

Activity 3: Wildlife Inventory

Tasks Record direct and indirect observations of wetland wildlife.

Materials Field guides *, collection containers, wildlife data sheet, base map

* Refer also to Chapter II for a reference list of the wetland wildlife you might expect to find in your wetland.

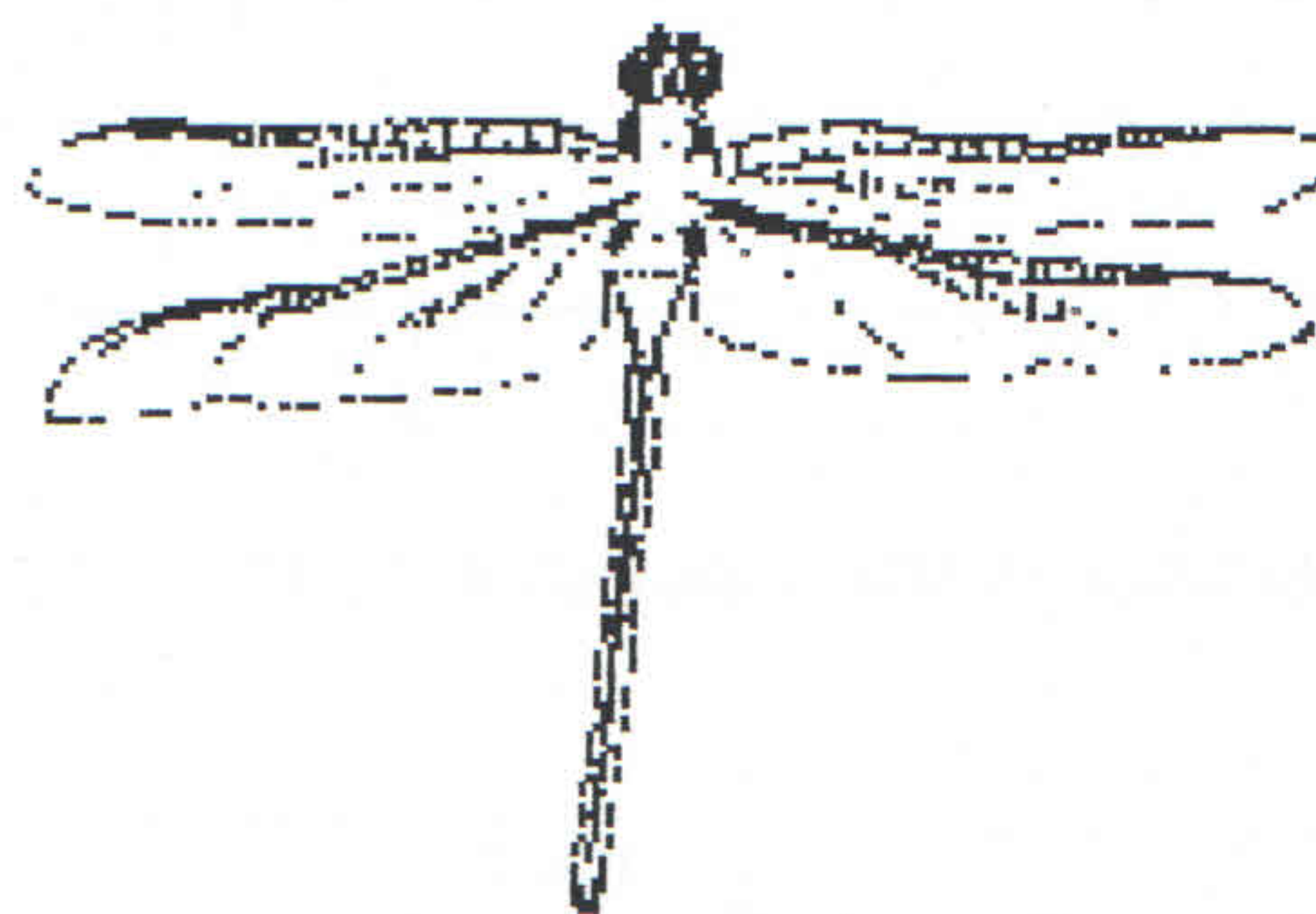
- Procedure**
1. Equip as many people in your group as possible with field guides to help you identify birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, fish, and insects.
 2. Begin your approach to the wetland area quietly to avoid scaring away wildlife.
 3. Walk through the wetland and along its borders and look for signs of animal life. You will probably find less *direct* evidence of wildlife (*seeing* the beaver, woodpecker or vole) than *indirect* evidence (burrows in the ground, the tap-tap-tap sound on a tree, animal excrement called *scat*, remnants of a beaver dam, animal tracks, etc.).
 4. If there is standing water on your site, look for insects, fish, and other aquatic organisms.
 5. On the worksheet, list every organism or indirect evidence you observe and mark its location on the base map.
 6. If you collect any specimens for study, be sure to pick them up with *wet* hands and include a piece of their habitat (e.g., bark, floating plants) with them in your collection container until you are ready to return them.

