



## FIELDWORK: WETLAND PLANT DETECTIVES

*based on the W.O. W! lesson "This Plant Key is All Wet!"*

### Summary

Students follow a scavenger hunt map through the reserve, learning to classify and identify wetland plants by type, using wetland plant wheels created by Pajaro Valley High School mentors.

### Objectives:

Students will:

- Name at least three different types of plants
- Know how to use a key to identify different plants
- Know some vocabulary used in plant identification

### California Content Standards Addressed

Grade Six - *Science content 5.c*: "Students know populations of organisms can be categorized by the functions they serve in an ecosystem."

Grade Six - *Science investigation and experimentation 7h*: "Identify changes in natural phenomena over time without manipulating the phenomena."

Grade Seven - *Science content 3.1*: "Students know both genetic variation and environmental factors are causes of evolution and the diversity of organisms."

### Outline

*There are four pieces to this lesson:*

- 1) Introduction (15 minutes)
- 2) Scavenger hunt in Reserve (45 minutes, including the walk back and forth to the classroom)
- 3) Journal prompt (10 minutes)
- 4) Closing circle (5 minutes)

## Vocabulary

shrub, grass, emergent, forb

## Background Material

The first step in identifying a plant is to figure out what type of plant it is. Trees, vines, and grasses are a few different types of plants you may already know. Here are some of the different types of plants we try to identify in the wetlands:

**Shrubs:** Like trees, shrubs have woody, rigid stems and grow above the ground, but they have more than one main stem.

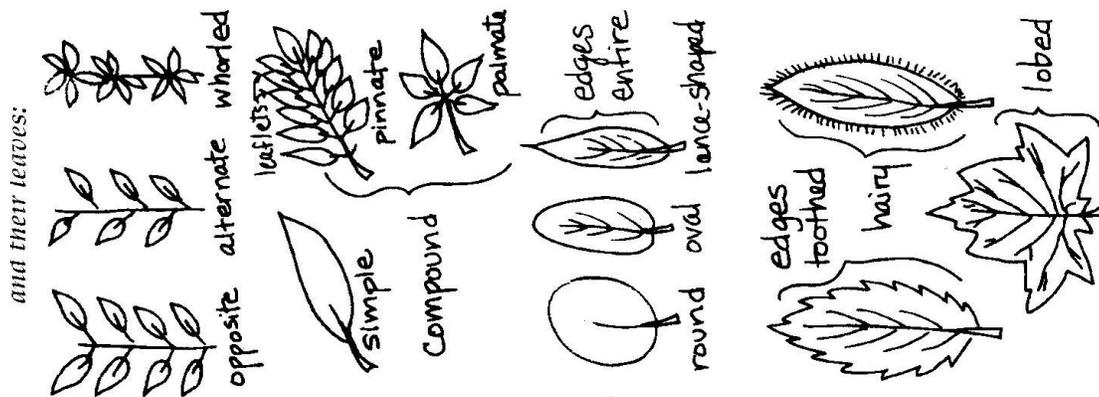
**Grass:** grass is a soft, non-woody (also called **herbaceous**) plant with slender, flat leaves and a round stem

**Emergent:** emergent plants are also herbaceous, and they grow with their roots and part of the stem under water, but most of the plant is visible above the surface.

**Forb:** a forb is a small herbaceous plant with wide leaves that is not a grass.

Scientists also examine the leaves of a plant for clues about what it is.

Here is a drawing of some of the different features of plants and their leaves:



## Procedure

### 1) Introduction (10 minutes)

Gather students in a group to discuss vocabulary and learn how to use plant wheels

**2) Plant Detectives Scavenger hunt** (45 minutes, including a 10-minute walk each way to the Reserve)

**3) Journal Prompt (10 minutes)**

- Give each student his or her science notebook, clipboard, and pencil or colored pencils along with Journal Prompt 11 (Appendix B).

**4) Closing circle (5 minutes)**

- Pass a leaf around the circle and ask each student to name the favorite thing they did today.

#### **Extensions**

- ✓ Hands-on WERC restoration project

#### **Appendices**

*Appendix A: WERC Field Identification Worksheet - page 4*

*Appendix B: Journal Prompt - page 5*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

At each point on the map, you will find a large group of one type of plant. See if you can figure out which plants these are by using your plant wheel and Plant Guide.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

9 \_\_\_\_\_

10 \_\_\_\_\_

11 \_\_\_\_\_

12 \_\_\_\_\_



WETLAND PLANT DETECTIVES

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_