

BEAVER LODGE. As you walk on the trails and

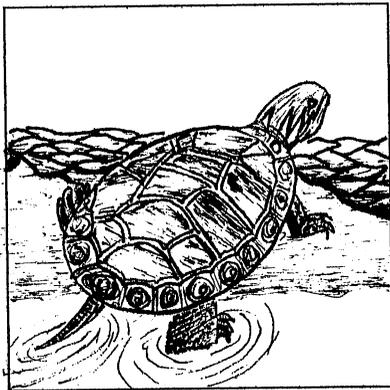


boardwalk, pay close attention to the edges of the creek and you may see the homes of an important animal who lives in the wetlands. Each home is made of sticks and mud and is called a *lodge*. This is where the beavers live. Beavers can create

wetlands by building dams. How do the wetlands that beavers make help other plants and animals? Take a good look at the beaver in the visitors' center and keep a sharp eye on the trees to see if you can see their work.

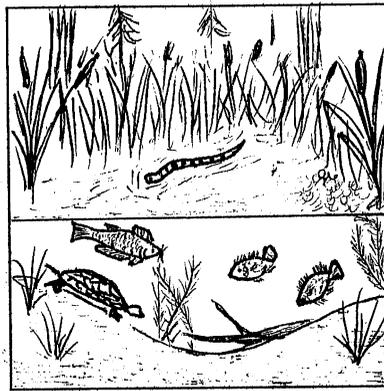
DEAD TREES. There are many dead trees in the wetlands. Many of them died because they were not

adapted for life in the water. Adaptations are special ways that plants and animals have for dealing with the places they live.

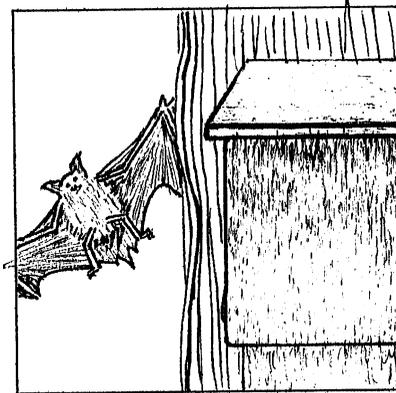


Dead trees are very important. They provide food and homes for many animals. Can you find a hole where an

animal might live? Fallen trees are important to turtles and snakes who need them to sun themselves. Birds perch on them and geese sometimes nest on them. As the trees further decay in the water, they become a new layer of the wetland.



live in each area. Which forest animals use the wetlands? Which wetland animals use the forest?



people can help by putting up boxes. The large boxes on poles in the water are for *Wood Ducks*. The larger boxes on the tree trunks are homes creatures such as Eastern Bluebirds, Eastern Screech-owls, Flying Squirrels and *Great-crested Flycatchers*. The boxes on trees without holes in front are for *bats*! Who else is a cavity nester? Check inside the visitors' center for plans to build your own box!

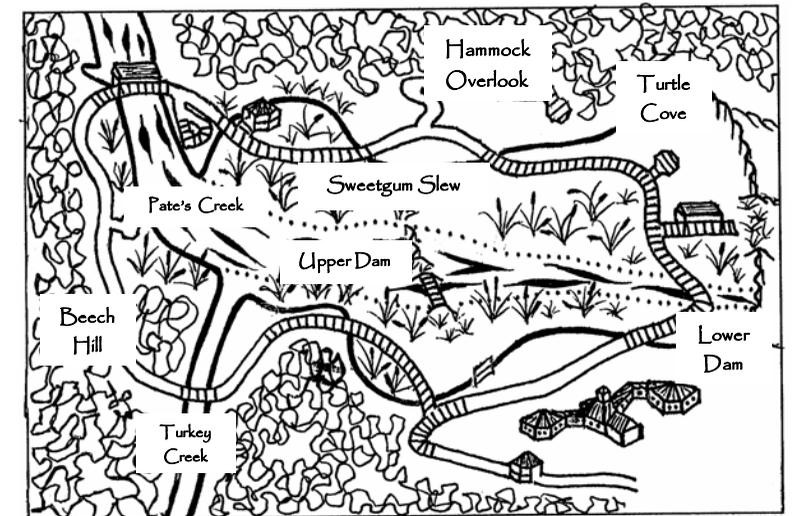
HABITAT. Both the forest and the wetlands provide important habitat. A habitat is an area where plants and animals find the things they need to live. It is not always easy to see where the wetlands end and the forest begins. Think of

BOXES. Scattered around the wetlands you may see boxes for nesting and resting. Many animals are *cavity nesters*. This means that they like to live inside hollow trees. Sometimes there are not enough holes to make homes. When this happens,

A Self-Guided Walk on the WETLANDS TRAIL

This self-guided tour will help explain some of the things you are seeing as you wander along the wetlands trail. Remember that you will see more wildlife if you are **QUIET** and **MOVE SLOWLY**. Children must stay with adults on the trail. To learn even more, visit the interpretive building exhibits and talk to our staff.

