A comprehensive outline to introduce Project Webfoot to volunteers in their state and local communities
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Foreword

At the beginning of his term as president of Ducks Unlimited (DU), John Tomke outlined a new initiative for a youth-and-education program that would build an appreciation and understanding among our youth for wetland conservation and wetland wildlife habitat in relation to the Ducks Unlimited mission. This was the beginning of DU’s Youth and Education (YE) Committee.

The YE Committee consists of volunteers of all ages and backgrounds from across the United States. Lisa Harris, a volunteer who serves as Senior Vice President of Youth and Education, chairs the committee. This group of dedicated volunteers serves in an advisory capacity to the president of Ducks Unlimited and to Ducks Unlimited staff, sharing suggestions, ideas, and concerns with staff liaisons. Committee members and staff work together as a team to make recommendations on how best to achieve the organization’s youth-and-education goals. The committee and staff liaisons strongly agree on two points: (1) It is extremely important to reach youth in all segments of our society; and (2) Initially, DU should focus its energy and resources on a single youth-and-education program—one that will allow for further development and growth in the future.

The committee made the recommendation to enhance and revamp a concept created by L. J. Mayeaux, past president of Ducks Unlimited, which he called Adopt-a-Classroom. His concept was to place Greenwing memberships in elementary school classrooms, whereby each student would receive a subscription to *Puddler*. The teacher would, in turn, use *Puddler* as a learning tool. Project Webfoot is an enhanced and expanded program based on that same concept.

Special Thanks

Special thanks is given to President John Tomke, whose desire for our youth to have a better understanding and appreciation of wetlands has led to the first major youth-and-education program for Ducks Unlimited.

We would also like to thank Ducks Unlimited Canada for their guidance and expertise in developing Project Webfoot. We appreciate their contributions to our package, and value the highly successful youth-and-education program they have developed in their own country.

And a special thanks to Chairman L. J. Mayeaux for his creation of Adopt-A-Classroom, which has been the inspiration and working model for Project Webfoot.
**Introduction**

This handbook is created for Ducks Unlimited volunteers to use as a guideline for implementing Project Webfoot in their states and local communities. With the support of volunteers in each state, Ducks Unlimited has the ability to reach girls and boys who may have never had an opportunity to walk in a marsh or experience the whistling of ducks’ wings in wild places. We have a chance to teach young people how the same wetlands that provide these privileges also play an important role in their everyday lives—by filtering drinking water, helping to control flooding, and by providing habitat for hundreds of plants and animals. Project Webfoot offers an excellent way to bring the wonderful world of wetlands to the classroom.

As with every Ducks Unlimited program, Project Webfoot will be volunteer-driven. The goal is to have Project Webfoot serve as the key Greenwing program for each state. In addition to introducing wetlands education to students and educators, the program also provides a great way for local chapters to increase their Greenwing memberships. It is therefore important that all committees and volunteers considering this program review this handbook in its entirety.

We hope you find Project Webfoot a worthwhile volunteer endeavor. With your support, we will begin to develop young people across our country who are committed to wetland conservation now and in the future. Together we can bring wetlands education to life.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you find this handbook useful in your volunteer efforts.

Sincerely,

Lisa Harris
Senior VP of Youth and Education
What is Project Webfoot?

Project Webfoot is an international, interdisciplinary wetland educational program and curriculum package developed by Ducks Unlimited for educators and youth organization leaders. The program is implemented by dedicated Ducks Unlimited volunteers and staff throughout the United States.

- Project Webfoot is an education outreach program and curriculum for 4th through 6th grade students.
- As noted in the foreword to this handbook, the Youth and Education Committee feels it is important that we focus staff and volunteer attention on these specific grades in the early stages of the program. We must ensure that Project Webfoot is firmly established before we attempt to grow the program.
- Project Webfoot can be provided to interested educators and integrated with existing school curriculums.
- Classrooms and school districts receive Project Webfoot through sponsorships obtained by Ducks Unlimited volunteers.
- Project Webfoot is the first step in bringing the value of wetlands to youth throughout North America.

