

Wetland Wonderland Webisode Narrative Description

[Jenny and Connor riding their bikes along a rough path in the woods]

Jenny: Hey! Look out!

Connor: Whoa!

[Connor stands up, high deep in swampy water]

Jenny: Are you okay?

Connor: Who put this stupid swamp here anyway?

[Jenny takes out her video camera and begins to film a soggy, not too happy looking Connor]

Jenny: Not me. The great eastern mud belly is mostly comfortable in wetland areas.

Connor: Nothing could be comfortable here. It's a swamp.

[Connor climbs out of the swampy water]

Jenny: The mud belly is a grouchy creature.

[Hinterland Who's WhoTube Intro featuring images of Jenny and Connor riding their bikes through the woods, a hawk flying across the sky, and various images of Jenny, Connor, and Jody observing and interacting with different forms of wildlife, including a butterfly, racoon, salamander, otter, and a snake]

[Wetland Wonderland title animation]

[Jenny observing Jody cleaning a tank as Connor approaches]

Jenny: Hey, would you look at that? He cleans up pretty well.

Connor: Nice.

Jody: I have a question for you guys. What is a wetland?

Connor: Duh, it's land that's wet.

Jenny: And muddy.

Jody: Exactly. Well, let me show you something. A wetland is like this big sponge.

[Picks up large yellow sponge from inside the tank she cleaning; it drips water into the tank]

Connor: Ewww, you mean it cleans toilets?

Jody: No, not this sponge.

Jenny: I think she means that a sponge can hold a lot of water.

Jody: Right. But Connor's right too because wetlands filter and clean the water. They clean out phosphates and heavy metals and other contaminants too. And they also help control water flow.

Jenny: So when there's a lot of water from rain and snow wetlands soak it up and hold it.

Jody: Right. Just like this.

[Jody presses the sponge into the water at the bottom of the tank, lifts it up, demonstrating how much water has been absorbed]

Connor: And when there's not a lot of water, wetlands release it into the environment.

Jody: Right. And that's important, especially after dry spells.

[Jody squeezes the sponge causing the water to drip back into the tank]

[Jenny and Connor sit together on the edge of a wooden pathway bridge examining a frog until it hops back into the water]

[Jody reclines on a bank while Connor looks through binoculars over the swampy water and Jenny fiddles with a net, dipping it in and out of the water]

Jenny: There sure does seem to be a lot going on here.

Connor: What do you mean?

Jenny: Well, we've only been here for a little while and we've seen all kinds of wildlife: muskrat, turtles, fish, beavers, dragonflies, butterflies...

Jody: Oh look, over there on the cattail.

[That's Wild Red-Winged Blackbird title animation]

Jody: It's a wetland sight you can always count on with a call like no other. It's a red-winged blackbird, named for the male's bright-red shoulders called epaulettes, which he can hide or show off in a dazzling display.

[Images of a male red-wing blackbird gliding through the air and flying low over a field of long grass, eventually landing in it]

[Images of a female red-wing blackbird perched on tall grass and on the water]

[Images of a male red-wing blackbird flying low over a field of long grass, eventually landing in it and then perched on a cattail]

The female red-winged blackbird looks very different, often mistaken for a large sparrow. Males migrate separately from females, arriving at breeding areas weeks in advance, and is one of the first signs of spring. In the summer, red-winged blackbirds nest and breed in wetlands across Canada. They defend their territory fiercely, attacking much larger animals to defend their nests.

Jenny: Connor, this morning you said nothing could be comfortable here.

[Images of water fowl on a log, a beaver dam, a muskrat swimming through the water, and a mother bird with her three babies]

Connor: Okay, I admit, I was wrong. Just because wetlands aren't cosy for us it doesn't mean that they aren't ideal homes for tons of other living things, including some really big ones.

[That's Wild Moose title animation]

[Images of a bull moose moving through the grass to the water to drink and through the trees]

[Images of a cow moose drinking in a stream as ducks swim by and running through the trees]

[Images of a lumbering bear and watchful wolf]

[Images of a bull moose strolling through a roadside field while mother and calf eat in woods]

Jody: Weighing up to 600 kilograms, the moose is the largest member of the deer family. They range from the Yukon and British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador. Moose love Canada's wetlands, particularly in the summer. They're excellent swimmers and can dive more than 5 metres to reach lush underwater plants. On land, they're just as skilled. In fact, moose can run faster than horses. Their speed and power come in handy against predators, mostly bears and wolves, who prey heavily on calves during the first few weeks of life. In many parts of Canada, it's not unusual to encounter moose on rural roads. Although they don't have claws or sharp teeth, moose can be aggressive during mating season in the fall, or if you come between a cow and her calf in the spring.

Jenny: With all this wildlife here, it reminds me of this thing we're studying in science, biodiversity.

Connor: We're studying that too. It's about the importance of having lots of different kinds of living things.

[Images of a duck resting on the water, a water snake sliding through the water while a turtle suns itself on a log; a dragonfly perched on a twig]

Jenny: Yeah. And that a healthy environment is one with a variety of plant and animal species.

Jody: So this wetland ecosystem is a great example of diversity.

Connor: It's kind of like a wildlife city.

Jenny: Huh?

[Images of people crossing the street at a crosswalk, looking down a city street at traffic and pedestrians]

Connor: Well, cities have a lot of people from different cultures. This wetland is full of all kinds of life.

Jenny: It's true. You can't take a step here without finding some different type of plant or animal.

