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# Introductions

Meet Jill, Edward, Amy and Munch.

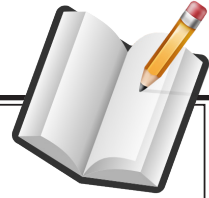
They are members of the Lee family and the Wilson family. The two families are neighbours.



*From left to right, Jill with her dog Munch, and Amy and Edward are in front. Jill's dad is behind with Amy and Edward's parents and baby brother.*

The Lees and the Wilsons like to **explore** outdoors. On weekends, they often take walks together. The children have fun being nature detectives. Like all detectives, they keep notes about what they discover. Sometimes they make drawings, too.

One place the families love to explore is the **wetlands** near town. Many kinds of plants grow there. Animals from **dragonflies** to ducks live in the wetlands. On each visit, the families discover something new.



## MEET THE WETLANDS



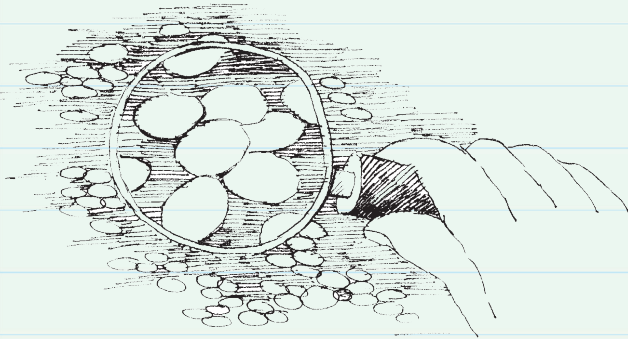
Wetlands are lands that are soggy or covered with water at least part of the year. They are one type of **ecosystem**, a place with living parts—plants and animals—and non-living parts, such as water, light and soil. Each of these parts affects other parts of the ecosystem. Each is important to healthy wetlands.

There are wetlands throughout the world, but they are not all alike. Some lie along rivers, ponds, lakes and oceans; others form in hollows. Some contain **fresh water**; others contain **salt water**. Different kinds of plants and animals live in different kinds of wetlands.

## **Nature Notes**

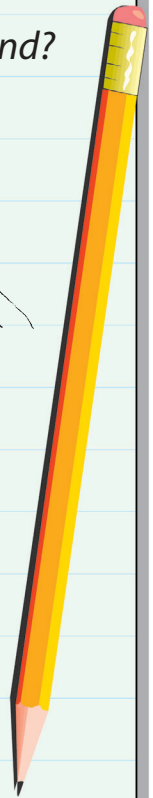
### **WHAT TO WATCH FOR**

1. *What kinds of plants live in the wetlands?*
2. *How do plants live and grow in the wetlands?*
3. *What kinds of animals live in the wetlands?*
4. *How do animals live and find food in the wetlands?*
5. *What are non-living parts of a wetland?*



### **THINGS TO CHECK LATER**

1. *What wetlands books does the library have?*
2. *Who can tell us about the wetlands?*







One morning, the Lees and the Wilsons hiked to a freshwater wetland, a **marsh** along a river. The day was sunny, but everyone—except the baby—wore boots.

As the families followed a dirt path, their footsteps went “clump, clomp.” But as they came closer to the marsh, the sounds changed. Their footsteps went “squish, squoosh” when the dirt turned to mud, “splish, splash” when the mud turned to water. Just as the water covered their feet, they reached a boardwalk.

"It's a good thing someone built this," said Edward, stomping on the wooden platform. "The water is getting deep."

"Spring brought heavy rain and melted a lot of snow this year," said his mom. "And it filled streams that run into the marsh. The whole marsh is much wetter than it was in the fall."

Edward marched along the boardwalk, making muddy footprints. Suddenly, he stopped.

"Something else was here," he hollered, staring at a trail of wet prints. He yanked out his magnifying glass to look closer.