Project Webfoot Wetland Education Package Contents

Project Webfoot offers teachers learning materials that can be integrated with the existing school curriculum to help bring the world of wetlands to life for 4th through 6th grade students. These materials encourage active participation and problem solving in an interdisciplinary approach that can be used in teaching reading, science, art, and other subjects. The package also provides fun learning materials for each student in the classroom, including a one-year subscription to Puddler magazine and a wetland animals sticker collection. Each Project Webfoot kit contains the following items:

- WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands, a curriculum-based lesson guide for teachers on wetland habitats and conservation. WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands is endorsed by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and has already been used in all 50 states and 28 countries worldwide.
- “Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America,” an interactive CD-ROM featuring a world of information on North America’s waterfowl, including color photos, songs for all species, range maps, abundance maps, ID tips, quizzes, and more.
- A full-color illustrated book, America’s Wetlands: Guide to Plants and Animals, which offers a complete guide to North America’s most exciting ecosystems.
- A Project Webfoot Activity Book filled with informative and fun puzzles, word scrambles, and graphic games that can be used in the classroom.
- Wetland Ecosystems teacher’s guide and student journal on habitats, communities, and the diversity of life.
- Wetland Values poster and booklet
- A Read-Aloud Wetlands Booklist.
- A frameable certificate showing the classroom’s participation in Project Webfoot.
The package provides the following items for each student:

- A one-year subscription to *Puddler*
- A Greenwing membership certificate
- A Greenwing membership card
- A Pocket Waterfowl ID guide
- A wetland sticker collection

The package and student materials will be shipped to the teacher at his or her school. Each quarterly edition of *Puddler* will be bulk shipped to the teacher.

**Additional Benefits to the Teacher**

- Hands-on training programs for teacher and youth organization leaders through Project WET (see Project WET and Ducks Unlimited on page 7).
- Access to the Webfoot Web site, which contains additional curriculum materials for teachers and activities for students.

**Two Key Selling Points**

**WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands (Educator Guide)**

This educator's guide is filled with lessons and activities relating to wetlands conservation. Part I of the guide includes lessons about wetlands, which teach students what wetlands are, why they are so valuable, where to find them, and how to protect them. Part II of the guide is filled with activities related to wetlands. Some of the activities may involve classroom participation, while many other activities can be enjoyed by students on their own, outside the classroom. Most projects require a few inexpensive materials, if any, and show students that through a few simple steps they can do something that has a significant impact on their own environment. The educational elements contained in each kit can increase students’ awareness, knowledge, skills, and critical-thinking abilities; as well as affect positive changes in the students’ behavior.

**Duck, Geese, and Swans of North America**

This interactive CD-ROM, developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, features a world of information on ducks, geese, and swans. For each species the CD contains color photos, songs, song range graphs, video shorts of the birds, migratory maps, research material, fun waterfowl jokes, species quizzes, and more. There is also a Web link where students can track sightings of waterfowl for their class.
Project WET and Ducks Unlimited

As part of the launch of Project Webfoot, Ducks Unlimited announced a partnership with Project WET on February 2, 2005. Project WET (Wetlands Education for Teachers) is an international water science and education program for students in grades K-12. Project WET is the leader in water education.

- Project WET is a program, a curriculum, and a network of coordinators and water educators.
- In each state Project WET is partnered with a natural resource agency, university, nature center, or museum. An employee of this organization functions as a Project WET coordinator who exclusively administers the program in their state.
- Project WET has coordinators and facilitators in all fifty states, which will help the uptake and acceptance of Project Webfoot among educators in those same states.
- Project WET allows educators and youth organization leaders to participate in hands-on training programs throughout the year.
- Through our partnership with Project WET, teachers and volunteers who participate in Project Webfoot will have the same access to these training programs. For complete list of Project WET coordinators visit www.projectwet.org.

