



2/2007

EXPERIENCE NATURE

WITH THE

GREENBURGH NATURE CENTER

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POND PROGRAMS

AQUATIC ADVENTURE FOR PRE-K - 2ND GRADES

Turtles, frogs and other pond critters that reside in our live animal museum are used to teach young children about aquatic life. A visit to our pond to look for signs of who's home and to observe the diversity of an aquatic habitat is part of this adventure.

POND ECOLOGY FOR 3RD - 7TH GRADES

There's an abundance of life and activity in a seemingly quiet pond. Students visit our pond and "dip" for pond critters. They investigate the interrelationships of plants and animals and the adaptations of each. They uncover aquatic niches and learn about life cycles. This program is designed to create an understanding of a pond's balance of life. Teachers may choose for students to conduct water tests (pH, temperature, turbidity).

Introduction to life in a pond and what is occurring there. Topics may include:

Food Chains/Webs

Succession

What is a Pond?

Predator/Prey

Decomposition

Pond Plants

Microscopic Life

Animals seen at our Pond

What **adaptations** animals have that allow them to survive in a water environment, gills, webbed feet, fins, "waterproof" skin, etc.

Examples of possible live animals used in program with some information on each:

PAINTED TURTLE - **Predator** of the pond when an adult. Adaptations include webbed feet and scaly "waterproof" skin.



BOX TURTLE - As a comparison with the painted turtle. Box turtles are land turtles.

TREE FROG - **Amphibian** adapted for climbing. Special "suction cup" toes for escaping predators or getting food.



TOAD - Amphibian adapted for land environment. Usually has dry skin. Goes through **metamorphosis** of egg to tadpole to adult.

A Few Ideas Before You Get Here

(Teachers should adapt information to the grade level of their students.)

- Make a **pond food web**. A neat idea is to make name/picture cards with different animals and plants found in a pond and give them to your students. Have your students then sit in a circle showing their new identities to the others. Give one child a ball of string to start and have him/her hold onto the end and pass the ball to one of the other students who represents a plant or animal that he/she could eat. Have that child who was the prey then do the same thing and so on and so on until all the children are connected to the web.
- Make an **adaptation poster**. Choose an animal from a pond and collect pictures of it from magazines. Have students come up with its adaptations (gills, special mouth parts, webbed feet, etc.) and write them on the poster you've made with pictures on it.
- **Discuss** with students what is a pond and what kinds of animals and plants live there.
- Have students read a good book about pond life - some examples are listed *below*.
- **Make** a list of questions to ask the naturalist when you arrive.

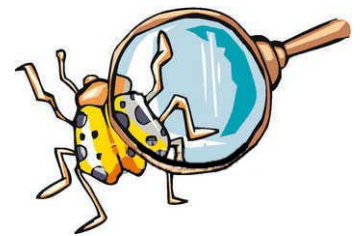
VOCABULARY LIST:

pond - a small shallow body of fresh water teeming with life.

habitat - a place where a plant or animal lives.

niche - the "role" an animal plays

adaptations webbed feet gills metamorphosis amphibian
insect decomposition food chain/web



Bibliography/Books to READ:

1. *Pond and Brook, A Guide to Nature in Freshwater Environments*, Michael J. Caduto, University Press of New England, 1990. ISBN 0-87451-509-2
2. *Little Frog's Song*, Alice Schertle, Harper Collins Publishers, 1992. ISBN 0-06-020059-6
3. *The Salamander Room*, Anne Mazer, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1991. ISBN 0-394-82945-x
4. *Scoots the Bog Turtle*, Cutchins and Johnson, Atheneum, New York, 1989.
5. *Pond Life Golden Book*, George K. Reid, Golden Books Publishing, New York, 1987. ISBN 0-307-24017-7

Please note: These sites are not listed to be an endorsement of the organizations, but are intended as an informational resource.

Some Helpful Pond Life WEB SITES:

Enchanted Learning - pond animal printouts.

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/biomes/pond/pondlife.shtml>

EduScapes - pond info and many pond links. <http://www.42explore.com/pond.htm>

Joseph Estabrook School - list of pond books for kids.

<http://estabrook.ci.lexington.ma.us/Library/May/Frogstoadsetc.html>

Kids Ark - British site with info and pictures of pond animals - especially insects.

(You'd be surprised to see how many of the same animals are also found in the US.)

<http://web.ukonline.co.uk/conker/pond-dip/>

Reminder:
Web addresses must
be typed exactly as
written to work.

