



Highlands-Cashiers LAND TRUST

"Saving Special Places since 1909"

Water Wonders

A BACKYARD NATURE DISCOVERY

Objective: Students will understand the significance of water for survival and discover human and animal water resources.

Background:

- Water is the foundation for all life on earth.
- The earth is made up of 71% water.
- Only 0.003% of earth's water is available to drink from freshwater sources.
- The human body is about 60% water and is vital to the function of organs.
- All living things need water to survive, but get water in different ways.
- Humans use water everyday to drink, bathe, and wash.

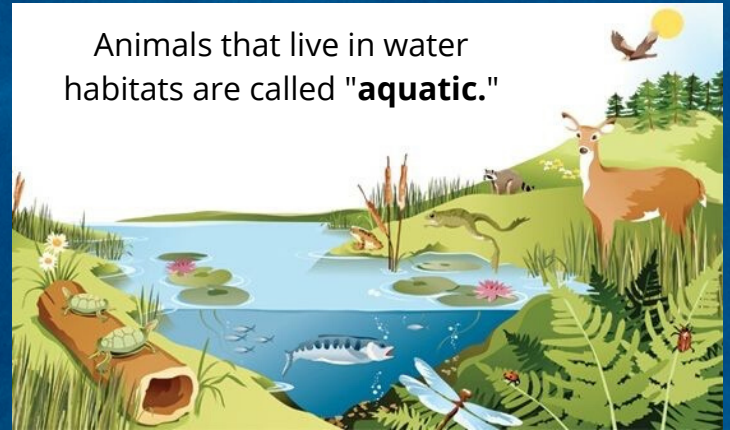
How does water get to your house?



Check out this YouTube link!
<https://youtu.be/cGi4PugN4qY>

Wildlife Water Safari!

Ever wonder where wild animals get their water? All animals need water to survive, but different animals get water from different sources. Some live in water, some just need it to drink from. Many animals use large sources such as lakes, rivers, and streams, but some animals only need small amounts of water such as a puddle or even as little as a tiny droplet.



Spiders and insects can drink from tiny droplets of water on leaves or in rock crevices.



Many small critters that live in the ground absorb water from moisture in the soil.



Birds use puddles and bird baths to drink from and clean their feathers.



Many aquatic animals live in water for part of their lives, during the egg and larval stages, but then live on land as adults.

CHECK OUT THIS BIRD BATH CRAFT!
<https://thekindergartenconnection.com/spring-craft-diy-bird-bath/>

How many water sources are in your backyard?

Go on a water safari in your yard and look for water sources for animals that might live in or visit your backyard.

Start a nature journal! List or draw the water sources you find and the animals that might use it or live in it.



Puddles are a great source for many animals to live in and drink from.

It's All Downhill!

Water flows from high to low. When it rains, water collects and drains off into a common outlet such as a stream, river, or lake. This is called a **watershed**.

Watersheds are separated by ridgelines or mountain divides. Water falling on each side of the divide drains into different watersheds and collection sites.

Watersheds drain into larger "River Basins." North Carolina has seventeen River Basins! Find yours by looking at this map of NC River Basins:

<https://www.ncwildlife.org/Conserving/Habitats/North-Carolina-River-Basins/NCRiverBasinMap>



TO BETTER UNDERSTAND WATERSHEDS, TRY THIS ACTIVITY! CRUMPLED PAPER WATERSHED

<https://water.unl.edu/documents/Crumpled%20Watershed%20Model%20opt.pdf>

Water connects us ALL.

Water health and quality depends on personal responsibility and action. The health of the water upstream, can affect the health of water downstream. Common threats to local water supply are: runoff water from chemicals such as pesticide, herbicide, and soaps; livestock waste; and trash to name a few. Water contamination can cause diseases, harm wildlife, and make water very difficult to clean.

What are some ways you can help keep nearby water clean for people and wildlife?

- Do not put harmful chemicals down the drain.
- Use biodegradable soaps when washing cars or animals outside.
- Leave no Trace! - Don't litter and pick up trash.
- Keep pesticides and herbicides to a minimum and don't use near streams.
- Encourage "buffer zones" of vegetation near rivers and streams to prevent erosion.

