

Pond Ecology

Program Outline

Welcome and Introduction

Behavioral Guidelines for visit:

- We are in the animals' neighborhood
- Stay on trails with your group unless taken off trails with class activity
- Leave flowers and plants for animals (don't pick anything)

Pick up trail treasures to enjoy on-site, but no collecting (leave everything, including feathers)

Introduction to Pond Ecology

Definition of Pond Ecology: The study of living things in a pond and how they interact with their environment.

How a pond is made and what kinds of plants and animals live there.

Ponds are pools of still, shallow water. They can occur naturally through rain, snow, ground water, or runoff from rivers or streams.

Edge: turtles, snakes, birds, mammals

Surface: dragonflies, damselflies, water striders

Below surface: fish, snails, frogs, tadpoles

Mud: leeches, planaria, dragonfly nymphs

Metamorphosis

Some animals don't change much as they mature (mammals, reptiles, birds).

Insects and amphibians change a lot as they mature in a process called metamorphosis.

Rotations

1. Build a Bug

Students will learn about different stages of metamorphosis and how this adaptation allows insects and amphibians to survive in ponds. To demonstrate this, a student volunteer is transformed into an insect and as a class we will discuss the changes that occur in aquatic insects as they go from a larva to an adult.

2. Pond Observations

Students will use dip nets to explore pond life and introduce the term macroinvertebrate. Students will learn different examples of macroinvertebrates and their role in a pond ecosystem.

3. Pond Scavenger Hunt Classroom Explorations

Students will observe plants and animals that live in and around ponds and waterways. We will explore the wetlands of the Ogden Nature Center looking for signs of ducks, geese, cattails, frogs, and beavers.

Topics are covered by varying degrees depending upon the maturity of students and time constraints.