



Live Theater  
Wetland Kayak Trip



We wanted to get an early start for our big **kayak** (*paddle-paddle*) trip. We left at the crack of dawn, for a teacher on summer vacation anyway, around 8:00. As we headed out on this **water** (*gurgle gurgle*) adventure, we drove just 5 minutes away, through the wetlands near Wilson Cut, just down highway 361. On the drive we were already making plans as to how we could make this a weekly outing. My friend, Mrs. Findley, was determined this was the summer she would learn to use her new camera and become a wildlife **photographer** (*Say cheese! click*). As we pulled off the highway to our destination, on the sandy roadway, we drove between a flock of **laughing gulls** (*mine-mine-mine*) fighting over a sandy sandwich left by a picnicker. We parked the vehicle, lifted our **kayak** (*paddle-paddle*) off the car and walked over to the **water** (*gurgle gurgle*). Just a few trips back and forth to the car to get our needed equipment, leaving **footprints**(*squish squish*) in the mud with every pass. The shore was lined with tall cattails, but we found a perfect opening to launch our bright yellow two person **kayak** (*paddle-paddle*). Mrs. Findley thought it quite funny that my bright yellow **water** (*gurgle gurgle*) shoes matched my vessel but not my shorts, so the **photographer** (*Say cheese! click*) in her insisted we get a picture of me in my wetland fashions. Off we were doused in sun screen, with me in the front and Mrs. Findley doing all the work steering in the back. "Look out wild-life, here we come!"

Our first real photo op was to be a **willet** (will, will, wil-let) feasting on some **mosquitoes** (buzzzzz). We were hidden by the vegetation that stood between us and the **willet** (will, will, wil-let) eating on a mudflat, until our cover was blown. The loud sound of me squealing excitedly about the **redfish** (*swish-swish*) that just happened to swim past our paddles scared the shorebird off and away to find another feeding site before capturing it on disk. I can't understand



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why any insect loving bird would want to leave that spot because from my vantage point, there were plenty of pesky **mosquitoes** (buzzzzz) to eat. After spoiling the **willet** (will, will, wil-let) shot I decided to sit as quietly as possible and just watch carefully for another shot for the **photographer** (*Say cheese! click*) to catch. I didn't move to even slap a **mosquito** (buzzzzz) that landed on the tip of my nose.

At first, all I heard was the rhythm of the **water** (gurgle, gurgle) tapping against the bow, it was so peaceful and relaxing as we made our way through the seagrass beds. It wasn't too long before Mrs. Findley stopped paddling again and readied her camera. She was doing her very best to remain quiet and still just so she could snap a close up shot of a **blue crab** (click-click) using its front claws to dig a hole, when I called back to her, "Are you ready for a granola bar?" Before I even knew what was going on I started riffling through our knapsack for a treat. "How about a cold bottle of water?" I called over my shoulder not noticing the look of disappointment she had on her face when yet another "**photographer's** (*Say cheese! Click*) dream shot" was missed. The **blue crab** (click-click) ducked away deep into the hole.

The more in tune with my surroundings I became the more I noticed...the squawking of **laughing gulls** (*mine-mine-mine*) in the distance, insects skating across the surface. Everywhere I looked the wetland showed it was teeming with life, above and below the **water** (gurgle, gurgle). I am sure I drove Mrs. Findley crazy that day with all my curious questions about what I was observing. "Was that a **redfish** (*swish-swish*)?", I inquired when I saw small waves of **water** (gurgle, gurgle) rippling in the quiet smooth glass like surface just feet ahead of us. How about that...Are those mud balls that **blue crab** (click-click) is making?" She knows her birds, too. By the time we finished that day she



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was able to teach me the difference between a rosette spoonbill and the sandpiper like **willet** .

But I knew it was time to go when my friend slumped down dejectedly, as I knocked her camera lens cap into the **water** (gurgle, gurgle) below. As she was retrieving the lens cap, I was preoccupied guarding our trailmix from the flock of hungry **laughing gulls** (*mine-mine-mine*) who gathered at just the sight of passing by **kayaker's** (*paddle-paddle*). Both of us decided maybe it was time to turn around and make **footprints**(*squish squish*) back to the car. I don't think the **photographer** (*Say cheese! Click*) got to take as many pictures as she was expecting but we sure enjoyed the memories we made that morning in our own local wetlands.