

# Mudflat Investigation

## Overview:

Take students out on the mudflats with bug boxes and explore things that live in and on the mud.

## Goal:

Students will learn how to look closely and observe in a way that minimizes the impact to the environment.

## Objectives:

1. Students will practice looking closely to discover small plants and animals.
2. Students will be able to identify particular flora and fauna of the mudflats.
3. Students will notice differences between animals that live on top of and underneath the mud.

Time: 15-20 minutes

## Materials:

Bug boxes

Mudflat ID card

A trowel (for adult use)

## Procedure:

1. Gather the group around to explain the activity. Set the boundaries.
2. Give each student a bug box and a Mudflat ID card.
3. Tell the students they will have a few minutes to explore the area with their partner. They can look at anything they find interesting and try to identify it using the ID card. It does not need to be alive, but if it is, it must fit safely in the box and should be returned safely to its home after the activity. They should not pull plants out of the ground, but they can pick a piece of a plant no bigger than their little finger nail.
4. Send the students off on their search. Remind them that small creatures are VERY tiny and VERY fragile. They may need to scoop some mud up with insects so as not to squish them.
5. At the end of 10 minutes (or when interest starts to wane) call the students back to the sharing circle with one interesting thing they have found. Go around the circle and have students share their findings and pass them around the circle. If time is limited, you may want to lead the discussion about what everyone has found.
6. Praise them for their keen observations skills, and then be sure to make time to put everything back where they found it. This activity could be done in different habitat types to emphasize the differences in habitats.