



# Wetlands Habitat

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NATURE PLAY ACTIVITY



Extended Learning Partnership

# Wetlands: Nature Play

Let's build our very own mini wetland habitat in a bottle! Wetlands are super important because they are a home for many different plants and animals, but they also help keep water clean. In this activity, we will get to go outside to collect our materials and we will see how water flows through the different layers of a wetland!

## Materials:

- An empty plastic bottle. Next time you finish a water bottle or soda bottle, save and reuse it for this activity!
- A cup of water
- Dirt, sand, and rocks from around your home
- Scissors or a knife (please ask an adult to help you use these)

## Optional materials:

- A small container to capture water (if you are doing this activity outside, you won't need it)
- Two different kinds of dirt. If you can, find one kind that is coarse with big pieces like sand, and one that is fine like soil



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## Steps:

1. Cut open the side of a water bottle, leaving the spout in-tact. You will need an adult to help you with this step. Lay the bottle flat with the open side facing up.



2. Go outside and collect some sand, coarse dirt, or really small gravel. Place this larger grained material in the bottom of the bottle and spread it out evenly.



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## Steps:

3. Collect dirt, potting soil, or really fine sand. (If you can only find one type of soil around your home, that is okay! The experiment will definitely work with only one kind!) Place your layer of dirt on top of the first layer in the bottle.



4. Next, find some small to medium sized rocks or pebbles. Place these rocks or stones on top of the dirt (not too many, make sure you can still see the dirt through the rocks)



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## Steps:

5. Gather up a few larger stones or rocks. Place these larger rocks at the back end of the bottle



6. Collect a small handful of grass. Put grass in the spout, but don't stuff it too full



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## Steps:

7. Put a container underneath the spout opening to collect water or place your project outside. (Optional: Place the bottle cap, or other small object underneath the back end of the bottle to make a slope down towards the grass spout)
8. Slowly, pour water over your rocks at the back end of the bottle and watch the water trickle out of the spout (alternatively, make some dirty water by swirling a little bit of dirt in with your cup of water. Pour the dirty water over your model wetland and see if the water comes out of the bottle cleaner!)



You have just made a wetland habitat!

\*NOTE: do not drink the water collected from the spout – instead, use it to water a plant!