Making Observations

- What color is the specimen? What is its shape and size? Where specifically did you find it (in the water, under a rock or log)? How does it move? How does it breathe?
- Think about the role, or niche, of each organism in the wetland – is it a predator, is it prey, or is it both?
- Why is the animal found here? Is there any particular reason why it depends on a wetland for habitat?
- Why are food chains important?
- List at least three characteristics of a wetland habitat.



greenhead fly



dragonfly

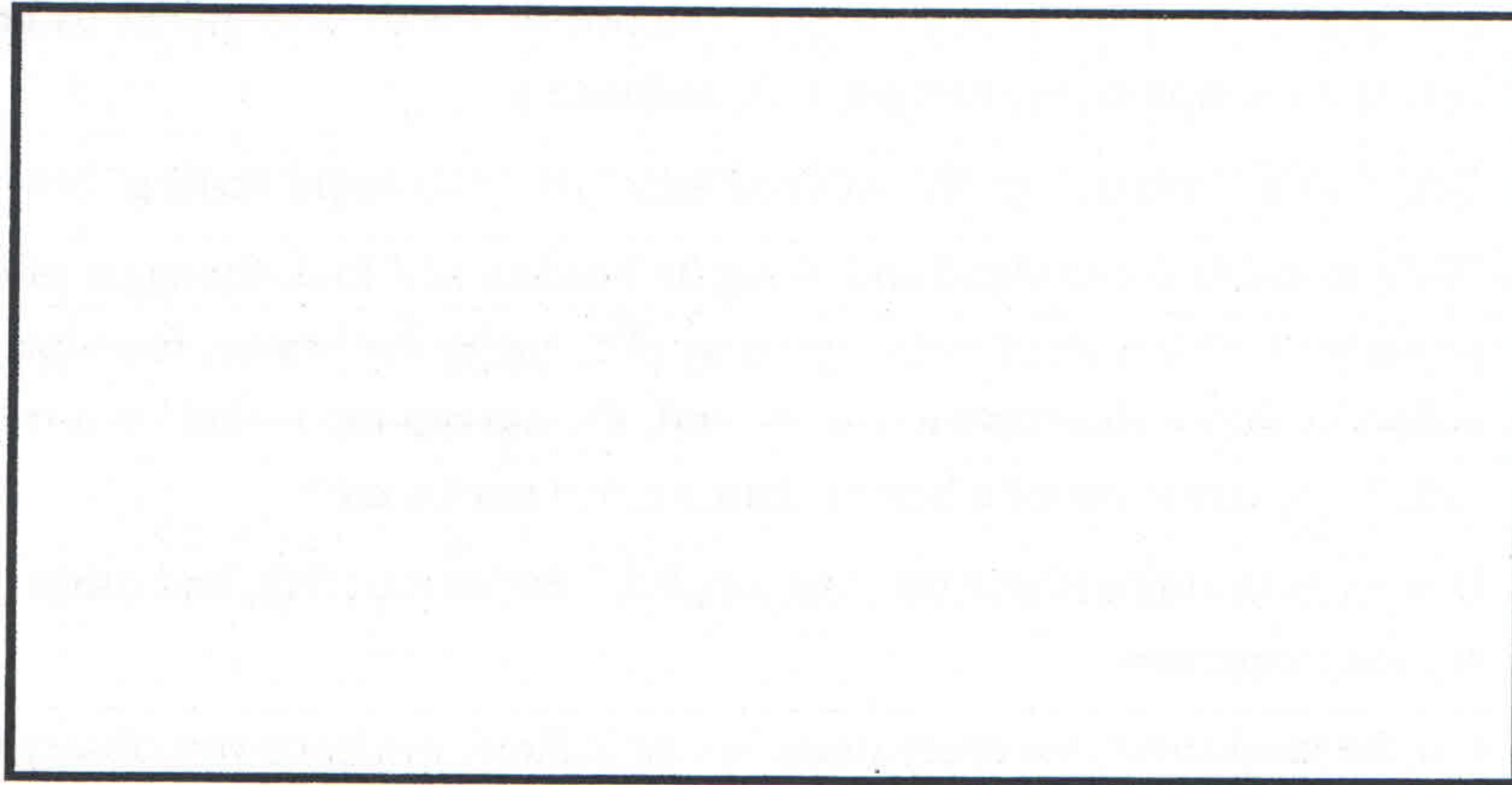
Wildlife Data Sheet

Name _____

Physical characteristics _____

Where found _____

Drawing:



What it might eat (prey) _____

What might eat it (predator) _____

Other observations _____

Back in class, use a field guide and try to identify one organism in each feeding level that you'd find in a wetland:

producer _____

herbivore _____

carnivore _____

omnivore _____

scavenger _____

parasite _____

Using any of the organisms above, construct a wetlands food web:

