

Wetlands Vocabulary Matching Game

Developed by Rachel Methvin & Teena Whitmore

Directions:

To make the vocabulary game, download the information and print on tag board. Each page contains a picture and a description of the picture composed as a riddle. Separate the riddle from the picture by cutting these two sections apart.

Students can then be given a set of pictures and a set of riddles. The students may then work in groups to match the riddle with the appropriate picture. Groups will either receive cards about solids (such as animals or plant life), liquids (types of water), or gases (types of gases).



Alligator

I am the largest reptile in North America.

I can either dig a mud den, or create a small wetland by lashing my tail and digging with my feet and snout, in order to survive periods of drought.

My eyes are on top of my head, so I can lie submerged and still see above water.

My skin is a tough, protective leather shield, prized for boots and luggage.

What animal am I?



Beaver

I have dense, oily fur, webbed hind feet, and ears and nostrils that close when under water.

I sink green branches into my pond to retrieve in winter for food.

I use my wide tail as a paddle.

I build a home in water with sticks, and it has an underwater entrance.

I live in streams, ponds, and rivers.

What animal am I?



Blue Crab

I am blue and I come into the marsh with the tide. Here, I find lots of oysters, fish, and many other creatures to eat. Since I breathe with gills, I must swim out of the marsh with the retreating tide. When I am "soft" (I shed my shell to grow), the marsh is a great place to hide from predators!

What am I?



Crawfish

I am a freshwater crustacean.

I breathe through my feather-like gills.

I create my home by burrowing
in the ground.

I resemble a small lobster.

People like to boil and eat me.

What am I?



Dragonfly

I am an insect and characterized by large multifaceted eyes, two pairs of strong transparent wings, and an elongated body.

I eat mosquitoes, and other small insects like flies, bees, ants and butterflies. I am therefore a valued predator, since I help control populations of harmful insects. I am usually found around lakes, ponds, streams and wetlands because my larvae, known as "nymphs", are aquatic.

I do not bite or sting humans, though nymphs are capable of delivering a painful bite.

What insect am I?



Great Egret

I am a large white heron with long, black legs and feet.

My bill is long and straight.

My neck pulls back into an s-curve.

I wait for my prey by standing still or walking slowly and then stab it with a quick thrust of my bill.

What bird am I?



Frog



I am an amphibian.

Part of my life is spent in water and part is spent on land.

I have long hind legs and like to jump

I am most noticeable by my call.

In the fairy tale, they say I'm a prince.

What am I?



Great Blue Heron

I am a large, beautiful bird that wades gracefully in the shallow water, hunting for food. With my long neck and long, pointed bill I snatch fish, crabs, water insects, and even small mammals out of the water. As the tide comes in, I move to higher parts of the marsh to stay in shallow water. Sometimes I just fly away.

My prehistoric cry is a croak,
And I'm painted the color of smoke.

What bird am I?



Mosquito

I am an insect with a slender body
and long legs.

My name is Spanish for “little fly.”

I come out at night. If I am a female, I suck
the blood of animals and humans and can
spread diseases.

I lay my eggs in the water.

What am I?



Nutria

I am an exotic species brought to North America from Argentina.

I was brought here for my valuable fur and now live in wetlands.

At first glance, I look like another wetland animal known for building dams, but the biggest visual difference between us is our tails. Mine is short and stubby.

I am nocturnal, or active at night, and chew up wetland plant foods much like a muskrat.

What animal am I?



Otter

I have a long, slim body and relatively short limbs, with webbed paws. Most have sharp claws on their feet, and I have a long muscular tail.

I have a very soft underfur which is protected by my outer layer of long guard hair. This traps a layer of air, and keeps me dry and warm under water.

I like to play in the water.

What animal am I?



Brown Peican

I am the smallest of the eight species related to me.

I live in shallow waters along the coastline.

I was on the endangered species list in the 1960s but have made a comeback and am no longer endangered.

I am the state bird of Louisiana.

What bird am I?



Raccoon

Though I do not live in the salt marsh, I do come here to hunt for dragonflies, crabs, oysters, clams, fish, and other good bits of food. I am not fond of swimming, so when the tide rises, I leave the marsh for higher ground.

I am known as a thief of the night because I am nocturnal and wear a mask.

What animal am I?



Salamander

I am typically characterized by slender bodies, short noses, and long tails and am similar to that of lizards. My moist skin usually makes me reliant on habitats in or near water, or moist ground, often in a wetland. Some of my species are fully aquatic throughout life, some take to the water intermittently, and some are entirely terrestrial as adults. I lay eggs in water. I am capable of regenerating lost limbs, as well as other body parts.

What am I?



Turtle

I am part of the oldest reptile group.

I can hold my breath under water
for periods of time.

I travel with my house on my back.

Who am I?



Saw Palmetto

I am a small palm that looks like a fan.

I grow in clumps and dense thickets.

My flower is yellowish-white.

My fruit is a large reddish-black drupe (outer fleshy part surrounding a shell with a seed inside) and is an important food source for wildlife.

What plant am I?



Pitcher Plant

I grow in peat bogs.

My common name comes from the shape of my leaves, which remind people of something you pour water out of.

Although I am a plant, I catch and eat insects.

Sugar-scented pools of water lure my prey, and downward-pointing hairs on my leaves keep insects from climbing to freedom.

What plant am I?



Tupelo Gum Tree

I am a tree that has adapted to live in swamps and very wet soil. My base is wider than the rest of me, which gives me more stability in soft and swampy soils. I grow in areas where flooding is common. I require a lot of sunlight and do not grow well in shade. I can grow up to 90 feet and have been recorded to live as long as 1000 years.

My fruit is ripe in late summer and early fall and is an important food source for wildlife. My honey is quite expensive and rare, and it is said to be very delicious.

What tree am I?



Bald Cypress Tree



I am native to the South am well-adapted to live in swamps and wetland areas because of my large base that gives me stability in swampy soil. My leaves are small and needle-like. In the South, my leaves stay green all year. I can live up to 600 years in the right conditions, but because my wood is valuable and resistant to decay, many are cut down and used for lumber and other purposes long before I reach an old age. My roots form "knees" that extend out into the water or land around the tree. The purpose of the knees is not clear, but they are thought to provide additional stability to the tree. I am a source of shelter for many species of animals, and the seeds are an important food source.

What tree am I?



Water Hyacinth

I am popular in decorative ponds and water gardens because of my beautiful flowers. I am not native of South America, and I have caused problems because I am an invasive plant. I can grow rapidly to the point of overpopulation.

I grow over the surface of the water. Because of me native plants have to struggle to survive. With fewer plants to create oxygen, the water can become oxygen deprived which can result in the death of many aquatic creatures that rely on oxygen to survive.

What plant am I?



Spider Lilies

I grow best in areas where the soil is always moist, like in wetlands and along the banks of rivers. Some of my parts are poisonous to humans. My long, thin petals extend from a central flower. This is my most notable characteristic and is the source of my nickname as an insect. There are about 40 other species which are closely related to me.

What plant am I?



Duckweed

I am a small plant that grows on the surface of the water. Each floating leaf on the plant is attached to a single, tiny root that extends into the water.

I grow best in slow-moving water like the water in a pond or a bayou. I grow best in warm, sunny locations.

Because I grow on the surface of the water, overgrowth areas can reduce oxygen exchange and cause low oxygen levels in water.

What plant am I?



Cordgrass

I grow in the low marsh where the ground gets flooded by water for long periods of time each day. During the highest tides, I might be completely underwater!

Since I am a rooted plant, I can't move about except to sway with the breeze.

I must tolerate sea water.

What plant am I?



Wild Iris

I am often used in gardens, but there are five species that are native to the wetlands of Southern Louisiana. Although these five species are different, they can be interbred to create hybrids (a mix of two species).

I produce beautiful flowers in many different colors, usually lavender, violet and dark purple. Hybrid flowers are often more stunning in color than their purebred relatives.

What plant am I?



Cattails

I am found along the shore of marshes, ponds, or lakes and sometimes found in ditches.

Many of us grow together. I stand straight and stiff about 3 - 9 feet tall.

My brown flower head pops open in early fall, letting its fluffy seeds get carried away by wind or water.

My leaves look like a thick blade of grass.

What plant am I?