preferably the same day.

If full cleaning is not possible in a timely manner, then wash out sticks and stains as soon as possible before they become more difficult to remove. If stored wet, the nets may mildew.

## Grass stains

Grass is the most common soiling agent of **Wildco®** nets and is often accompanied by a buildup of grass fibers and pieces. By "grass" we also mean algae, reeds, sedges and other aquatic vegetation.

A build-up of dried or fresh vegetation is best removed by sponging gently with ethyl alcohol or isopropyl **alcohol**. When the debris is removed, try rinsing with **vinegar** to remove the remaining stains.

Soak in **dishwasher detergent** such as Cascade® or treat with Spray & Wash® (or similar) which will remove all or most of the stains. Biz Bleach® powder and Spray & Wash® aerosol spray are less effective.

**Do not soak in a liquid bleach solution** as this may destroy the nylon fabric.

Rinse thoroughly when done.

Most detergents alone rarely remove grass stains or dried debris.

## Mildew

Mildew is the result of improper air drying. It impairs the appearance of your net and, if untreated on damp fabrics, can damage it.

Use a **mild hand detergent** and a **non-chlorine commercial mildew remover** for nylon. Rub gently as needed. Rinse carefully and thoroughly. Repeat if necessary. Then let the net completely air dry before storing.

## Hard Water Particulate

When sampling in hard water, calcium carbonate and other insoluble particles may build up and plug the apertures in the Nitex® netting. If your net is lashed to the net ring, remove the line and net rings. Do not remove the net ring sewn into the net collar in smaller plankton nets as this is a permanent attachment. In these cases, **fasten the cable thimble to the net collar with a strong safety pin**. Otherwise the thimble may damage the nylon netting. If the net collar is made of cotton muslin, do not soak it in the acid solution mentioned below.

**We do not recommend using any Clorox or chlorine bleach or any other chemicals not mentioned.**

## Storage of nets

Keep the nets and seines clean and **completely air dry** them before storing.

When storing, it is best to cover them with an **opaque cotton cloth** or **brown paper** on an open shelf.

The best storage is in a **cool, dark room** with plenty of circulating air.

## References

These recommendations for cleaning nets are from Consumer Reports and the manufacturer(s) of Nitex® bolting cloth.

**Need professional equipment?**  
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