Sponsorships for Project Webfoot

How does a classroom participate in Project Webfoot? The curriculum package may be obtained through a sponsorship that is directed to a classroom or youth organization. Ducks Unlimited staff and volunteers will oversee the sponsorship of all classes. Educators or youth organization leaders may purchase the package for their own classrooms or youth groups. However, most sponsorships will come from other sources. Businesses, corporations, foundations, and individuals are encouraged to participate in this program by sponsoring classrooms in their local communities.

- Sponsorship is $300 per classroom, which provides for 25 students and the teacher.
- Key selling point: Each sponsorship is used locally—usually on a school district, school, or classroom of the sponsor’s choice.
- Sponsor receives certificate suitable for framing in the office or home.
- Participating teachers and students are encouraged to recognize their classroom sponsor.
- Local Ducks Unlimited chapters will receive Greenwing membership credit for classes sponsored.
- Our Ducks Unlimited Development team will assist with corporate and foundation sponsorships of $25,000 and above. (Note: DU only has 12 Directors of Development (DOD) nationwide.)
- If a volunteer has a desire to contact a corporation or foundation, such solicitations must be coordinated with our DODs. It is imperative that we coordinate these types of efforts with our Development team, so we do not have two individuals contacting the same corporation or foundation—which could result in embarrassing situations for our organization. Volunteers and staff will have much more success if they work together as a team.
There is great potential for attracting major donors interested in funding wetland education in the community of their choice. Youth and Education is part of the next Ducks Unlimited capital campaign. This initiative confirms Ducks Unlimited’s commitment to youth and the valuable role they will play in the future of our wetlands.

**Implementing Project Webfoot Through Our Volunteer Ranks**

Because Project Webfoot will be largely volunteer driven, the work of volunteers is critical to its success. This section serves as a detailed instructional for our volunteers in implementing this program in their states and local committees. As stated earlier, it is the hope of Ducks Unlimited and the Ducks Unlimited Youth and Education Committee that this program will serve as the Greenwing youth program for each state.

**State Greenwing Chair and Their Duties**

- The State Greenwing Chair is the Project Webfoot point of contact for each state and plays a key role in distributing information to the volunteers in their respective states.
- For states that do not have a State Greenwing Chair, we will ask the State Chair to deliver the information to volunteers. These states are encouraged to recruit an able volunteer in their state who has an interest in youth to implement the program.
- Each State Greenwing Chair will have a point of contact at DU National Headquarters and on the Youth & Education Committee.
- Once this packet is distributed to State Chairs and State Greenwing Chairs, a conference call per region will be held with these individuals to address any questions or concerns.
- State Greenwing Chairs and youth educators will have access to a special DU e-mail address to forward questions concerning the program.

**Timeline for Implementing Project Webfoot**

In order for a classroom to receive full benefit of the Webfoot kit, we are asking to receive enrollment forms (see form on page 14) no later than **September** of each school year. We will focus on an April through September sponsor drive with the hope that all classes are successfully enrolled by early fall, at the start of the new school year. For year-round schools, daycare centers, or other youth-oriented organizations, this request would not apply. Moreover, sponsorships that come in later in the school year will still be accommodated, provided the school and/or teacher targeted is interested in participating at that time. Sponsorships obtained after March 1, however, will have to be used to adopt a class for the coming fall school year.

**Suggestions for Distributing Project Webfoot Information to Volunteers**

- This handbook is designed to be easily copied, which should assist with distribution to volunteers. It is also provided in an electronic form to be e-mailed to volunteers (see enclosed CD).
• We would suggest that State Chairs and State Greenwing Chairs discuss how they will implement the program in their state once they receive this package. A good plan for your state will determine its success.

• One suggestion is to provide this handbook to all Area Chairs as an introduction to the program, asking them to appoint someone on their committee to review it—possibly the chapter’s Greenwing Chair or someone on the committee who may have an interest in youth. We would not suggest that the Area Chairs be tasked with implementing this program. Our Area Chairs have a huge responsibility overseeing grassroots fundraising within their respective chapters.

