

WILDERNESS:
Knock! Knock! Who's There?
A play written by Deb Scala and Judy Schmidt
for
Friends of Great Swamp NWR Fall Festival 2014

Characters:

Barred Owl
Bear
Rabbit
Turkey
Honey Bee
Duck
Salamander

Props: Can of shaving cream
 Critter hats
 Wood box and hammer to make knocking sound

OWL: Hi! I am a barred owl WHOOOOO is quite intellectual. Today, as we learn about the many habitats of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, I would like you to help me greet my visitors. When you hear KNOCK! KNOCK! (rap with hammer), please say "WHOOOO'S There?" Let's practice.. KNOCK! KNOCK! (rap with hammer), "WHOOOO'S There?". Great, you got it!

I love living here in the Swamp and **Wilderness** is my favorite area because there is no trace of man anywhere... No offense intended to my present company!

Did you know that **Wilderness** covers 3,660 acres of the *Great* Swamp? It was the first **Wilderness** ever in the Department of the Interior of our great country, the United States of America.

There is a lot of wildlife here at the Swamp in many different habitats. Let's find out about some.

WILDERNESS: Knock! Knock! Who's There?

Are you ready? (KNOCK! KNOCK! sound)

AUDIENCE: WHOOO'S There?

OWL: Bear?

AUDIENCE: Bear who?

BEAR: It's beary nice to see you!

I love this place for all its forest and swamps. There is a lot of **Wilderness** here. I have a *BIG* appetite and eat anything from tiny insects to mammals to plants like acorns and berries. YUM! YUM! YUMMY!

I am at the very top of the food chain and average about 300 pounds in weight. In spite of my size I can climb a tree quicker than 1-2-3 and I can run lickity split!

Well, I am off to pack on some pounds; winter is just around the corner you know.

Beary nice meeting you.

OWL: I think I hear something. Do you hear it?

(KNOCK! KNOCK! sound)

AUDIENCE: WHOOO'S There?

OWL: Rabbit

AUDIENCE: Rabbit who?

RABBIT: Rabb - it up carefully, it's a gift! (Slaps thigh and laughs)

And that is exactly what the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge **Wilderness** is to me ... A Gift. It is filled with lovely brambles, bushes and shrubs for me to eat, hide in and raise my family. AHHH, Home Sweet Home.

In spring, I can have a litter of up to 7 sweet babies and again in the summer. That sure is a lot of little ones to take care of, isn't it?

WILDERNESS: Knock! Knock! Who's There?

The habitat of brambles, bushes and shrubs provides protection and shelter for my precious babies from dangerous predators.

I must HOP along now and check on my young ones.
Hare Today, Gone Tomorrow! Toodles!

(KNOCK! KNOCK! sound)

AUDIENCE: WHOOO'S There?

OWL: Turkey

AUDIENCE: Turkey who?

TURKEY: Turkey to the right and it'll open! Get it? Tur-key... Turn key to the right and it will open. It will open both of my favorite habitats here at the refuge. The forest, where bear prowls and the shrubs that hide the rabbits.

I roost in trees at night, hence my fondness for the forest. I feed on the ground on insects, berries, seeds and nuts best found in the shrubs.

We turkeys had a hard time in some places in this country. Wild turkeys were wiped out in many areas because of massive land development - new houses, shopping centers and parking lots. Here, it is like the good ole days! Fresh air, the woods, wide open spaces, clean water and NO CARS!

I'll be on my way into the **Wilderness**, my friends. Time to "Gobble Gobble" up some lunch. Chow!

OWL: You've met some of my WILDERNESS friends from the forest and shrubs and meadows, but the swamp is a wet place, too.

(KNOCK! KNOCK! sound)

AUDIENCE: WHOOO'S There?

OWL: Sally

AUDIENCE: Sally who?

WILDERNESS: Knock! Knock! Who's There?

SALAMANDER: Why it is me, Sally Mander!

Hi! I am meandering here from the **Wilderness** of Great Swamp's forested: wetlands where I like to live under logs by vernal pools. I am nocturnal and dine at night on earthworms, YUM! Slugs, TASTY!, isopods, MMMM, and various other arthropods. An arthropod is another word for the creepy crawlies that I like to find under logs and leaves.

I am unique because I protect myself with a sticky white yucky substance which is absolutely distasteful to some of my predators. You know those guys... my enemies!

(Spray shaving cream on your hand and approach the crowd)

Want to taste? (Crowd will go E WW WWW)

Aha, it works! See ya!

OWL: That's salamander rather distasteful company! Let's move on.

(KNOCK! KNOCK! sound)

AUDIENCE: WHOOO'S There?

OWL: (say loud and forceful) **Duck!**

AUDIENCE: Duck who?

(Owl swats Duck in back of his head)

OWL: See, I told you to "DUCK"!

DUCK: Owl, you quack me up.

I don't mean to brag, but in my world us guys are gorgeous with beautiful feather patterns and bright colors while the girls are dull and plain. But that is a good thing because the girls can sit on their eggs well camouflaged and protected.

This **Wilderness** provides lots of different wetland habitats. It offers cool places to swim and find good things to eat; insects, aquatic plants and

WILDERNESS: Knock! Knock! Who's There?

grains. Kind of like soup and quackers for you!

Time for me to Waddle on out of here... bye bye.

(KNOCK! KNOCK! sound)

AUDIENCE: WHOOO'S There?

OWL: Honey!

AUDIENCE: Honey who?

HONEY BEE: Honey, BEE a sweetie and get me a sip.

I am a beeeeee and I buzzzz all over the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. When I am looking for a sip of nectar to drink, I collect pollen from flowers and shrubs and trees.

When I fly into a flower, my fuzzy body collects pollen. I buzzzz on over to another flower where some of the pollen drops off. With time, this makes the flowers grow into fruits, nuts or veggies.

If I could NOT do my job there would beeeeee less for everybody else to eat. Gotta get back. Remember beeee kind to BEEEEES. We are important to the life of the refuge.

I may beeee the littlest critter you have met today, but I have the BIGGEST job... and that is POLLINATING!

OWL: As you have heard, the **Wilderness** is important to wildlife.

As for me, I too, whooo-whoohoo, adore the Wilderness. I roost in the forest and at night I take flight over Great Swamp's shrub-lands, fields and streams that satisfy my every need. It is a wonderful place to eat, drink and be merry...FA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA!

Please... come and visit often.

And remember.... only leave your footprints.