[Images of a roadmap focusing in on the Vancouver area then panning over to Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax]

Connor: And a wetland always has water, right? Can you think of any major city in Canada that's not on a river or a lake or ocean? I can't.

Jody: Wetlands are a lot like cities. They're very complex habitats, but you know, they're surprisingly sensitive.

Connor: Yeah, well I also think they're kind of ugly. My uncle says the only thing they're good for is breeding mosquitos.

[Connor raises his hands and gestures quotation marks]

Jody: Now it's time for WhoTube Mythbusters.

[WhoTube Mythbusters title animation]

Jenny: What have we got this time, Jody?

Jody: Today's myth: wetlands breed only mosquitos.

Jenny: Ha, busting that old myth will be easy.

[Images of various wetland scenes, focusing on frogs, fish, birds, mosquitoes as Jody lists them followed by images of standing water examples as Jody lists them]

Jody: Wetlands are one of nature's most important nurseries, the breeding site for many species that actually eat mosquitos, including frogs, fish, and birds. The fact is that mosquitos are more likely to breed in standing water like ditches, puddles, and even backyard birdbaths.

[Busted title animation]

Jenny: So if you want to reduce the number of mosquitos in your community, protect your wetlands.

[Connor, Jody, and Jenny sitting together at the rocky edge of the water]

Connor: You know, that really makes sense, in a weird kind of way.

Jenny: Well, just because you can't skateboard on a wetland doesn't mean it's not valuable. And that's one of the problems with wetlands. People think they're not good for anything.

Connor: Yeah, well most people are probably like me. They don't know a whole lot about wetlands or how important they are.

Jody: Connor, you know a lot more than you think. Let's check and see.

[Jody dressed in hip waders, plaid shirt, hat, mask and snorkel holding a fishing net and wearing a waterproof container around her neck stands in front of a Wetlands Wizards backdrop]

Jody: It's time to test your wildlife knowledge on Wetland Wizards. Can you check your buzzer, Connor, make sure it's working?

[Connor dressed in plaid shirt and suspenders with slicked back hair and taped together black glasses pushes his buzzer with a nervous expression on his face]

Jody: And, Jenny, yours too?

[Jenny dressed in black and white striped top, hair in pigtails wearing wire-rimmed glasses compete with neck chain tests her button and nods affirmatively]

Jody: First skill testing question: which one of these animals doesn't belong in wetlands? Fox, beaver, osprey, or a snake?

[Connor presses his button while Jenny thinks about the question, a finger along her cheek]

Connor: Fox.

Jody: I'm sorry, that's not correct. Jenny?

[Connor gestures his arms in frustration over his incorrect answer]

Jenny: That is a trick question. All those animals are found in wetlands.

[Jenny and Connor turn and look at each, Jenny with a satisfied smile and Connor with an incredulous expression]

Jody: Correct. Next, name the continents that do not have wetlands. Jenny?

[Jenny pushes her glasses up on the bridge of her nose and lays her finger along her cheek as she thinks]

Jenny: Uh, Antarctica.

[Conner pushes his button furiously]

Jody: Conner?

Conner: Another trick question. Wetlands can be found on all continents, even Antarctica.

Jody: Well done.

[Conner gestures his arm in a good-for-me manner]

Jody: Okay, Connor, one more question to break the tie. How many different kinds of wetlands are there?

[Jenny watches Conner as he is guessing]

Connor: Six. No, two. Ten, eight, sixty-two, five.

Jody: Right, five. What are they?

Connor: Hey, you said one more question.

Jody: Yeah. But it's got two parts. What are the different types of wetlands?

Connor: Round, oval, big, small, and ginormous.

[Connor shifts his eyes back and forth self-consciously]

Connor: What? That's five.

Jody: Jenny?

Jenny: Swamps, marshes...I don't know the others.

Jody: Partial points for you both. The five types are bogs, marshes, fens, swamps, and shallow-water wetlands, which can be salty or fresh.

[Jenny claps along with the off-screen audience members while Connor make silly facial expressions]

Jody: Wetlands are also located along Canada's ocean coastlines.

[Connor, Jody, and Jenny lean on the rails of a wooden walkway over a swampy area]

Jody: One more question. How much of the world's wetlands are in Canada?

Connor: Well, Canada is pretty big and we have tons of water.

Jenny: I'll bet it's as much as 10 percent.

Connor: Maybe more.

Jody: Well, try 25 percent.

Jenny: You mean we've got one-quarter of the planet's wetlands?

Connor: Wow. So that means we have a big job caring for these areas?

Jody: And here are a few ways you can help.

[Images of turtles, frogs, racoons]

Jenny: Don't remove turtles, frogs, or other animals for pets, and keep your dog on a leash if you go for a walk near a wetland.

[A man walks his dog on a leash while Jenny, Connor, and Jody examine a wooden nest box]

Connor: Build and put up nest boxes to welcome more birds.

[Images of wetland areas; water and vegetation]

Jenny: Use lawn fertilizers wisely, since they can be washed into wetland areas.

[Jody, Connor, and Jenny stand together inside]

Jody: Tell your friends and neighbours about the importance of wetlands and the need to protect them.

Jenny: You can also visit Hinterland Who's Who online to learn more about Canada's wetlands.

Connor: And to tell us about your ideas for protecting them.

Jody: And remember, no matter where you live in Canada, wildlife is close by, so get out and see it.

[Hinterland Who's WhoTube logo]