• Please remember that the State Greenwing Chair should be the point of contact for each state.

• Some states that are geographically large institute regional Greenwing Chairs. In this case, conference calls are a great way to plan a strategy for the program. Please see your Regional Director to assist with setting up conference calls if you do not already have an account set up for your state.

• Don’t forget state meetings, district meetings, state newsletters, and committee meetings as possible ways to introduce the program (see enclosed CD with PowerPoint presentations and state newsletter article).

Committees Receive Credit for Project Webfoot

The $300 Project Webfoot sponsorship provides a Greenwing membership for an average of 25 students. Committees will receive credit for the Greenwings enrolled through the classrooms sponsored. This has the potential to double some committees’ Greenwing memberships with very little effort! Likewise, it could also double a state’s Greenwing memberships!

Enrolling a Classroom

• If your sponsor has selected a particular school or school district, a designated volunteer should contact the school principal and introduce himself/herself as a volunteer for Ducks Unlimited.

• Inform them of our new program and of our partnership with Project WET. Most educators will be familiar with Project WET.

• Inform them that the WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands curriculum guide included in the package has been endorsed by the National Science Teachers Association. Tell them about all the other educational tools included in the package.

• Explain that this is a gift from Ducks Unlimited and the sponsor, and that their school or classroom has been chosen at the request of the sponsor.

• Inform them that each student will receive Puddler magazine, which can be used in the classroom or sent home with the child to be enjoyed by the whole family.

• The name(s) of teachers must be obtained for the enrollment form.

• The principal may refer you to the school district’s science coordinator, he may prefer you talk to the science teacher directly, or may say “Thank you, we look forward to receiving the package.” Each case may be different.

• If someone on the local committee has a contact at the school, the volunteer may want to involve them.
• Again, once Project Webfoot is a firmly established program it will become better known in the education world.

**Submitting Sponsorship and Enrollment Forms**

• Simply attach the check, money order, or credit card information along with the enrollment form and send them to Project Webfoot, c/o Ducks Unlimited, One Waterfowl Way, Memphis, Tennessee, 38120.

• If there are multiple classes being sponsored at the same school, be sure to list each teacher on the form.

• If there are multiple schools involved with a sponsorship, submit enrollment forms for each school with the appropriate teachers listed.

• Send all forms with the appropriate method of payment to DU.

• Don’t forget to enter the applicable chapter number on each form.

• Please make two copies of any enrollment form and payment submitted to DU. Retain a copy for your chapter’s records and send a copy to your Regional Director.

**Ducks Unlimited Web site**

The DU Web site will also serve as a resource to volunteers and teachers participating in the program. Project Webfoot has its own Web site, [www.projectwebfoot.org](http://www.projectwebfoot.org), which is linked to the DU and Greenwing sites. State Greenwing Chairs and teachers participating in Webfoot can forward inquiries and/or receive further information about the program by e-mailing info@projectwebfoot.org.

**Sharing Ideas and Successes**

Volunteers are encouraged to share success stories, testimonials, and new ideas with State Greenwing Chairs so that they may forward these to DU. As volunteers, you will be our field-test experts, and DU would like to hear from you.

**Frequently Asked Questions—PLEASE READ!!**

The following section is devoted to questions that may arise among volunteers. Please keep in mind that this is a brand-new program, and that there will be unforeseen questions and perhaps situations that DU has not encountered. These will be addressed as each situation arises. DU staff and the Youth and Education Committee members will do their best to resolve these issues in a timely manner and inform State Greenwing Chairs. There will no doubt be additions and corrections to this handbook after our first enrollment campaign is complete.
Q. **How will Project Webfoot Greenwing memberships be tracked?**

A. The enrollment form contains a space for a committee to enter its chapter number when submitting the form to DU NHQ. This will assist with crediting the Greenwing memberships to the deserving committee as well as with tracking how many students are enrolled in the program across the United States. A database will be set up at NHQ for tracking sponsors, classrooms, schools, Greenwing memberships, chapter credits, and other pertinent information.

