WVMN Class Description

Title:	**AQUATIC HABITATS**
Objectives:	Look at the important properties of water that make aquatic habitats unique. Examine the few types of WV habitats that exist in still and moving water, their characteristic plants and animals.
Class type:	Core curriculum
Time:	3 hours
Optimal season:	Spring, summer, fall
Materials:	Dip nets; containers for holding/observing live specimens; forceps; kits/instruments for measuring temperature, acidity, dissolved oxygen, transparency; hand lenses; field microscope; field guides
Expected outcomes:	The student will gain a basic understanding of 1. the characteristics of water that are important to aquatic organisms. 2. the habitats created by the still waters of ponds and lakes and the moving waters of streams. 3. measurement of some of the parameters of natural surface waters. 4. some of the animals and plants that inhabit WV waters.

WVMNClass Outline

1. Important properties of water
    a. Density
    b. Heat-holding capacity
    c. Transparency
    d. Oxygen and carbon dioxide content
    e. Dissolved minerals – nutrients
2. Habitats
    a. Ponds and lakes
        - Surface film
        - Open water
        - Bottom
        - Littoral habitat: zone of rooted plants
    b. Streams
        - Size
        - Gradient: rate of water flow
        - Substrate (bottom)
3. Changes
    a. Daily
    b. Seasonal
    c. Over the long term
4. Observation, collecting, and study
    a. Measuring physical parameters of waters
    b. Collecting and observing plants and animals
    c. Aquatic organisms as indicators of water quality