



Alaskans for Palmer Hay Flats

## Animal Homes at Reflections Lake

### Before you go:

- **Visit** websites:
  - Section 1 from “Alaska’s Wetlands and Wildlife”  
[https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/education/educators/curricula/alaskawildlifecurriculum/pdfs/alaskas\\_wetlands\\_wildlife\\_curriculum.pdf](https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/education/educators/curricula/alaskawildlifecurriculum/pdfs/alaskas_wetlands_wildlife_curriculum.pdf)
  - Alaska Department of Fish & Game: Habitats <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=lands.main>
- **Watch** videos:
  - WetlandsLIVE: Discover Wetlands: <https://youtu.be/JveJX9jGq0Q>
  - WetlandsLIVE: Students explore wetlands <https://youtu.be/wrsfhqBsDhs>
- Understand the 4 necessary components of an animal habitat: food, shelter from weather and predators, water, and a place to raise their young.

### Gather your tools:

- Binoculars and or Magnifying glass
- Field Notebook and Pencil
- Optional: Camera/video recorder



### At the Palmer Hay Flats:

1. Look at the habitat and the season. Think about what types of creatures you may expect to see.
  - Look for signs of animals adapting the environment to create shelter, for example bird nests, rodent burrows, moose beds, beaver dams, insect holes, and so on. Discuss aspects that would be important in creating each shelter, like protection from temperature, wind, rain, snow, and other animals.
  - Find at least 3 ways humans have adapted the environment at Reflections Lake to meet their needs.
2. Students can work together to create a shelter that would be big enough for one of them to sleep in, or they could build a miniature shelter if it is just one or two students. Explain that they must not break branches from trees, but rather find materials that have already fallen. Help guide them towards useful structure designs like a teepee or a lean-to.
  - Once the shelter is finished, do a wind test by gently shaking the shelter, and a rain test by spraying some water onto the shelter and seeing how much water gets through.
  - Discussion questions: Was it hard making the shelter? How long would it have taken if you were making it by yourself/full size? How long do you think it takes for animals to make shelters? Now that we’ve made this shelter, how can we leave no trace that we were here?
  - Take apart your shelter and try to make it look like as if you were never there.
3. Write notes or sketch your discoveries. Take photos and videos if you like.

### After your Wetlands experience:

Share your learning with others. Post photos on public media, tell your friends and relatives what you saw, what you felt, what you heard, and what you could smell. Tell them which habitats you saw and how they looked. Show them your notes and sketches.

Make a plan for when you will go to the wetlands again.