

Third Grade / Spring Walk / At A Glance

Ponding ⌚ 60 minutes

Goals

- Collect, observe, and identify pond creatures
- Discover how pond animals meet their life needs in their habitat, especially food
- Learn about interdependence in the pond community, especially food chains and food webs

Observe the Pond Habitat

⌚ 10 minutes

- *What makes up this pond habitat—what do you notice?* (water, plants and animals, air, shelter)
- *Are there things about this pond habitat that might be important, but which we can't see?*
- Sketch the pond and include features that might be important to life in the pond.

Learn How to Carefully Collect Pond Animals

⌚ 40 minutes

- *What is the first thing a pond animal will need in order to survive while you are observing it?* (Water.)
- Show how to collect clear water in the white basin and plastic cups to make comfortable temporary homes for the animals.
- *Where do you think we might find the most animals when we scoop with the strainers? How would you decide?*

Identify the Most Common Animals Using ID Sheets

- *What color is it? What shape is the animal's body? Can you see its eyes? Can you see legs? If so, how many are there?* Count legs first to decide which side of the ID sheet to look at.
- Note that some of the insects are immature and will look very different as adults.
- *How many different kinds of animals did you collect?*
- *What animals are most common?*
- *Which of your tiny creatures are insects?*
- *How can you tell?*

Draw and Record Observations About One of the Collected Animals

Use the student worksheets for recording

- How does it move?
- How do you think it breathes? (Encourage children to look for a silver air bubble on diving insects—and watch the animal return to the surface to get a fresh breath.)
- What part of the pond does it live in?
- What do you think it eats?
- What do you think might eat it?

Use the References to Find Out What Each Animal Eats

⌚ 5 minutes

If animals are taken for the classroom be sure to bring the food they need.

Gently Return All Animals to Their Home in the Pond

⌚ 5 minutes

- If the teacher has requested that some animals are taken back to school, they will be returned to the pond within 1-2 weeks.
- Encourage children to clean equipment.
- Collect materials (strainers, cups, plastic spoons, etc.)

Wrap Up

- *What did you discover that surprised you?*
- *In what ways are pond animals and plants dependent on each other?* (Food, shelter, oxygen.)
- *What questions do you have about the animals that live in this pond?*

This summery does not replace the Walk Guide. Activities, their order and duration will vary depending on group dynamics and weather.