

## Day 15 Activity

### Activity Citizen Monitoring Programmes

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Choose one or more of these activities to participate in.

#### **Building A Database**

Students can conduct an inventory of the flora and fauna found in their wetland and gather enough data to produce a local field guide. (See Ideas on preparing a field guide)

#### **Wetland Watch Patrol**

Identify certain students (or involve the whole class, if possible) as 'wetland watchers' to keep an eye out for possible impacts or encroachment on your wetland. (See the Changes to the Wetland data sheet for a list of potential impacts to check for.) Students could work in shifts, alternating every few weeks or so. Evidence of pollution or land alteration (e.g., littering and illegal filling) should be reported to local or state authorities.

#### **Routine Cleanups**

Removing litter for aesthetic purposes or habitat improvement is a fun and very gratifying way of improving wetland quality. Keep notes on the kind of trash you find - where does it come from? Can you deduce the source? Is there any action you can take to prevent this kind of trash from ending up in the wetland again? If most of it is from a certain fast-food restaurant, how about getting them to place more trash cans at their facility? Have the students brainstorm ideas and try out potential solutions.

You can conduct a safe, successful, and enjoyable cleanup by doing a little planning, using common sense, and following a few safety tips:

- Notify the conservation commission early of your cleanup plans. They may have a lot of information about wetlands in your area: the best access points, areas that need the most attention, provide clean up supplies (gloves, bags), or assist with removing collected refuse.
- Know whose land you're cleaning up. Check with the town council office to determine ownership and obtain written permission from landowners to cross private property. Do not enter posted areas without permission.
- Determine how you'll access the area and cause the least impact to wetland plants and soils.
- Plan ahead on how you will dispose of all the trash you collect. How will you transport it from the site, and where will the trash be accepted? Check with your town council to possibly receive permission to dispose of the collected refuse free of charge.
- Supply students with gloves, garbage bags, insect repellent (only if necessary) and refreshments at the end of the event.
- Wear long pants, long sleeved shirts, and rubber or waterproof boots, if available.
- All students should be under the supervision of an adult.
- Watch out for sharp objects (nails, pipes, etc.) that may be submerged in soggy soils.
- Take a camera to document your event and send photos to your local newspaper.



Drawing of  
"Todd River"  
By: Anthony  
Age: 8