

Wetland Wildlife

Description:

Students will prepare charts to help them identify various organisms associated with wetlands and the adaptations, feeding and breeding habits that connect them to these habitats.

Number of Participants: 1 or 2

Approximate Time: 20-30 minutes

The Competition:

1. Competitors will identify organisms by name from a list of select organisms which include:

Mammals- White-tailed Deer, Raccoon, Muskrat, Beaver, Water Shrew , River Otter, Star-nosed Mole, Meadow Vole, Mink, Meadow Jumping Mouse

Birds- Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Pied-billed Grebe, Northern Harrier, Belted Kingfisher, Marsh Wren, Red-winged Blackbird, Sandhill Crane, Song Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat

Reptiles and Amphibians- Green Frog, Northern Leopard Frog, Spring Peeper, Eastern Newt, Painted Turtle, Common Snapping Turtle, Spotted Turtle, Northern Water Snake, Common Garter Snake, Eastern Ribbon Snake

Insects- Order Odonata: Damselflies and Dragonflies, Order Hemiptera: Water Boatmen and Water Strider, Order Coleoptera: Whirligig Beetle and Predaceous Diving Beetle, Order Diptera: Mosquitoes and Blackflies, Order Lepidoptera: Baltimore Checkerspot and Purplish Copper

Plants- Common Cattail, Turtlehead, Water Smartweed, Joe-pye Weed, Blueflag Iris, Cardinal Flower, Lesser Duckweed, Yellow Water-lily, Black Alder, Pussy Willow

2. Contestants will be asked questions about the group of animals to which certain specimens belong (ie: are they mammals, birds, insects, etc.). This includes orders of insects.

3. Contestants will be asked questions about the feeding habits and foods of organisms on the list. This includes what they eat, whether they are a producer or consumer, what type of consumer (herbivore, insectivore, omnivore, carnivore) and how this connects them to a wetland environment.

4. Contestants will be asked questions about the breeding habits and life cycles of organisms on the lists and how these are connected to wetland habitats.

5. Contestants will be asked about particular adaptations of organisms on the list that help them to live in a wetland environment.

Scoring: One point will be awarded for each correctly identified organism and each correctly answered question.

Charts: Each team or individual may bring a chart or charts listing all of the organisms and information about them into competition with them. One chart may be made for each group of organisms. Include the order for insects. ***You may not bring a field guide as your resource.*** See example below.

Wetland Wildlife

Animal	Group			
Name of organism	Food /Feeding habits	Life Cycle/Breeding habits	Wetland Adaptations	Particular wetland relationships
Wetlands Butterfly Order Lepidoptera	Larva: water lillies Adult: flower nectar	Eggs layed on host plant in spring, summer caterpillar, chrysalis, adult hatches following spring	Larva feed only on water lillies. Chrysalis is formed underwater beneath the lilly leaf. Adults prefer the nectar of several wetland species	Intimately related to plants that only grow in particular wetland habitats

Resources

Internet Links- Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians, Birds: <http://www.biokids.umich.edu/critters/>

Birds: <http://www.audubon.org/field-guide> , <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/onlineguide/>

Plants: <http://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/mnfi/communities/community.cfm?id=10651> ,
<http://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/mnfi/communities/community.cfm?id=10654>

Insects: <http://bugguide.net/node/view/15740> (type in common name or order to search)

Field Guides- A Great Lakes Wetland Flora : A Complete, Illustrated Guide to the Aquatic and Wetland Plants of the Upper Midwest by Steve W. Chadde, The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America by David Allen Sibley, Peterson Field Guide to Mammals of North America: Fourth Edition by Fiona Reid, National Wildlife Federation Field Guide to Insects and Spiders & Related Species of North America by Arthur V. Evans, A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians: Eastern and Central North America (Peterson Field Guides) by Roger Conant and Joseph T. Collins