

# Are You My Mom?

Image from Wikimedia Commons



## Specific Learning Outcomes

**2-1-01:** Use appropriate vocabulary related to the investigations of growth and changes in animals.

**2-1-08:** Recognize that all animals can have offspring, and that offspring generally resemble their parents.

**2-1-09:** Compare the appearance of young and mature animals of the same type.

**2-1-10:** Compare the length of time from birth to adulthood for humans and other animals.

**2-1-13:** Describe and compare ways in which different animals care for their offspring.

## General Learning Outcomes

**2-0-1a:** Ask questions that lead to the investigations of living things, objects, and events in the immediate environment.

**2-0-4e:** Respond to the ideas and actions of others in building their own understandings.

**2-0-4g:** Verbalize questions, ideas, and intentions during classroom activities.

**2-0-7a:** Purpose an answer to the initial question based on their observations.

**2-0-8a:** Recognize that learning can come from careful observation and investigation.

**2-0-9b:** Express enjoyment when sharing and discussing science-related experiences from daily life.

## Vocabulary

wetland, lifecycle, growth, changes, adult, parent, young, baby, matching

## Summary

Students are introduced to wetlands by exploring the growth and changes of animals that live in wetlands by matching pictures of young animals with their adult counterparts.

## Materials

- *Either print or project accompanying activity sheets. If printed, you will need enough for groups of two to four students, and each animal picture must be cut out*

## Procedure

### *Warm Up*

Introduce the activity by stating that all living things grow and change throughout their lives, some looking much like their parents when they are young, while others are unrecognizable. Ask students if they can list any animals that look like their parents (cats, dogs, snakes, etc.) and list any animals who look very different from their parents (frogs, bugs like a Dragonfly, etc.). Different kinds of animals will also be cared for differently, some needing several months of care while others must rely on themselves as soon as they are born or hatched.

### *The Activity*

Explain that today you will be investigating life cycles in preparation for your field trip where you will be exploring wetlands at Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre. Wetlands are special homes for living things where there is shallow, slow moving water with lots of water and land plants. The life cycles you will be exploring are from animals who all need wetlands to survive. Each animal has an important role to play within a wetland ecosystem.

Explain to students that they will be playing a Wetland Animal Matching Game, where they will look at pictures and try to match the pictures of the baby animals with the pictures of their parents.

**A wetland is** an area of land that holds shallow water, with a maximum depth of two metres. The water makes the soil very moist, so plants who need moist soils will grow in and around the water; this is why a wetland can not be deeper than two metres, because otherwise these kinds of plants drown and do not receive enough sunlight. The water moves slowly across because there are so many plants that slow the water down, absorbing some of the water like a sponge and filtering it as it moves through.

Have students paired or in groups of four, where each pair or group has a set of the Wetland Animal Matching Game (see accompanying pictures), setting a timeframe for when they should try to be finished with matching.

After the allotted time has passed, come together as a class. Go through each animal, comparing images, then asking the class which picture that they think belongs with which, having them explain their answer. Discuss which animals look similar and which look different from their parents.

*Extension: Read out the provided descriptions which explain the offspring care required for each animal. Have the class guess which animal pairing matches which description. Compare the different ways each animal cares for its young, noticing the differences even among similar animals (like the birds).*

### *Wrap Up*

After the animals have been matched, explain to your class that you will all be visiting a special place called a wetland that is home to all of these animals. Briefly explain that you will be learning more about wetlands and the many animals and their young that call wetlands home when you explore Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre.

### *Naturalist Note:*

For this activity, the timeline given for each animal is for the approximate time it takes for the animal to be able to live without assistance from adults.

However, it should be noted that most academic resources will state that an animal will reach adulthood when it is able to be sexually reproductive.

Due to the age of the students however, we have only included the time it takes for the animal to be able to live on their own rather than when they are sexually reproductive.

### **Animal Highlight — the Red Fox**

*On the cover of this section and in the insets you will see pictures of Red Foxes. The Red Fox is a dog-like animal with bright ginger-colored fur and a bushy tail used for warmth and balance. The Red Fox is found in every province and territory in Canada, and is known to be a highly adaptable, intelligent animal who can live in a variety of habitats, including wetlands.*

*Red Foxes live in a den for the spring and summer seasons where they raise their young. Once the young are able to feed themselves at around 3 months of age, the Red Foxes will leave their den, using bushes as shelter during the winter months.*

*The diet of Red Foxes change with the seasons, eating smaller animals like mice, squirrels, and rabbits for the majority of the year, in addition to various forms of vegetation (when available).*

*As a predator, the Red Fox is near the top of the food chain in a wetland setting. To learn more about the Red Fox, search for the Red Fox at: <http://cwf-fcf.org/en/resources/encyclopedias/fauna/mammals>*

