

Name: _____

Homeroom: _____



Bonus Activity

Directions: Read the following paragraphs. On the back of this sheet, draw a detailed picture of what you read about. You can earn up to 50 bonus points for every detail that you draw. You will receive 2 pts. for every detail in the reading. Do your best on your drawings.

Where do you go to hear frogs croak, to watch herons fish, and to feel fuzzy cattails? Wetlands are unique areas with features all their own that change from season to season. Thousands of plants and animals species call wetlands their home or a nice place to visit. Wetlands are found all over the world where low-lying lands meet water, or where rivers meet oceans. Wetlands are land areas covered by water some or all of the time. Water moves very slowly through wetland areas. When they are not underwater wetland soils remain waterlogged all of the time. Wetlands include marshes, swamps, bogs, and wet meadows.

For many years people thought of wetlands as yucky, soggy, useless land. It would be much better if this land were drained so crops could be grown, or filled so people could build on it. It even seemed a great spot to use as a garbage dump because then you could both dump and fill.

Now people are trying to save and protect wetlands because we understand why they are important.

- Many animals depend on wetlands for some part of their life cycle, like fish, frogs and mosquitoes.
- Wetland plants are very productive and support a rich web of life, from simple molds to mammals.
- Wetlands provide shelter and food for fish.

Aquatic beds are found near the edges of lakes or stream. The area is sheltered and quiet. Some plants grow underwater. Other plants float on top of the water or their leaves float on water. Water lilies, duckweed and pondweed grow in water that may be 3 to 6 feet deep. Waterfowl nest. Migrating birds like the whooping crane rest and feed in this wetland area. Ducks, geese, red-winged blackbirds fly through. Herons wade in the emergent zones. Small mammals such as muskrats and raccoons quietly move about in marshy areas. Deer come to the marsh to feed.

Swaying grassy plants fill the emergent wetlands. Emerging wetlands are found next to lakes and streams. Plants in this wetland area have soft stems. Part of stem and roots are in wet soil. The rest of the plant sticks up above the water or soil. Cattail, bulrush and reed canary grass are found in marsh.

Wetlands are wonderful areas that are home to many species of wildlife, both plant and animal. It is important to take care of our wetlands so that species of plants and animals don't become endangered or extinct.