



Freshwater macroinvertebrates are borrowed and returned (with a DGIF permit) from a nearby waterway. Students use a variety of methods to identify the animals and then share their findings with the group.



John Lewis from the Jamestown 4-H Center helps students learn about native animals they might see in a forested wetland.

Oceans field trips. All field trips follow the same format: Students rotate through six to seven different activity stations which are led by community volunteers with backgrounds in science and by representatives from local and state agencies. While access to the wetland offers unbelievable opportunities to discover nature's secrets, "No matter where you are, at school or in your own backyard, there is so much to see and learn from nature," states Turner.

Assistant Principal Christina Head has first-hand experience with the program both as an administrator and as a parent. Her daughter participated in the program last year and her son is looking forward to his turn. "My child and others were given an opportunity to see and understand things in nature they normally wouldn't have noticed. My family



With guidance from Lisa Deaton, Virginia Department of Forestry, students identify area trees. Each child received a tree identification guide to continue their research at home.

was given an opportunity to have a rich conversation about environmental issues at the dinner table. It was like we all received a special gift."

And those three moms who brought the gift to school? They're pretty special, too. □

Gail Brown is a retired teacher and school administrator.