

The Cascades: Natural Wonderland

The Cascades area of Hudson Gardens is natural area that features a pond, creek, waterfall, and lush landscape. A variety birds also call it home.

You will explore three areas of the Cascades using your senses and observation skills. Click on the video and then scroll down for the activities.

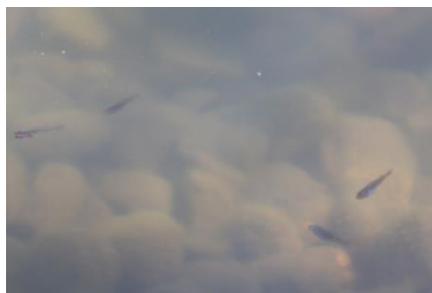


Pond Life

This is the first in a series of three observations along the Cascades. Although you can do these observations in any sequence, we recommend you start here and progress to the waterfall, then the bridge.

Can you see?

Minnows in the water



Reflections in the water



Birds



Insects



Plants



Questions:

1. What else do you see?
2. How might this area look different in another season?

Can you hear?

Now, listen with and without deer ears. (Cup your hands behind your ears, facing forward.)

Questions:

1. What sounds do you hear?
2. What sounds are natural and what sounds are not?
3. What sounds do you like best?

What Do You Feel?

Carefully touch the grasses. Describe how they feel. Are they smooth or rough? Cool or hot?

Touch a tree trunk then touch a leaf? Describe how they feel.

Feel the air. Is it cool or warm? Is it cooler here or warmer here than in the parking lot? Why is that? Is there a breeze?

What Do You Smell?

Take a deep breath through your nose. What do you smell? Does it smell different than in the middle of a forest? Does it smell different here than in a parking lot?

Waterfall

This is the second in a series of three observations along the Cascades. Although you can do these observations in any sequence, we recommend you start at the pond and progress to the waterfall, then the bridge.

Although this is a small waterfall, it has many benefits. For example, it purifies the water and adds oxygen to the water to help fish thrive. It also cleans the air and produces negative ions, which help people feel good.

Questions:

1. Can you see any minnows or floating insects in the waterfall? Why or why not?
2. Can you see reflections in the running water? Why or why not?
3. How might this area look different in another season?

The Bridge

This is the last in a series of three observations along the Cascades. Although you can do these observations in any sequence, we recommend you start at the pond, progress to the waterfall, then the bridge.

Walk to the southwest side of the bridge. Notice the cattails and grasses. These are very different plants.

- How are the cattails and grasses different?
- Are you surprised that they grow next to each other?
- Do you notice differences in the type of soil they grow in?
- Do they get the same amount of water?
- Do they get the same amount of sunshine?



Comparisons

How are each of these things the same along the different parts of the Cascades? How are they alike?

- **Water** – Think about how the water sounded, the color, and reflections
- **Plants** – Were the plants different near the pond and at the bridge? In what ways?
- **Wildlife** – Did you see different wildlife (fish, insects, birds) at different parts of the Cascades?
- **Sounds** – Where did you hear the most natural sounds? Where did you hear the most sounds made by man and machine?
- **Smells** – Did the smells change along the Cascades? Where did they smell the best?
- **Feel** – Where was it coolest? Hottest? Where could you feel a breeze?