CLAIM(S):

1. A filtration assembly comprising:

(a) a sample reservoir for holding a fluid sample to be filtered, the sample reservoir having an open top end, an open bottom end, and at least two inwardly facing arms arranged at the open bottom end, wherein the at least two inwardly facing arms are slidably attached to the sample reservoir; the sample reservoir having an elastic side wall;

(b) a fluid port in fluid communication with the sample reservoir;

(c) a porous microorganism-capturing filter element disposed across a flow path between the sample reservoir and the fluid port, the porous microorganism-capturing filter element being releasably retained by the at least two inwardly facing arms;

(d) an absorbent pad arranged below the porous microorganism-capturing filtration element and the at least two inwardly facing arms, disposed across the flow path between the sample reservoir and the fluid port;

(e) a base detachably mounted to the sample reservoir, the base including the fluid port, and a support surface for supporting the absorbent pad;

wherein compressing the elastic side wall releases the porous microorganism-capturing filter element from the at least two inwardly facing arms after the base is detached from the sample reservoir.

2. The filtration assembly of claim 1, wherein the open bottom end of the sample reservoir has opposing straight portions and opposing curved portions.

3. A filtration system comprising the filtration assembly of claim 1 or 2, and an incubation assembly comprising an incubation plate and an incubation plate cover.

4. The filtration system of claim 3, wherein the incubation plate includes agar.

5. A method for determining the presence or absence of at least one microorganism in a fluid, the method comprising passing the fluid through the filtration assembly of claim 1 or 2;

detaching the sample reservoir with retained porous microorganism-capturing filter element from the base;

releasing the porous microorganism-capturing filter element from the sample reservoir into an incubation plate;

incubating the released porous microorganism-capturing filter element; and

determining whether at least one microorganism is present or absent on the porous microorganism-capturing filter element.