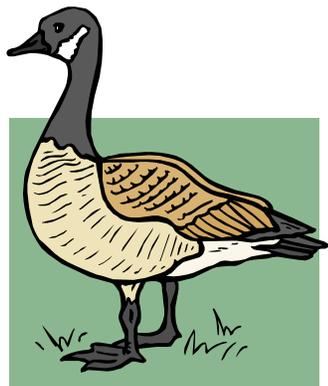


Write about what you have learned in the wetland habitat, add drawings too!



Wetland Habitat Naturalist



Be A Nature Detective



Extension Service
Benton County

[http://extension.oregonstate.edu/
benton/resources-1](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/benton/resources-1)

OSU Extension Service, Benton Co.
4077 SW Research Way
Corvallis, Oregon 97333

541-766-6750





What is a Wetland Habitat?

The wetland habitat is characterized by the presence of standing water, special soils, and plant life. In the Willamette Valley it is common to have seasonal wetlands. These wetlands are submerged or saturated for only part of the year, typically after the fall rains through late spring/early summer. In the dry months of summer and early fall these seasonal wetlands dry up and upon first glance may not appear to be a wetland at all. These unique, adaptive communities can survive long periods of standing water, but also long periods of little or no water during the late summer and early fall months.

The ponds, marshes, and wet prairie habitats are home to a rich diversity of plants and wildlife. Listen for the distinctive call of the red-winged blackbird in the cattails, the early spring chorus from the Pacific tree frog, the loud croak from the non-native bullfrog, or the spring songs of migrating birds. Watch for waterfowl in winter, and check out the aquatic insects in the water. Look for special plants that seem to thrive in the wet environment. Take a chance to smell the distinctive smells of wetland soils.

Become an Wetland Habitat Naturalist

We challenge you to:

- care for natural areas and treat them with respect
- explore and learn more about the ecosystems and ecology in Benton County
- share with your family and friends the special places and the incredible things you have learned in nature

Name _____

I visited (place) _____

Date _____

Try your hand at nature writing!

Become an animal that lives in a wetland. Write a riddle/poem to tell us who you are.



Example: Red-winged blackbird

Bird

Glossy, Black

Calling, Guarding, Fussing

Nesting, Cattails

Red-winged

Now you try:

Pick an animal: _____

- 1.) Write one word below that describes you
- 2.) Write two words below that describe what you look like
- 3.) Write three words below that describe how you move or where you live
- 4.) Write two words below about how you contribute to the ecosystem where you live:
- 5.) Write another word below that describes who you are:

1. _____

2. _____ , _____

3. _____ , _____ , _____

4. _____ , _____

5. _____

Try your riddle on a friend, can they guess who you are?

Go on a Wetland Scavenger Hunt

Use your detective skills to look for the items pictured below. Each picture is something interesting that you can find in a riparian habitat.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
|  Great Blue Heron |  Standing water |  Frog |  Mammal Tracks |
|  Turtle |  Blue or Purple flower |  Underwater plant |  Flying insect |
|  Duck |  Salamander |  Crawling insect |  Willow Flower |
|  cattail |  Webbed bird tracks |  Small fish |  Beaver or signs |

Cross off the picture when you find the item. Can you find them all? Use not only your eyes but ears to help you.

Caring for nature, and taking care in nature!

Have Fun, Be Safe and Be Respectful!

- Be prepared with water, snack, rain gear, hat, or sunscreen when venturing into the outdoors.
- Stay with your group leader and on trails
- Take only photos, leave only footprints. Leave nature for others to enjoy too!



- Some things can harm you; be careful around stinging insects. Learn to identify species before you go and respect their homes.

- Enjoy wildlife from a distance - to protect them and you!

Find an interesting plant in the wetland that all or part grows under water. Draw it.



Plants in the wetland have adapted to living in wet conditions. Many have hollow stems to allow oxygen to get to their roots (like cattail), and some float on the water surface (like duck weed)

Check for These Wetland Characteristics

1. Standing or slow moving water for all or part of the year

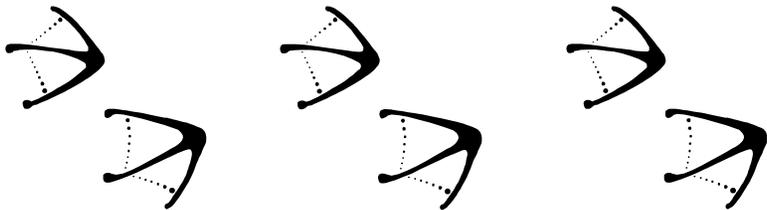
- ◇ Check this box if your site shows signs of water: spongy ground, muddy or mud cracks, water line stains on tree trunks, mottled or stained vegetation, low spots to collect water.

2. Special soils—called hydric soils.

- ◇ Check the box if you have one or more of these traits: rotten egg smell, mottled coloring (especially along plant roots), colors such as green, grey, black, or with red/orange flecks.

3. Special plants that can grow in very wet conditions

- ◇ Check the box if you find plants with these wetland adaptations: all or part of the plant grows underwater, floating with root systems that dangle in the water. Plants associated with wet soils, check the Ecology Field cards for help



Become a Wildlife Detective

Many species of wildlife lives here. Look for tracks, scat, homes, or evidence of feeding. Can you think of any more evidence?

Wildlife Observations

Animal _____

Date _____ Time of day _____

Location _____

Behavior (what was the animal doing?)

Evidence of Wildlife

Clue _____

Where found _____

Draw or write about what it looks like

What animal do you think left this evidence?