Q. **Does our committee/volunteer have to provide the names of students to DU in order for them to receive Puddler?**

A. No. A Project Webfoot sponsorship provides Greenwing memberships for the entire class. Volunteers must obtain from the teacher the number of students per class, and the class is then enrolled as a unit. The database, for example, will list the name of the school and classroom/teacher, the number of students enrolled, but not the names of the individual students. Likewise, *Puddler* magazine will be bulk shipped to each school and not to individual students. The teacher will hand out copies of *Puddler* and the other Greenwing membership materials to the students. This is done for security reasons, as most schools do not give out the names and addresses of individual students.

Q. **Who should be approached first—sponsors or classrooms?**

A. Each case will be different. We would suggest that, in the beginning stages of this program, a chapter solicit sponsors first then contact educators. We would hate to get a teacher’s hopes up and then be unable to obtain a sponsor. Once this program is established, it is very likely that teachers will approach DU volunteers requesting Webfoot in their classrooms. In this case, we can approach a sponsor with the selling point that we already have a teacher at “ABC Elementary School” who wants the package in his/her classroom.

Q. **What if a school appears to be apprehensive about accepting Project Webfoot?**

A. Offer to e-mail the enclosed PowerPoint presentation, which explains the program and displays the contents of the package. You may also e-mail the program brochure and invite the teacher to visit the Webfoot Web site. In addition, you can provide contact information for the Project WET coordinator for your state, in case the teacher would like to speak to them as well.

Q. **What if a chapter acquires a sponsor, but does not designate a school?**

A. The enrollment form provides an option for the sponsor to allow DU to select a deserving school. The committee could select a school of their choice, or contact the State Greenwing Chair. Ducks Unlimited will be compiling a listing of teachers that contact our DU Web site expressing an interest in the Project Webfoot package. The committee and/or State Greenwing Chair could also contact the Project WET coordinator for a listing of teachers and/or schools that have gone through their hands-on training program. This would ensure that the school and teacher are already familiar with Project WET and would have an interest in wetland conservation.
Q. Can banquet fund-raising dollars be used to sponsor a classroom?

A. For the most part, banquet funds are not to be used to fund this program. A number of approved ideas for obtaining sponsors are included in this handbook (please see the Ideas for Acquiring Sponsors section). If you have any questions about the methods of obtaining sponsors and conforming to Ducks Unlimited’s policy and procedures, please contact your Regional Director.

Q. If an individual wants to sponsor a classroom outside the chapter area, will the chapter still receive credit for the Greenwing memberships?

A. Yes. You will include your chapter number on the enrollment form, and that chapter will receive credit for the appropriate number of classrooms. However, a committee volunteer will need to contact the designated school to coordinate the completion of the enrollment process.

Q. What if a sponsor designates a classroom or school that has already been sponsored?

A. Please contact that Sponsor and inform them of the situation, suggesting an alternative classroom for sponsorship.

Q. Our chapter would like to participate, but our community is small and our sponsor opportunities are limited.

A. Please see the Ideas for Acquiring Sponsors section of pages 16-17 this handbook for new ways of acquiring sponsorship for classes.
Volunteer Tools for Project Webfoot

The following pages contain tools that will assist volunteers in implementing Project Webfoot in their state. This entire handbook is contained as a pdf file in the enclosed CD. Each tool on the following pages is also contained on the CD as a separate file. It is hoped that this will assist with volunteer efforts in your state.

