

# WELCOME TO THE WETLAND

# BIRD FORAGING ACTIVITY

The sun is just beginning to rise over the wetland, and it's time for the birds to begin their day with a nutritious meal! Students will act as birds, attempting to collect as many food items as possible in their cup using tweezers.

## Activity Setup

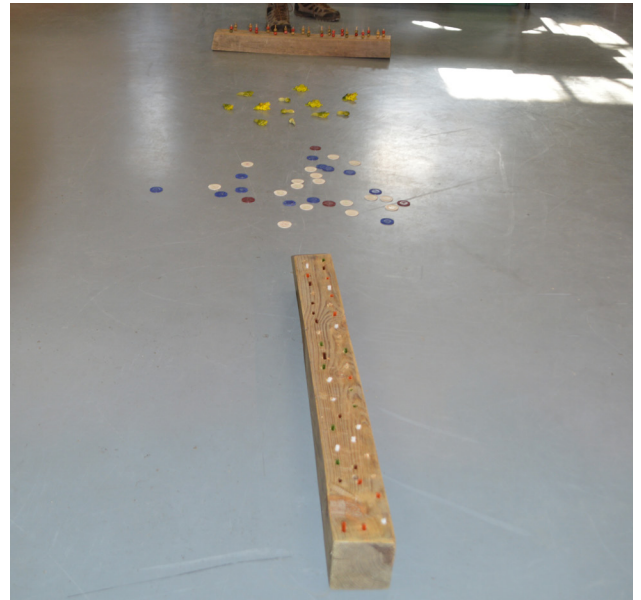
Fill the 4" x 4" posts with pipe cleaners. The pipe cleaners mimic the aquatic invertebrates the birds will be foraging for, and the post mimics the wetland's mud.

Arrange the 4" x 4" posts in the center of the room or activity area.

Distribute the animal props in a line between the two posts. The animals can be mixed together or separated into distinct groups.

Once the wetland buffet has been prepared, arrange the birds in equal groups on each side of the wetland.

Distribute cups and tweezers to the birds.



**Play** On your signal, the birds will begin foraging for the different food items using their tweezers. At the end of the activity, have the birds examine their cups and discuss the challenge of foraging for the different food types. Return the food items to the wetland and play again.

## Play Alternates

- Birds can forage until no food items are left, or only be allowed to forage for a set time.
- Birds can be divided into "shorebirds" and "wading birds," with shorebirds only foraging on the invertebrates found in the mud and wading birds only bending at the waist while foraging. Shorebirds should forage close to the mud, wading birds should only bend at the waist while foraging.
- Add a foraging challenge by draping the net provided for the tabletop display over the food items. This could mimic vegetation or debris used by the prey for protective cover.
- Points can be assigned to the different food groups (1 point for each pipe cleaner, 2 points for each animal, etc.). If the birds don't reach the minimum point count for survival, they must leave the wetland. Food items can be removed from the wetland to represent scarcity until one bird remains.



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*We manage and protect fish and wildlife, along with their habitats, while also growing our community of hunters and anglers, partnering with those who love the outdoors, and fostering stewardship with those who care for the land.*