



School Program Description
Wetlands, Waders & Waterfowl
Level: 2nd & 3rd Grades

Saginaw Bay Visitor Center
Bay City State Recreation Area

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

This program is designed to introduce students to the wetland birds which make our park and Michigan's wetland habitat a special place to explore! An indoor presentation will cover special adaptations of wetland birds, i.e. webbed feet, long legs, and special beaks. Students will also explore food chains and habits of herons, ducks, geese, loons and swans. This program also incorporates the use of our hidden remote control marsh camera, which the students will use to locate birds on the wetland ponds. In conclusion, students will take a one-hour hike out to the marsh or the Saginaw Bay to witness the waders and waterfowl in their wetland habitat.

PROGRAM GOALS:

To instill in students an awareness and appreciation for wetland habitats and the rich variety of birds which depend upon them.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will be able to distinguish between ducks, geese, swans, loons and herons.
2. Students will be able to name one wetland bird and a special "adaptation" it possesses to help it survive.
3. Students will be able to describe how one wetland bird depends upon the food, water, shelter and space it finds in the wetland habitat.
4. Students will be able to draw a simple food chain which includes a wetland bird.
5. Students will be able to name three birds which call the wetlands home.
6. Students will be able to name three reasons why birds need wetlands.

PRE-VISIT SUGGESTIONS:

1. Each student should be dressed for weather conditions, which are generally 10 degrees cooler near the Bay. Wind can be much harsher and a jacket or coat should be worn regardless of weather conditions at your school. Bring a box of trash bags with square bottoms to use as emergency rain ponchos. Shoes should be selected for outdoor exploration and boots worn when weather is snowy or muddy.
2. Discuss characteristics of the bird family.
3. Put a bird feeder up outside your classroom window and make a list of birds which come to it.
4. Look for pictures of different habitats in books or magazines. Have the students list the habitats they find, such as forest, field, desert, lake, pond, marsh, rain forest.

POST-VISIT SUGESTIONS:

1. As a classroom discussion, make a list on a chalkboard of the different birds they saw at the park. Next, list an adaptation for each bird.
2. Compose a class mural of the wetland habitat and have each student draw a wetland wader or waterfowl which lives there.
3. Read the children's story, "She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head" by Kathryn Lasky. Discuss with the students how wetland birds inspired the creation of the Audubon Society.
4. Contact the Michigan Audubon Society and see if they will send you a classroom set of student Audubon activity guides.
5. Project WILD: Adaptation Artistry – students design and create imaginary birds; Color Crazy – students create representations of colorful wild birds; Wildlife is everywhere – students search their environment for evidence of wildlife.

COORDINATING WITH THE MICHIGAN SCIENCE GRADE LEVEL CONTENT EXPECTATIONS:

Life Science. Organization of Living Things:

L.OL.03.32, L.OL.03.42

Life Science. Evolution:

L.EV.03.12

Physical Science. Properties of Matter:

P.PM.02.13

COORDINATING WITH M.E.A.P. SOCIAL STUDIES CONTENT STANDARD BENCHMARKS:

Geographic Perspective

II.1—e.e.2

II.2—e.e.1, e.e.2, e.e.3, l.e.1

II.4—e.e.1, e.e.3, l.e.3, l.e.5

II.5—e.e.1, l.e.1

Inquiry

V.1—e.e.2