



Mission: Possible Mystic River Watershed Scavenger Hunt Challenges

Your first challenge is to download the app. See printed instructions at the Mission Possible Launch Table

Look for these symbols:



Fawn Path Challenges,



Adult/Teen Path Challenges,



These go in the app

There is a survey question in the app asking about **photo/video releases** beyond this data gathering: within the Alliance only or also social media?

You will gather at the launch table: Pencils, Field Notebook per person, Per Team, Handout, Rubber glove, Measuring tape, box of colored pencils

Return the materials to the Mashantucket Pequot Museum Group Entrance at the FINISH of the Scavenger Hunt on Saturday Nov 30, and ENJOY the giant collaborative art project, ecological relationship games, and the Silent Auction. There are prizes and FREE FOOD and people to meet.

Everything must be found near the Mystic River, Whitford Brook, Haley Brook, Williams Brook, Long or Bush Pond, Lantern Hill Pond, or Lantern Hill Brook. If you get lost, call 914-462-2857. If you need a hint, email info@alliancemrw.org. Zoe will be monitoring it on Friday and Saturday.

Link to map of the Mystic River Watershed: <https://www.alliancemrw.org/maps>

This is not a race. Stop, savor, wonder, reflect. Do as many as you can and that's all!

1- Flood



Find a big puddle or a place where there has been a big puddle before. Take a photo/selfie there now, and draw in your field notebook how it looked when it was flooded. OR--Stomp around as if you were stomping in the puddle, and ask your parents to take a photo or a very short video. Create a 6-word poem about flooding.



Where do you see evidence of past flooding today? Evidence of past flooding can be watermarks (on trees or walls) or wrack lines (lines of debris washed up by flood water) or buildings that are now empty or have had to be restored. Where did the water come from?? Take a photo/selfie there and in your Field Notebook, write a 6-word poem about flooding.



- Submit Photo of Place
- Have you seen flooding here before? When did you see flooding? (short answer)
- How often/under what conditions does it flood here?

2 - Pollution



What doesn't belong on the ground? Put on your glove and pick up 5 of these items, take a picture of them where you found them and then of you dropping them in a recycling or trash bin. In your Field Notebook, write or ask your parents to write What would you like to say to people who throw their trash on the ground?? (Keep it clean...) What would you like to say to people who take care of the Earth? OR make a very short video of you saying what you would like to say....



Find evidence of pollution on land, in the water, or in the air. If you find trash, put on your glove and pick up 5 pieces. Take a photo of you putting it in a recycling or trash bin. In your Field Notebook, draw / reflect on the results of lawn fertilizers and sewage seepage into our waterways...and what we need to do to control the amount of plastic waste.



- Submit Photos of Pollution
- What kind of pollution did you find? (drop down list)
 - Trash on land
 - Trash in water
 - Oil or Gasoline
 - Animal/Pet Waste
 - Lots of lawns (add as Other)
 - Other

3 - Recreation



Where can you go to see or touch the water? Take a photo of you at one of those places. What are your favorite things to do in or on the water?? In your Field Notebook, draw a picture of you doing that (swim, fish, paddle a board, canoe, or kayak, sail, snorkel, sit and think...just to give you some ideas). AND, draw a picture of who/what you might see in the water AND/OR make your body move like you are doing your favorite water activity or swimming like a fish. Make a short

video!



Where do people go to swim, fish, or paddle in the water for free? Where do people go to look at the water? Take a photo/selfie of BOTH of those places. In your Field Notebook, while you are looking at the water, reflect on the relationship between humans and water. How much of our bodies are water? Where does that water come from and where does it go? Or any other observation you care to make. What do you wonder about water?? Draw and image of your thoughts....



- Submit Photo of Place
- What do people do here? (drop down list)
 - Swim
 - Fish
 - Launch a kayak or boat
 - Look at the water
 - Other
- What are the limits to your recreation (swimming, fishing, paddling) here?
 - Not free
 - Closed for camp at times
 - Closed because of pollution at times
 - No place to park
 - Other

4 - Trees



Find the biggest tree and take a photo of you hugging it. How big is the tree around the bottom? Use your tape measure to measure around the bottom of the tree trunk. If you find a BIGGER tree, before you are finished with the Scavenger Hunt, measure THAT one, too. Draw a your favorite tree in your Field Notebook. Who/what else is usually found near trees?? Draw that relative near/in the tree in your Notebook. Take a photo of you behaving like a tree and like the tree-relative you drew.



Find the tree with the biggest trunk. Take a photo of the tree and measure how big the trunk is around the bottom. If you know what kind of tree it is, type it into the app form. (Hint: look at the leaves around it on the ground). In your Field Notebook, list two or three threats to trees. What would you like to say about that?? Make a short video. Draw your favorite tree. Don't forget to include some of the other species who rely on that tree!



- Submit Photo of Tree
- Tree Trunk Measurement [inches] (number input)
- If you know what kind of tree it is, type the name here: (short answer)
- In what ways do trees contribute to human health and well-being? Check all that apply
 - Storing carbon in wood and roots/soil
 - Releasing oxygen
 - Providing shade / cooling
 - Soaking up water
 - Stopping erosion
 - Facilitating other species' health
 - Providing food
 - Soothing our moods
 - Filtering pollutants out of water
 - Other

5 - Native Species



Find a plant or animal that has grown here in the Watershed for as long as anyone knows. Take a photo of the plant or animal and write the name of it. In your Field Notebook, think first...what is your favorite winter meal? What would a Robin eat now?? How about a chickadee?? Draw a picture of either bird eating their favorite winter foods. AND/OR make a video with you making a Robin or Chickadee sound.