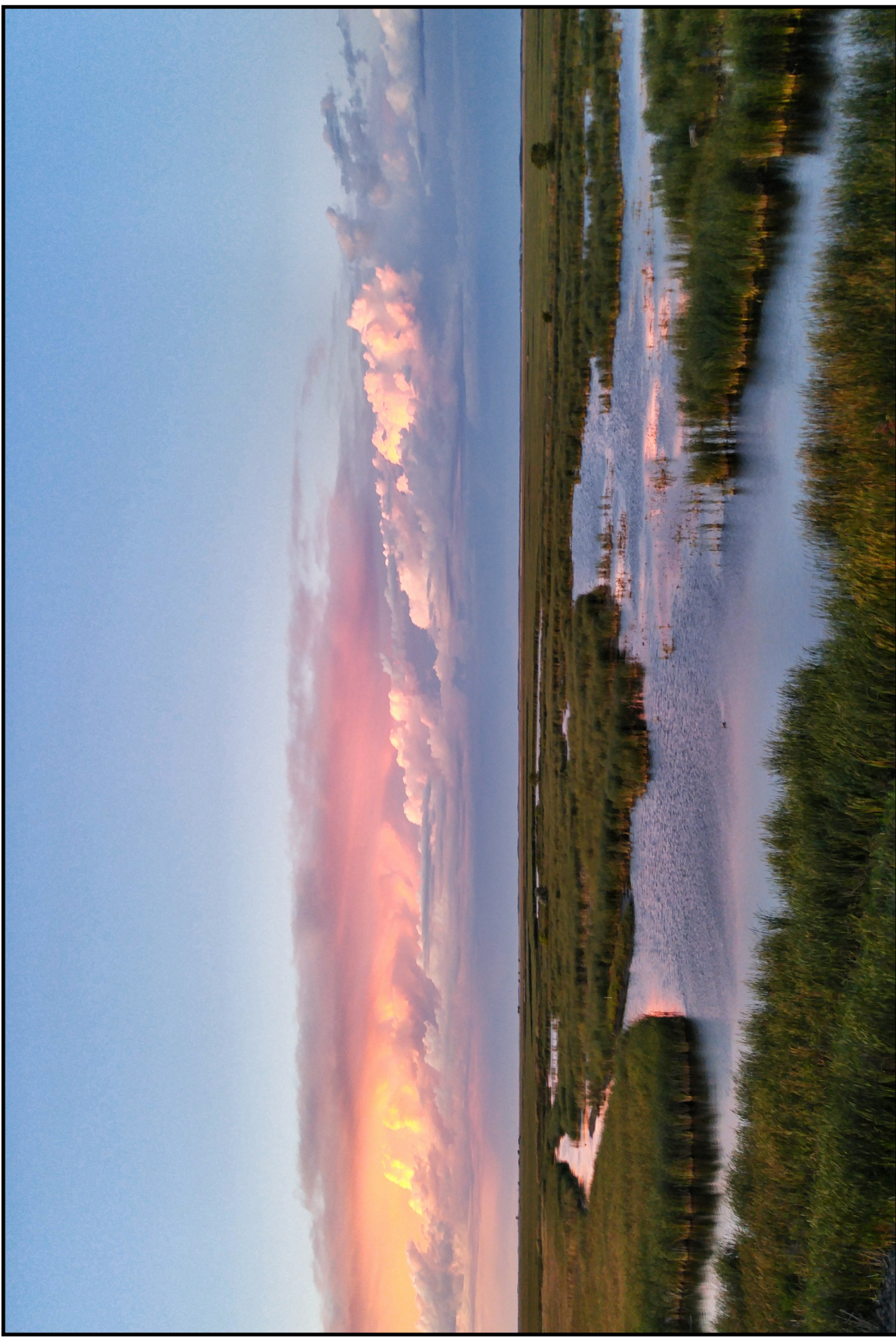


# Wetland





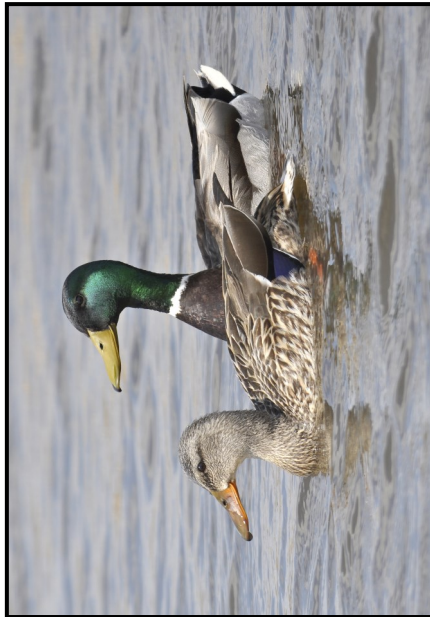
# Wetland











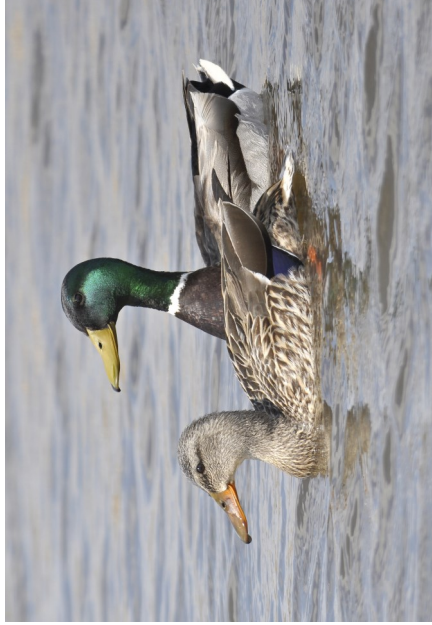


Dragonfly



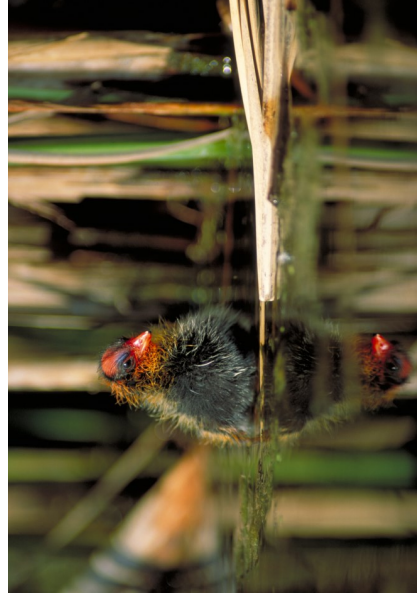
When I hatch from my **egg**, I must **rely on myself right away** to hunt for my food, to find safe places to rest, and to stay away from predators. I **use my bottom** to squeeze out water which moves me forward.

Mallard



When I hatch from my **egg** and my **feathers** are dry, my **mom leads me** and my siblings to water, where we find our own food. In about ten weeks I am able to live on my own. I will be living on my own by **two months**.

American Coot



When I hatch from my **egg**, I hop into the water and follow my parents where they feed me, until I can feed myself. My parents also take turns keeping me warm in our **floating nest**, and protect me from predators. I will be living on my own by **three months**.



## Killdeer



When I hatch from my **egg**, I can leave my simple nest (known as a **scrape**) as soon as my feathers are dry. My **parents** help protect me and my siblings, while I look for my own food. I will be living on my own in **two months**.

