

Wetland Ecosystems

Vocabulary

Algae – marine or freshwater plants that are single-celled, colonial, or multi-celled, with chlorophyll but no true roots, stems, leaves, flowers, or seeds

Amphipods – small shrimp-like crustaceans

Bog (Muskeg) – a type of wetland dominated by moss, characterized by low nutrient and oxygen availability, high acidity and peat accumulation

Ecosystem – a community of interrelated organisms and their environment

Emergent – plants which live partly in and partly out of the water

Fen – a type of wetland characterized by a high water table with slow internal drainage by seepage down low gradients, dominated by sedges

Filter feeder – a way that some animals sort out and eat very small plants and animals from the water

Food Chain – a sequence of organisms in which each is food for the next organism

Food Web – all the feeding relationships of a community taken together; includes producers, consumers, decomposers, and the flow of energy

Habitat – the place where an organism lives

Invertebrate – an organism without a backbone

Kettle – a specific type of wetland in the rolling hills on the prairies created by glaciers

Larva – a worm-like stage of development in an incomplete life cycle, after the egg and before the pupa and adult

Marsh (or slough) – a depression filled with plants and open water; rich in nutrients and characterized by an emergent vegetation of reeds, rushes, cattails and sedges; they are the most productive wetlands habitat

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Moraine – a landform created when material was pushed up by a glacier into distinct landforms

Nymph – The immature stage of an organism that hatch from eggs and gradually acquire adult form through a series of molts without passing through a pupal stage, part of the incomplete metamorphosis

Peat – the dead remains of partly rotted plants that have piled up in deep layers over many years

Pond – an open water wetland; can be seasonal or permanent

Sedge – grass-like plants with long narrow leaves and three-sided stems,

Submergent – plants which grow entirely underwater

Swamp – a wetland dominated by shrubs or trees, may be flooded seasonally or for long periods of time

Slough– a type of marsh lying in a depression, surrounded by dry land (prairie); they vary in size from a few metres across up to a few kilometers.