To give you some ideas:

Top Row: Robin, Chickadee, Cattails in summer, Cattails in the fall, Fall asters (and a monarch)

Second Row: Bark of an old oak tree, three kinds of oak leaves, maple leaves, and staghorn sumac at this time of year.



Find a native species of plant or animal. Take a photo of the plant or animal and identify what species it is. In your Field Notebook, draw the Native species you found. Include the other species that depend on it. Write a 6-word poem about Biodiversity.



- Submit Photo of Species
- What species is it?
- Where would you go in the Watershed to find the highest concentration of Native species?
- What human activities make it difficult for Native species to thrive?

6 – Aquatic Invasive Species



Find a place where there is a lot of growth of these **in the summer**. Hint: they like freshwater ponds. Take a selfie/photo there. Hydrilla is in ponds very close to but not (yet) in our Watershed. It travels on boats and fishing hooks, mostly, and can grow from just a tiny piece. It chokes out EVERYTHING and crashes ecosystems. In your Field Notebook, draw a picture of Hydrilla-monster. Think of a message you would like to tell people to warn them about Hydrilla and how to be careful. Draw it, write it, or Make a short video.



Fanwort



Eurasian Milfoil.

Two views of the Hydrilla monster



[Link to CT DEEP page on CT Aquatic Invasive Species page](#)



Find a place where there is a lot of growth of these in the summer. Hint: they like freshwater ponds. Hydrilla (ZOE need photo) is in ponds very close to our Watershed. It travels on boats and fishing hooks, mostly, and can grow from just a tiny piece. It chokes out EVERYTHING and crashes ecosystems. Find places where people are likely to transfer Hydrilla into our Watershed. Take a selfie/photo there.

In your Field Notebook, draw a picture of Hydrilla-monster. Think of a message you would like to tell people to warn them about Hydrilla and how to be careful. Make a short video. If you are there with your kids, do this together!



- Submit Photo of Species locations or likely transfer areas
- Is there information and equipment provided to ensure that invasive species are not transferred into our ponds? What did you see?

7 – Animal Habitats



Our homes come in all forms. We sleep in beds, where do animals sleep? Find a place where an animal might sleep. Take a photo of the place. What animal might sleep there? Take a picture of you posing like the animal or draw a picture of the animal.



Discover an area that many call home (not humans). Who are some of the animals who live there? Take a photo of the habitat. Take a photo of the animal that might live there OR draw a picture. Reflect on the concepts of home, migration, displacement in your Field Notebook. Are there animals whose habitats are being changed or whose migrations are blocked by humans at this moment?? Find a place where this is happening and take a photo.

Complete this section twice to show BOTH a healthy and a disrupted habitat



- Submit Photo of Habitat
- Who lives here?
- Submit Animal Photo or Drawing
- Submit photo of Habitat degradation or disruption.

8 – Pollinator Habitats



Take a picture of a place or specific plant where bees collect nectar to make honey. (It might be too cold for them now). Do you know the name of the plant you found? Most plants, including the ones that produce our food, need pollination to thrive. What can you do to HELP the pollinators?? In your Field Notebook, draw a habitat that bees would like.

Hint: Nectar is pollen which is inside of flowers.



Find a pollinator garden and take a photo. Can you identify one of the plants there? In your Field Notebook, draw a plan for a pollinator garden at your yard, school, place of work, a public park. Which spot did you choose? Whose help do you need to make it happen?



- Submit Photo of Place
- Plant Name (short answer)
- Where did you choose to imagine/create a pollinator garden?
- Whose help do you need to make it happen?

9 - Heat



Some places get hot in the summer while some places stay cool. Can you find a place outside that gets hot? Or a place outside that stays cool? (Hint: pavement vs. big trees) Take a photo of the place and tell us if it is hot or cool in the summer. Draw a picture in your Field Notebook of how you feel when it is too hot OR write a 6-word poem about it.



Find an outdoor place that is too hot to go in the summer or a place that stays cool in the summer. Take a photo of the place and identify if it is hot or cool in the summer. If it is extremely hot outside, where would you go to cool off if you did not have air conditioning at home or the power went out? Name the place.



Complete this section twice to show a place that is HOT in summer and a COOL one:

- Submit Photo of Hot summer outdoor space
- Submit Photo of Cool summer outdoor space
- Where would you go to cool off if you had no home power or air conditioning?
- What can you do to keep your home cooler without air conditioning?

11 – Important Places



Find an important place. Some places are important because a lot of people like them and some are important because important things happen there. An important place could be a park that a lot of people like to go to or a fire station that keeps people safe. Take a photo of your important place and in your Field Notebook, explain why it is important. You can make a short video too.



Find a place that is important to the community. What is one place everyone would want to protect? This could be a place that people enjoy or a place that serves an important purpose for the community (school, fire station, etc.). Take a photo of the place and explain why it is important.



Submit Photo of Place

- Why is this place important to the community? (short answer)

PHOTO MATCH CHALLENGE



Submit your photo match in the app, once you identify what it is...and take your own photo!

