

Awesome Adaptations – KS2

Overview

Description	Discover the clever ways in which wetland wildlife is suited to its environment, including some not-so-obvious surprises.
Time	20 minutes (plus more for extensions)
Curriculum	Y4 science: identify and name a variety of living things in the local and wider environment; recognise that environments can change and that this can pose dangers to living things. Y6 science: classification; identify how living things are adapted to suit their environment in different ways.
Aims	To demonstrate to learners how animals are adapted to their habitats, and therefore highlight the importance of the wetland habitat for these species.
Learning outcomes	At the end of this activity all pupils should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name 3 types of wetland wildlife • Give an example of a way that a wetland animals is adapted to its environment
Linked resources	Introduction to the Avalon Marshes Pick & Mix – Wonderful Wetland Wildlife; Noses – A Wildlife Game; Water in the Wetlands; Colouring the Marshes; Creative Response to Landscape; Avalon Marshes Quiz. Film (YouTube channel): various wildlife films



Photo: John Crispin

Teachers' notes -

Introduce the wetlands of the Avalon Marshes to you pupils. Ask them what characteristics a wetland has. Ask them to give examples of habitats that are found in wetlands and what animals, birds and insects they would expect to find in such habitats.

Explain to pupils that adaptations are special features that animals have to help them live in their habitat. At the Avalon Marshes, all of the wildlife is adapted to living in one of our many wetland habitats. Ask pupils to give an example of an adaptation of a wetland animal.

Humans often use things to help us do things in places that aren't our habitats e.g. we can use flippers and snorkels to help us swim under water. On the following pages is a series of images of items that humans use - each represents a different adaptation. Show pupils the objects - either print out the sheet and give them out between pairs/small groups, or show the images on your class whiteboard. For each item discuss what humans use that object for. Then ask pupils to look at the images of wetland wildlife, and choose an animal that has an adaptation similar to the object. The answers are on a table below - there is sometimes more than one answer, and sometimes the answer might not be obvious!

Finish the session by asking pupils to give examples of:

- Wetland wildlife
- Adaptations that animals have for living in wetlands
- An adaptation that they didn't know about before

Extension:

Think of some other wetland wildlife and research how they are adapted to their habitat.















Compare and contrast the wildlife of the Avalon Marshes with wildlife in a different environment.

Create a new animal that could live in the Avalon Marshes. What adaptations does it have?

Avalon Marshes Wildlife

				
Snorkel	Balloon	Paddle/oar	Binoculars	Camouflage
				
Flippers	Hi-visibility vest	Sieve	Tongs	
				
Drinking straw	Whoopie Cushion	Underwater mask	Trowel	Stilts

Avalon Marshes Wildlife

				
Mole	Hoverfly <i>Photo: Bill Urwin</i>	Water Scorpion	Mute Swan	Grey Heron <i>Photo: Lynne Newton</i>
				
Great White Egret <i>Photo: Lynne Newton</i>	Kingfisher <i>Photo: Lynne Newton</i>	Mallard <i>Photo: Lynne Newton</i>	Water Beetle	Peacock Butterfly
				
Dragonfly Nymph	Water Boatman	Kestrel	Bittern <i>Photo: Lynne Newton</i>	

Answers -

Object	Animal	Adaptation
Snorkel	Water Scorpion	Breathing tube that it holds to the surface of the water to take air in
Flipper	Swan / Mallard	Webbed foot for swimming
Hi Viz vest	Hoverfly	Colouring to warn off predators
Whoopee cushion	Dragonfly Nymph	Jet propulsion –shoots water out of its bottom to move in water!
Camouflage vest	Bittern	Camouflage (reeds)
Bucket stilts	Great White Egret / Grey Heron	Long legs for standing in / wading through water
Paddle	Water Boatman	Oar-like legs for swimming – hence the name!
Tongs	Grey Heron / Kingfisher / GWE	Big beak for catching prey
Trowel	Mole	Digging holes and tunnels underground
Sieve	Mallard	Filtering water out of beak without losing food
Balloon	Water Boatman / Water Beetle	These creatures come to the surface and take a bubble of air under water with them – that’s how they get their oxygen
Straw	Butterfly	Butterflies have a long, straw-like appendage called a ‘proboscis’, which they use for drinking nectar from flowers.
Goggles/mask	Water Boatman / Water Beetle / Dragonfly Nymph	These creatures can see underwater for swimming.
Binoculars	Kestrel	Good vision for hunting prey (whilst hovering high above).



Photo: Lynne Newton