

Kids Explore!



Critter Quest Scavenger Hunt

Ever wonder who's rustling in the reeds, wading in the water, or plopping in the pond? Below is a scavenger hunt featuring critters that live in or near water in our community. Look for but don't collect the things on this list next time you walk in a watery place. (See watery walk ideas on the other side of this page).

- Something a frog might like as a snack
- Something that can float but is not part of a plant (hint: you probably can't catch this one!)
- Something that flies when it's an adult but swims when it's young
- Something soft and light that helps keep ducks warm through the winter
- Something that a beaver might eat for dinner
- Something hard that is a home for something soft (hint: you could also find this at the beach)
- Something that every living thing needs to survive (hint: you can't put this in a paper bag!)

Possible answers: insects, duck, dragonfly, feather, green twigs, water snail shell, water

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Originally from Nearby Nature Explore Spring 2004

Water, Water, Everywhere!



Did you know that Eugene's drinking water comes from the McKenzie River? And that Springfield's drinking water is drawn from wells? Our community's health depends on the health of its local water sources, which are abundant.

Many of our parks feature rivers, streams, and wetlands that are fun to explore. Some are so close that you can walk or ride your bike to them. What should you take when you go on a water adventure? Pack a magnifying lens for checking out things up close, binoculars for looking at water birds, and a lightweight collecting jar for briefly housing insects or other small critters. Bring a camera if you want to take something home—pictures!

Alton Baker Park

Canoe the canal and walk or bike along the Willamette River. Look for heron and osprey nests in the tops of trees or on nesting platforms near Autzen Stadium.

Amazon Park

Check out restored wetland habitat behind the playground in this Eugene park. Watch for herons and listen for Pacific treefrogs in the spring.

Armitage County Park

This park features the McKenzie River, an amazing osprey nest on the top of an old railroad bridge, and lots of huge, old bigleaf maple trees.

Clearwater Park

This east Springfield park is on the Willamette's Middle Fork off

Jasper Road. From here you can walk for several miles along the river on a paved bike path.

Delta Ponds

You can easily access this area along the Willamette River bike path, on an 800-foot causeway that runs on the river's east side near Valley River Center Mall.

Dorris Ranch

This Springfield park is more than a working filbert ranch. Explore lovely woodland trails with views of the Willamette's Middle Fork.

Island Park

Open space, trails, and access to the Willamette River highlight this natural area located right near downtown Springfield.

Mt. Pisgah Arboretum & Buford Park

Lovely trails run through this area along the Willamette's Coast Fork. Look for frogs and turtles in the arboretum water garden.

Skinner Butte

In downtown Eugene, this park features forest and river trails. Hike the butte for views and use the bike path to explore downriver.

Willow Creek & West Eugene Wetlands

Willow Creek is one of the only examples of native wet prairie left in the Willamette Valley. Use the bike path to access lots of interesting spots in this area.

Critter Questions

- ◆ **Where do dragonflies begin their lives?** In water! They shed their exoskeletons several times before becoming winged adults.
- ◆ **How do frogs breathe and drink?** Frogs can breathe air *and* absorb water through their skin.
- ◆ **How long can a beaver hold its breath in water?** 15 minutes!
- ◆ **When do ducks learn to swim?** Right away! They take to the water soon after they're born.
- ◆ **How many great blue herons can nest in one tree?** Lots! Great blue herons often nest in colonies or rookeries—with several nests in the same tree.