Activity 3
Wetlands and Water Quality Definitions

The vocabulary from Activity 1 on the scientific method is important for all your science lessons. Review the Activity 1 vocabulary, with emphasis on the words *classify, dependent variable, hypothesis, independent variable, inference, quantitative data, repeated trials,* and *replication*.

Amphibian – Vertebrates such as frogs, toads, and salamanders that begin life as aquatic larvae having gills and metamorphose into adults having lungs.

Aquatic biologist – A scientist who studies plants and animals that live in water.

Blackwater stream – A flowing body of water that contains harmless "tea colored" chemicals called tannins that come from the decomposition of leaves.

Carolina bay – A special type of shallow wetland that is mostly filled by rain and is primarily found on the Coastal Plain of the Carolinas.

Colorimetric – A method of testing a substance based on a measurable change in color when an indicator is added.

Community – Different species of plants and animals living in the same ecosystem.

Concentration – The ratio of the amount of one substance to another in a mixture or solution; example—the *concentration* of *dissolved oxygen* in the water sample was 8 milligrams of oxygen per 1 liter of water, or 8mg/L.

Dissolved oxygen – Amount of gaseous oxygen actually present (dissolved) in water.

Ecosystem – A specific geographic region characterized by the local landforms, the various plants and animals that live there, and the prevailing climatic conditions such as temperature and rainfall.

Environment – The physical conditions that influence the growth and development of an organism.

Habitat – The environment in which an animal or a plant lives or grows.

Hydroperiod – The amount of time that a wetland is either dry or wet.

Landforms – Regions or areas that are characterized by the presence or absence of certain features, such as forests, wetlands, deserts, mountains, and prairies.

Life cycle – Different stages of development that organisms pass through as they mature from egg to juvenile to adult.

Metamorphosis – The process in which an organism transforms from a young (often larval) form into an adult form, like a tadpole transforms into a frog or a caterpillar into a moth.

Nutrients – Substances used by plants and animals to help them grow and develop.

pH – A number between 0 and 14 on a scale used to indicate the acidity of a water sample.

Pollutant – Human-made waste or chemicals that are released into the natural environment.

ppm – Abbreviation for "parts per million," a measure of the concentration of a pollutant.

Resources – Materials needed by living organisms to survive.

Volume – A measurement of the space that an object occupies.

Water quality – The physical, chemical, and biological properties of water; variables that are measured to determine the condition of a water body.

Wetland – An area of land that is sometimes wet and sometimes dry, and is home to plants and animals that are adapted to this unique environment (Examples—creeks, marshes, floodplains, Carolina bays, and ponds).

Zooplankton – Microscopic aquatic animals.