The following section contains:

- Project Webfoot Enrollment Form—to be used for enrolling classes into the program.
- Project Webfoot Program One-sheeter—a brief overview of the program that can be provided to potential sponsors, educators, members and volunteers.
- Ideas for Acquiring Sponsors.
- Sample Press Releases—for local newspapers to generate interest in the community. There is also an article that can be published in state newsletters.
- Sample Classroom Activity—an activity taken from The Project Webfoot Teacher’s Guide.
Classroom Enrollment Form

DU Chapter # (if applicable) __________________________

Sponsor Information

Name of sponsoring company/individual ____________________________________________
Contact name (if different from above) ____________________________________________
Street Address: ________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State _________________ Zip _______________
Phone number ( ) __________________________ Fax ( ) __________________________
E-mail: ____________________________________________________________________

Sponsorship Options

❑ 1 class $300    ❑ 2 classes $600    ❑ 3 classes $900    ❑ 4 classes $1200    Other __________

Sponsorship is to go to the following School/youth group

School Name/Community Group:
Teacher Name: ___________________________ Grade Level ____________________________
Teacher Name: ___________________________ Grade Level ____________________________
Teacher Name: ___________________________ Grade Level ____________________________
Teacher Name: ___________________________ Grade Level ____________________________
(if needed, please attach additional sheet containing teacher’s names)

Street Address: ________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State _________________ Zip _______________
Phone# __________________________

Sponsor wishes Ducks Unlimited to select a deserving class(es) and of their choice

Method of Payment

❑ MasterCard    ❑ Visa    ❑ Check (Made payable to Ducks Unlimited)
Credit Card # ___________________________ Exp Date ____________________________
Signature ________________________________________________________________

Please send this form and payment to: Project Webfoot
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
One Waterfowl Way
Memphis, TN 38120

Project Webfoot . . . Bringing Wetlands Education to Life
Project Webfoot is an education outreach program and curriculum created by Ducks Unlimited to bring wetland education to 4th through 6th grade students. Your support of this program in your community will help to develop young people who are committed to wetland conservation now and in the future.

Project Webfoot educational package contains the following for the teacher:

- **America’s Wetlands: Guide to Plants and Animals**
- "Ducks, Geese and Swans, of North America," an interactive CD for the teacher and students
- **Project Webfoot Activity Book**
- Wetland Values poster and booklet
- A Read-Aloud Wetlands Booklist
- Wetlands Fact Sheet
- A frameable certificate showing the classroom’s participation in Project Webfoot

The package provides the following amenities for the students:

- A one-year subscription to *Puddler* magazine for 25 students per class
- Greenwing membership certificate
- Pocket Waterfowl ID guide
- A sticker collection

The cost of sponsorship to provide Project Webfoot to a classroom in your community or to a community of your choice is $300. The sponsor will receive a certificate suitable for framing in the office or home. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please fill out the information on the attached form and present it to a Ducks Unlimited committee volunteer.

*Together … Let Us Bring Wetlands Education to Life!*
Ideas for Acquiring Sponsors

Following are several ideas for obtaining sponsorships in your local community. You are encouraged to use your creativity and entrepreneurial spirit to expand on these and to provide feedback to DU on which methods work best.

**Businesses**

- Local businesses such as restaurants, delicatessens, car dealerships, realtors, public utilities, banks or credit unions, department stores, and other retail outlets are great places to start when seeking sponsorships. However, be careful not to approach sponsors that are already donating to the annual DU dinner banquet, as you won’t want to cannibalize that revenue source.
- Larger retail outlets like Wal-Mart and Sam’s Club offer community grants. Wal-Mart has several grants: Matching Grant Program (max $1000), Bonus Matching Grant Program (Max $1000), Earth Day Grant ($500 on Apr 22), Make a Difference Day (Max $500 in October). And Sam’s Club offers grants of up to $1,000 for programs in the immediate community.
- Several businesses in a given community may pitch in on one sponsorship as well, but try to initially encourage each business to sponsor a classroom on their own.
- If a business cannot make a donation directly, ask them if you could put donation boxes at their registers to collect customer donations.