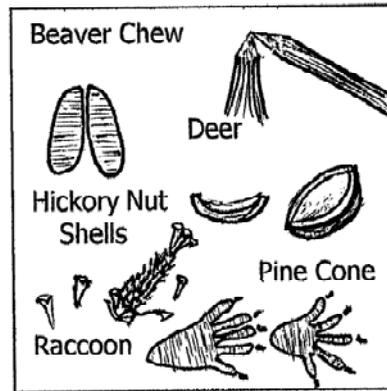
The term *wetlands* applies to swamps, bogs,



marshes, and river flood plains as well as other wet and temporarily wet habitats. The wetlands that you see here were restored in 1995 and are still in transition. They include several types of habitat. We hope that you have fun visiting the wetlands and that as you learn more about wetlands you'll understand how important they are.

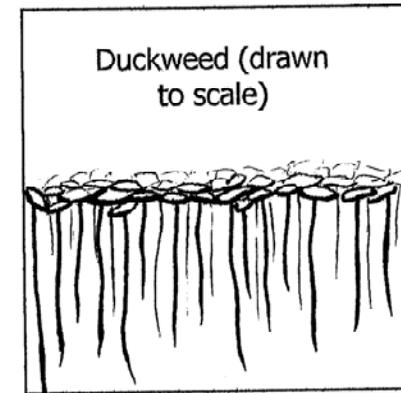
Newman Wetlands Center
Clayton County Water Authority
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ANIMAL SIGNS.



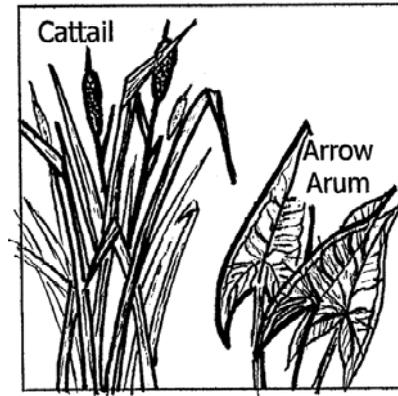
Many animals are camouflaged and some are very shy and rarely seen. Some are *nocturnal* and sleep during the day. Even if we don't find animals, we can see clues, or *signs*, that they live here. Check the mud and trail for foot prints or *tracks*. Watch for nutshells and half-eaten

pine cones. Listen for bird and animal *calls* and look for nests and other homes. What animals that you don't see live in the wetlands? How can you tell? Why is it important to be very quiet when we want to observe nature?



DUCKWEED. The water is covered with a layer of green. Look very closely and you will see that this green is really millions of tiny plants. There are a couple of different kinds, but it is mostly *duckweed*. This plant floats on top of the water and

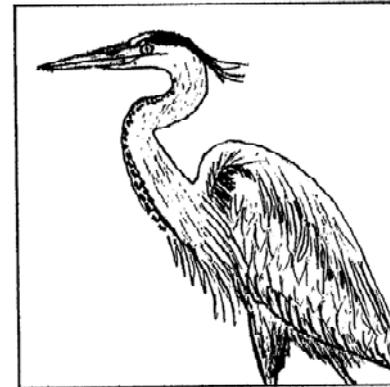
does not have roots in the soil. Duckweed can be very helpful to the animals. Some like to eat it and others use it to hide in. In many places you can see trails in the green carpet. Who do you think made these trails?



WETLANDS

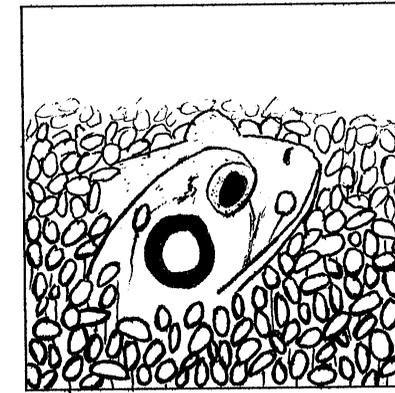
PLANTS. Many special plants are adapted to wetland life. These plants clean our water by using *pollutants* as food. They can be eaten by wildlife and their stems are good for *amphibians*, fish,

and *insects* to hide in and lay their eggs on. Sometimes wetlands dry out, but we can still tell they are wetlands because of these special plants. Can you find any "dry" wetlands near your home or school? Remember, these hidden wetlands are just as important as bigger wetlands.



BIRDS. Birds love the wetlands. You may see some birds with very long necks and legs standing in the water. These wading birds are different types of *herons*. Their long legs help them to walk in the water and their long bills help them to spear

fish and frogs. Other birds like to catch insects above the water. Some birds are high above your head searching the treetops for insects or seeds. *Migrating birds* use the wetlands like a hotel, stopping on their long trips to rest and feed.



CAMOUFLAGE. Bull Frogs and Green Frogs are green like the duckweed floating on the water. This is called *camouflage*. Camouflaged animals are hidden and can sneak up on their food and stay safe from other animals that

want to eat them. What other animals can you find that are camouflaged? Where do you think they hide? What brightly colored animals do you see?

PATE'S CREEK.



from *Pate's Creek* which runs under two of our bridges. The creek water is deep in some places. Look along the creek channel for *otters*, *muskrats*, large *turtles*, big *fish*, or maybe *Wood Ducks* and *Belted Kingfishers*

flying along the creek's path. The shallow water has an important role. It acts like a bowl or sponge, holding water and slowing the flow during heavy rains. Why do you think it's important to have both deep and shallow water *habitats*?