## Eastern Cottontail



When I am **born**, my mother feeds me and my brothers and sisters **milk** twice a day for about three weeks. I am able to leave the nest and live on my own by **two months**.

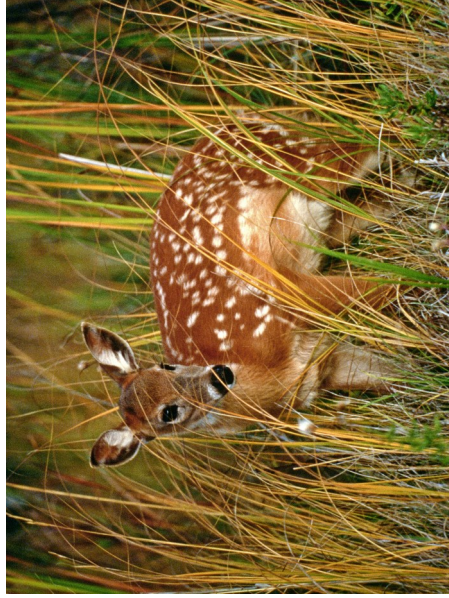
## Western Painted Turtle



When I hatch from my **egg** in the fall, I must **rely on myself right away to survive**. I will stay in my **nest chamber** hibernating through the winter. Once it is spring, I will leave my nest and have to find food.



## White-tailed Deer



When I am **born** I am able to walk right away. I can look for my own food after a few days, but I still need to **drink milk** for about six weeks. To protect me, **my mother** hides me in tall grass or bushes. I can be on my own by **two years**.

## Human



When I am **born**, I am naked and have very little hair. I can be fed my **mother's milk**, or other nutritious liquid food. My **parents or guardians** take care of me until I am able to live by myself, which is usually after eighteen years or more.

## Northern Leopard Frog



When I hatch from my egg, I must **rely on myself right away** to hunt for my food, to find safe places to rest, and to stay away from predators. Soon I begin to grow legs and will one day lose my tail and live on land.