



**LAKEHEAD REGION**  
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

## ECOSYSTEMS PROGRAM

### *Explore Ecosystems at the Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area*

Students explore and compare three unique ecosystems: the forest, the meadow and the wetland. This program ideally incorporates a hike at Mission Island Marsh. Outdoor Active Games are included. The students use observing and active exploration to determine the unique flora and fauna in the three ecosystems. They explore trophic levels to create a visual list of the creatures found in each ecosystem. The students take away their observations to later create Food Chains and Food Webs upon their return to school.

The activities can be focused towards a single ecosystem in some cases; such as a study of Food Chains in the field ecosystem with grade 4's or Wetland Creatures such as Arthropods with grade 6 students.



*The Forest Floor develops rich soils largely due to the work of decomposers*



*Active Exploration in the Meadow looking for producers, consumers and decomposers.*



*Forest Food Web– Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area offers forest, wetland and field or meadow ecosystems.*



*Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area*

## **Grade 4– Habitats**

The “Big Ideas” Grade 4: Plants and animals are interdependent and are adapted to meet their needs from the resources available in their particular habitats. This trip focuses on the wetland and shoreline habitats of the birds.

**2.2** build food chains consisting of different plants and animals.

**2.3** use scientific inquiry/research skills to investigate ways in which plants and animals in a community depend on features of their habitat to meet important needs.

**3.5** classify organisms, including humans, according to their role in a food chain.

**3.7** describe structural adaptations that allow plants and animals to survive in specific habitats.

## **Grade 6– Biodiversity**

*Biodiversity includes diversity of individuals, species, and ecosystems.*

**2.2** investigate the organisms found in a specific habitat and classify them according to a classification system

**2.3** use scientific inquiry/research skills compare the characteristics of organisms within the plant or animal kingdoms

**3.1** identify and describe the distinguishing characteristics of different groups of plants and animals (*e.g., invertebrates have no spinal column; insects have three basic body parts;*

and use these characteristics to further classify various kinds of plants and animals (*e.g., invertebrates– arthropods – insects; vertebrates –mammals – primates; seed plants – flowering plants – grasses*)

## **Grade 7– Ecosystems**

*Ecosystems are made up of biotic (living) and abiotic (non-living) elements, which depend on each other to survive.*

**3.1** demonstrate an understanding of an ecosystem

**3.2** identify biotic and abiotic elements in an ecosystem, and describe the interactions between them

**3.3** describe the roles and interactions of producers, consumers, and decomposers within an ecosystem

**3.4** describe the transfer of energy in a food chain and explain the effects of the elimination of any part of the chain

**3.5** describe how matter is cycled within the environment

**3.7** explain why an ecosystem is limited the

number of living things (***e.g., plants and animals,***

***including humans***) that it can support and explain how it promotes sustainability