

Footprints on the Marsh

2nd Grade Program

Description: Tread lightly – our impact can be bigger than we think. Students will get to observe with binoculars native birds and their local habitat. Students will record and tally different species for comparison.

Objectives:

- Describe 3 different habitats found on the Sweetwater Wildlife Refuge and compare and contrast the resources found in each.
- Identify at least one bird that lives in each habitat, and describe why that bird can be found there.
- Define watershed and introduce how water flows through a watershed, how the movement of water is affected by vegetation, and erosion.

Birdwatching Station:

1 pair of binoculars per student.

Mark the behavior of birds in the ethogram on worksheet. Use the field guides to identify at least one species – students may not get a close/clear enough look to ID all the birds, and that's ok!

At the end of time, ensure all binoculars are collected and returned to the box.

Binocular Instructions:

Always keep string around your neck, so the binoculars don't get lost. Never walk while using binoculars! Look through the small holes so that birds look bigger. Have a staring contest with the bird, slowly raise your binoculars until they just touch your eyelashes, and use the focus to make the bird clear.

Talking Points:

- What is that bird doing? (looking for food, flying, calling, etc.)
- Do you notice any unusual body parts on that bird? (ex. Long legs/neck/beak, bright colors) - How do you think that body part might help them survive?
- If we're having trouble seeing a bird, can we find any evidence that birds were here before? (ex. Feathers, footprints, scat, birdsong)

Nature Journaling Station:

Encourage students to explore the designated area. They can work independently or in partners to find something natural and something man-made to document in their journals. You can help point out items of interest to students.

At end of time, please make sure all students have their clipboards, pencils, and journals. Check area for any misplaced supplies.

Behavior Expectations:

- Stay within the designated area
- Take only memories – do not pick up anything – leave sticks, rocks and shells where they are
 - Watch your step – areas may be muddy
 - Be mindful of crab burrows
 - Quiet voices to not disturb wildlife

Talking Points:

- Where on the refuge would we find crustaceans?
 - Point out where crab burrows are
- Description of daily tidal changes and how crustaceans adapt