**Clubs and Groups**

- Local sportsman’s clubs or organizations may also provide support for Webfoot—but, again, make certain the local committee does not already target these groups. You may ask clubs to solicit small donations at a club event and use those collectively to sponsor a class. Likewise, you might encourage a local shooting facility (sporting clays, 3-D archery, skeet, trap, etc.) to solicit a $2.00 donation from their patrons to sponsor a class.
- Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H clubs might be encouraged to find a sponsor, match him or her with a classroom and oversee the implementation of the program.
- Current college fraternity or sorority members might also be encouraged to find sponsors or to take up a collection and sponsor a class themselves. These groups may be contacted directly on a local basis or through their national committees.
- Also, many “baby boomers” are having school/neighborhood/fraternity reunions; volunteers attending such events might encourage the participants to pass the hat and sponsor a class in their name.
- Parents of children attending summer day care centers may want to sponsor their 4th through 6th graders in the Webfoot program.

**Committees and Events**

- Challenge your local chapter to come up with a sponsor for at least one class.
- DU committee members may pass the hat around at a committee meeting to sponsor a class in their community.
• Project Webfoot brochures and applications can be placed on tables at dinner banquets to provide information about the program to potential partners and volunteers.
• Committees may choose to auction off a Wetland Willy Teddy Bear or similar item at their dinner banquet to sponsor a classroom.
• DU committee or local outdoor club might hold a basketball or softball game against the local teachers as a fundraiser.

Wildlife Refuges
• National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs) often have educational outreach programs and may be interested in sponsoring a classroom in their local community. Many NWRs also have a Friends of the Refuge organization that may also be able to offer suggestions.
LOCAL STUDENTS JUMP FEET FIRST INTO WETLANDS EDUCATION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEMPHIS, September 10—In Mrs. Smith’s 4th-grade classroom at Springfield Elementary School the topic this week was “The Importance of Wetlands” and there wasn’t a dry...um, foot in the class.

Not literally, of course. Her students haven’t gone out and gotten their feet wet in a nearby marsh or swamp—at least not yet. But they have become immersed in a new Ducks Unlimited program called Project Webfoot, which offers teachers exciting learning materials that are designed to bring the world of wetlands to life for their students.

“When I got the Project Webfoot kit, I couldn’t believe how well it meshed with our curriculum requirements,” said Mrs. Smith. “I was bowled over. And you should have seen the look on the kids’ faces when they got their Greenwing memberships, *Puddler* magazine, and other items.”

Created by Ducks Unlimited, Project Webfoot is a grassroots, volunteer-driven program that operates through a web of local support to raise awareness and appreciation of wetlands among 4th through 6th grade students. Funds are raised locally to enroll classrooms in the local community. The enrollment cost is $300 per classroom. And that covers the cost of all the educational materials as well as the cost of providing DU youth—i.e., Greenwing—memberships to each student in the classroom.

Mrs. Smith said she will use the materials to teach art, language, and science. In fact, she said she plans on combining the first two subjects by having her students draw pictures of wetland animals and compose thank-you notes to their local sponsor. “I really can’t thank him enough,” she said. “This is a great program that will teach, inspire, and impassion these kids to really care about these special places.”

For more information about Project Webfoot, visit their Web site at www.projectwebfoot.org or call 800-45-DUCKS.
LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORTS WETLANDS EDUCATION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EVANSVILLE, September 10—Thanks to the generosity of Thomas Shelde, of Shelde’s Cleaners, students in Mrs. Becker’s 5th-grade classroom at Garfield Elementary School are discovering the wonders of wetlands.

By sponsoring a classroom in Ducks Unlimited’s new education program, Project Webfoot, Mr. Shelbe is helping students learn that wetlands are among the earth’s most productive and valuable ecosystems. Mrs. Becker’s students are also learning that wetlands are among the most fragile, threatened places on the planet. But most important, they are becoming empowered by the realization that they can do something to conserve these special places.

Created by Ducks Unlimited, Project Webfoot is a grassroots, volunteer-driven initiative that operates through a web of local support to raise awareness and appreciation of wetlands among 4th through 6th grade students. Funds are raised locally to enroll classrooms in the local community. The enrollment cost is $300 per classroom. That covers the cost of the Project Webfoot kit, which contains most extensive curriculum materials available on wetlands and wetland conservation. It also covers the cost of providing DU Greenwing youth memberships to each student in the classroom.

