

Delta Swamp Web of Life Teacher Sheet

Complete the food web on the student page using the clues and filling in each box with the correct entry. The animals highlighted in **bold** can be found in the Delta Swamp Gallery at the Tennessee Aquarium. The students may need to follow their observations with research in the classroom or at home to complete the web. For every animal they find, place an “X” next to its name on the **Web of Life Cast**. The students should not expect to see a feeding frenzy when they visit the Delta Swamp; we feed all our animals, minimizing the feeding that would occur in the real world. *You don’t have to actually visit the Delta Swamp to complete the web –tell the students to use the **Web of Life Clues** and their thinking skills!*

Web of Life Cast

alligator	carp	gray rat snake	opossum	river cooter
alligator snapping turtle	chicken turtle	human	plants	shiner
box turtle	crayfish	insects	purple gallinule	slider
bullfrog	field mouse	mosquitofish	red shoulder hawk	sunfish
				wood duck

Web of Life Clues

1. These living things use energy from the sun to make food and form the base of this web.
2. Some of these feed upon each other while others chow down on Box #1.
3. From a distance, this creature looks like a miniature lobster.
4. This small mammal relies on keen hearing and speed to “squeak” by predators.
5. One of the reptiles in this web is quite the herbivore. Which one?
6. No, it doesn’t have a black eye but when sunlight hits the scales, you’ll notice it!
7. Representing the omnivores, this reptile is definitely a landlubber.
8. When you’re not choosy about what you eat, you can be a big fish in a small swamp.
9. Have you ever heard of an amphibian named Jeremiah?
10. Although this fish has a fondness for a certain type of food, it really isn’t that picky.
11. You’d strut around too if you had this for plumage.
12. Watch where you’re going; you may “quack” up.
13. Some reptiles are omnivores; with a name like this, the food must just ease on down.
14. And then this reptile enjoys the carnivore reputation; its name includes the prey.
15. This fish can be quite fierce, especially when defending its nest.
16. An omnivorous marsupial, this critter ambles around searching for food.
17. This carnivore enjoys warm updrafts, especially when searching for prey.
18. Its prey wouldn’t call this reptilian carnivore by its name, or else...
19. Near the top of the food web, this carnivore pretty much eats what it wants to.
20. Also near the top of the food web, this reptile likes to lure its prey in for a meal.
21. Another top of the food web critter, this mammal qualifies as a definite omnivore.

For an additional class activity, assign one of the web of life animals to each student in your class. If you have more students, have additional prey available or add some more animals that might frequent a delta swamp. Have everyone sit in a circle and then, using a ball of twine, try connecting everyone by passing the twine from “person” to “person” and reproduce the web of life. When everyone is connected, have each student pull the twine taut and feel the connection of everything. Then, try eliminating one or more of the links and see what happens to the web. For online examples of this activity, try <http://www.cpawscalgary.org/education/free-resources/wetland-web.html> and <http://www.vtaide.com/png/foodchains.htm>. Also, check out “Web of Life” in *Project Learning Tree*, pp. 148-152. American Forest Foundation, 2000; <http://www.plt.org>. Questions? Call George Bartnik at (800) 262-0695, ext. 4049 or email him at gpb@tnaqua.org.