

A Salt Marsh Story & Word Search



Read a short story about the Salt Marsh and complete a word search highlighting important species and vocabulary words.



Around the edge of the San Francisco Bay, there is a special place in the estuary, called a Salt Marsh, where land and water meet. The Salt Marsh is home to many different plants and animals. Those plant and animal species rely on the ecosystem for food, water, and shelter, everything that they need to survive. These native species love living in the Salt Marsh.



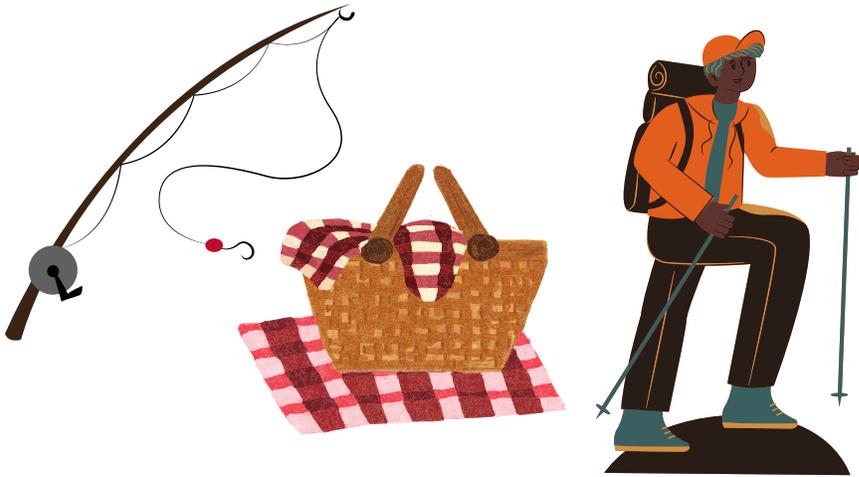
The Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse said, "I love my habitat in the Salt Marsh. That's where I find pickleweed, it's so yummy to eat and I can make my home out of it!"



The Great Blue Heron and the ducks said, "We like swimming in the slough because we make our nests out of the Tule plant that grows there."



The Alkali Heath plant joined in and said, "I love the Salt Marsh because I like salt and can grow in soil and water that has the perfect salinity for me."



The people said, "We love coming to the wetland to visit the plants and animals, especially the keystone species we see. We come hike the trails, bicycle, fish, or have a picnic."



The Snowy Egret and the Least Tern said, "We like when the water level goes down because we can explore the exposed mudflat to find food in the muddy sediment."



But one day, the animals and plants started to notice some new species growing in the Salt Marsh.

The Spartina and the Ice Plant said, "Hello, we also like the marsh and we are going to live here with you."



Sadly, the new species were very good at adaptation in their new surroundings and grew very quickly. Soon, they started to take over the Salt Marsh and didn't leave room for the native species.

The Pacific cordgrass said, "I don't have enough room to grow now because the invasive species grow much faster than me."



The California Ridgway's Rail said, I am an endangered species, and I have trouble finding food now because the Spartina blocks the paths I used to take."



Even the Red-tailed Hawk was worried, and said, "I have trouble hunting now because the vegetation is too thick for me to find prey."



Soon the people came back to enjoy the marsh, and they noticed how the changes were hurting the native species and were a threat to the marsh's health and biodiversity. So the next day, they came back with all of their friends and helped remove the Ice Plant and the Spartina so that the native plants and animals could grow freely and enjoy their Salt Marsh home.



The plants and animals were so thankful that someone was looking out for them and wanted to help with the conservation of the marsh. The Salt Marsh was healthy once again, and the people continued to protect the wetlands so that everyone could enjoy them.



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Find the underlined words from the story, in the puzzle below. The words may go forward or down. Circle each one when you find it.



L	S	X	Q	H	T	I	D	A	L	H	H	F	N	X	Z	Z	D	I	H
L	P	A	L	K	A	L	I	H	E	A	T	H	F	S	U	M	A	I	X
I	E	W	F	Y	H	C	G	H	N	B	I	P	U	E	H	M	Q	Q	K
O	C	M	H	D	U	C	K	S	F	I	C	O	R	D	G	R	A	S	S
V	I	K	R	Z	V	E	G	R	E	T	P	C	E	I	V	R	C	E	A
V	E	G	E	T	A	T	I	O	N	A	D	O	C	M	V	I	W	G	L
I	S	D	N	M	C	X	G	I	H	T	V	N	P	E	K	D	Y	M	T
K	W	Q	N	C	N	A	T	I	V	E	D	S	V	N	E	G	I	Z	M
L	V	K	G	B	W	E	T	L	A	N	D	E	X	T	Y	W	H	S	A
Q	G	R	E	A	T	B	L	U	E	H	E	R	O	N	S	A	A	D	R
M	N	I	G	Y	G	V	O	E	Q	G	L	V	P	P	T	Y	R	T	S
B	I	O	D	I	V	E	R	S	I	T	Y	A	Y	Z	O	S	V	U	H
R	K	P	I	C	K	L	E	W	E	E	D	T	M	A	N	R	E	L	S
L	W	Y	C	Y	A	D	A	P	T	A	T	I	O	N	E	A	S	E	P
E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	F	I	A	O	B	K	J	I	T	K	A
H	X	R	M	U	D	F	L	A	T	S	J	N	K	T	F	L	M	I	R
A	F	P	T	T	I	N	V	A	S	I	V	E	X	R	L	R	O	T	T
W	K	P	K	S	L	O	U	G	H	E	S	T	U	A	R	Y	U	E	I
K	N	I	V	O	M	E	S	A	L	I	N	I	T	Y	F	M	S	R	N
E	N	D	A	N	G	E	R	E	D	V	R	C	Z	F	J	T	E	N	A

