

Edge of Home

Study Units

[Aquatic Life; The World in a Pond](#)

Supplemental Information

The “edges” of aquatic habitats are very special indeed! “Terrestrial” and “aquatic” organisms both are found here. For example, in a lake, only algae (single-celled, plant-like organisms with no roots or leaves) and tiny floating plants can live in deeper water, but nearer to the shore submerged, rooted plants such as elodea and some pondweeds grow. Floating-leaved pondweeds and water lilies also are found here. Emergent plants (e.g., American lotus, cattails, rushes, grasses) are found in shallow water. Even certain trees such as cottonwoods and sycamores are found in low, wet areas near water.

In larger bodies of water the majority of animals are found near shore. Small aquatic animals are attracted to plants, which they use for food and protection. Larger animals (both aquatic and terrestrial) search out their prey in shallow water. Other terrestrial animals regularly visit the water to get drinks.

Teaching Suggestions

Follow the suggestions in the activity. Have students work in groups of three. Two students should make observations and the third should record them. Since data will be recorded for three areas, have students take turns recording data. Go out onto the school grounds and find “edge” areas such as the edge of the playground, fence rows, or wood edges.

Younger students: Have students list the things they observe in the two areas on either side of the “edge.” Then have students list the things that are found in the edge area.

Older students: Look for a variety of “edge” habitats and have students record their data. If you have an opportunity to take students to a stream or lakeside area, have them identify the “boundaries” of the aquatic and terrestrial habitats as well as the interface zone between the two. Use field guides to identify as many organisms as possible in each of the three areas and record your observations. Follow instructions in the guide.

Evaluation

See the ***Student Worksheet***.

Student Materials

Student Worksheet

Teacher Aids

None



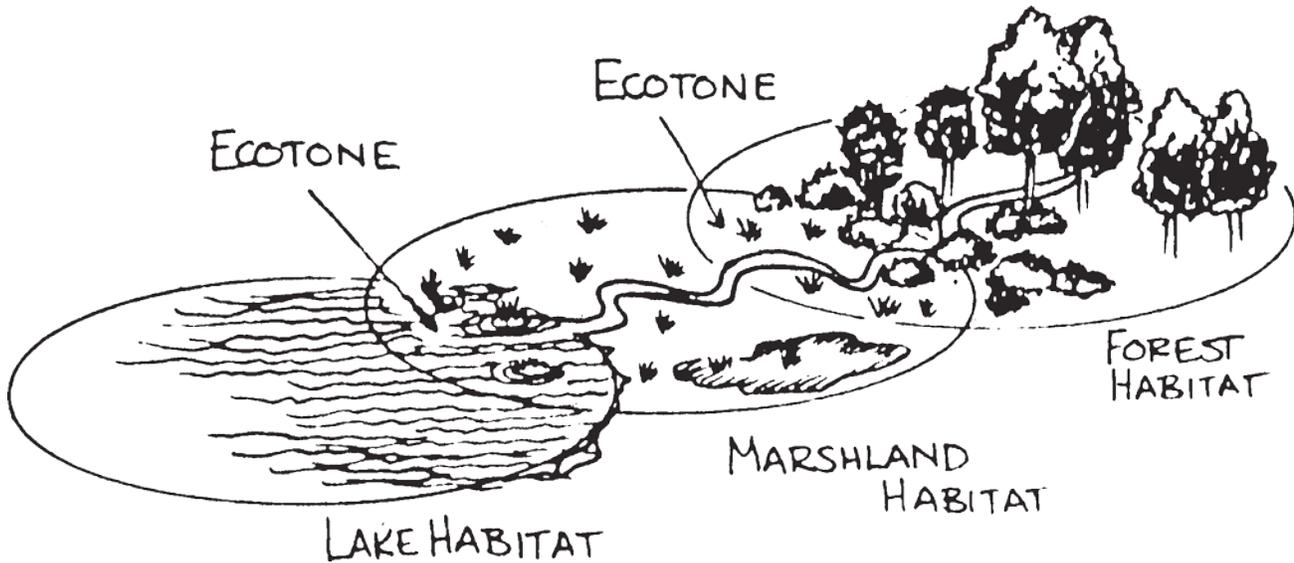
Additional materials

Reid, G.K., S.D. Kaicher, and T. Dolan. 2001. Pond Life (A Golden Guide from St. Martin's Press)



Edge of Home: Student Worksheet

Directions: You have just completed the activity "Edge of Home." You saw several ecosystems. Each ecosystem contains certain plants and animals and has special characteristics. When two ecosystems meet, it often is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins. This area where two ecosystems overlap is called an ecotone. The ecotone often has plants and animals from both ecosystems. Look at the drawing below and answer the questions.



1. Name three ecosystems show here.
2. How many ecotones are in the drawing?
3. Name one animal found in each ecosystem (three) shown in the drawing.
4. Might any animals you named be found in an ecotone as well? List the animal(s) and the ecotone(s) in which it might be found.