“It’s a modest sum when you consider how much good it’s doing,” Mr. Shelde said when asked about his contribution. “These young people are our future. I want them to have every tool possible to make the right decisions about the environment they will inherit.”

For more information about Project Webfoot, visit their Web site at www.projectwebfoot.org or call 800-45-DUCKS.
Lesson seven

Water, water everywhere...but where, oh where, is air?

Oxygen is of great importance to most living things, both in its use and its production. Terrestrial organisms (those living on land) possess lungs, sponge-like bags that are heavily filled with capillaries for gas exchange. The lung works much like a sponge, soaking up large quantities of air, absorbing oxygen and expelling carbon dioxide. With the atmosphere composed of 21 percent oxygen, it is easily procured. Aquatic organisms, on the other hand, must employ other means to procure necessary oxygen. Though it is not immediately apparent, oxygen is present in water as dissolved particles (oxygen and other gases do dissolve in liquids such as water). Because of the largely reduced amount of oxygen available, different methods are required and generally involve organs located outside or close to the outside of the organisms’ bodies. These organs function by enabling a great deal of water flow over their blood-filled surfaces so that oxygen may diffuse into the blood cells and carbon dioxide may diffuse back into the water. The blood then carries the oxygen to other body tissues via the circulatory system.

Curriculum Alignment
Recognize that some aquatic animals use oxygen from air, others from water. Identify examples and adaptations of each.

Materials
Sponges, paper towels, plastic wrap, other materials to test for absorbency, plastic tubs, water and a balance (triple beam or equal arm).

Activity Description
1. Introduce lesson by asking students:
   • What would happen if all the oxygen on earth suddenly disappeared?

   • Do all organisms require oxygen to live? What is oxygen used for? Give examples of organisms that do not need oxygen to live (e.g., anaerobic bacteria).

   • Why do most living things need oxygen?

   • Ask students to think about plants, then briefly explain how plants absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen during the photosynthetic process. Plants are important in supplying the oxygen needed by other living things.

2. Display the following question on a blackboard, chart paper or overhead projector:
   • What behaviors and structures do animals use to increase the amount of oxygen they absorb?

Students may list ideas such as breathing harder or faster, using lungs filled with tiny sacs (alveoli), constant motion to increase the amount of oxygen passing over the gills (sharks and rays) or constantly pumping water by the gills using gill covers (the operculum in most fish).
Sample Activity from *Project Webfoot Teacher’s Guide*

Lesson seven continued

3. Explain to students that they are going to conduct tests to identify a material and a procedure to absorb water in ways that demonstrate similar methods of taking in oxygen. Explain that they are using water rather than oxygen because it is easier to observe changes in quantities of water through weighing.

**Challenge students to:**
- Discover a material and a method that would absorb the greatest possible amount of water.

**Guidelines:**
- The material used must allow water to escape from it in any position in which it is held.
- Students will be limited to 15 seconds to absorb water with the material and procedure(s) of choice.
- The material must be held freely in the air until the water escaping from it is reduced to slow dripping.
- A written procedure must be provided before students are permitted to submit their idea for final testing. See the sample (diagram 7.1) below.
- The material and procedure which retains the greatest amount of water compared to the material’s weight will be considered to be the most absorbent.

**SAMPLE EXPERIMENT**

**Material**
Five sheets of paper towel.

**Procedure**
- Stack the towels up to form a pad of towels five thick. Weigh the towels.
- Submerge the paper towel pad in water and drag it slowly around under the water.
- Gently squeeze the pad of towels and open it once more, dragging it through the water.
- Carefully lift the towels from the water by holding onto two corners of the pad.
- Finally, allow the pad to drain until it drips slowly, and weigh again.

The experiment can be repeated using a variety of other materials like sponges, plastic wrap, glass, wood, etc.
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