Family Activity - Creek Boat Race

Summary
Race boats in the creek to learn about creek currents, riffles and pools.

| Time | 30 mins |

Materials
- One sheet of 8 1/2 x 11-inch construction paper or cardstock for each boat

Note: Always be careful around creeks. Children should be supervised. Creeks are delicate ecosystems, please tread carefully.

Activity Directions
1. Make boats. Fold your own paper boat. For ideas and directions, search paper boat designs.
2. Predict boat speed. Hypothesize whether the boats will travel slowly or quickly in a given area.
3. Release boats. Release the boats into the creek at different points. Have a race or just watch the boats go down the creek. Retrieve the boats.
4. Compare results to predictions.
5. Identify creek parts. See if you can identify the different parts of the creek: riffle, pool, meander.
6. Test again and again.
7. Retrieve all boats.

Background
**Riffle:** A shallow stretch of stream where water flows quickly and gravel or rocks are often present. Importance: Many fish need the gravel bottom of a riffle to reproduce and lay their eggs.

**Pool:** A deep stretch of stream where water flows more slowly than other stretches. Importance: Many aquatic bugs and small fish need the slower waters of a pool to feed.

**Stream meander:** The way a stream weaves from side to side, carving out the bank. Importance: A stream meanders through flat areas, which can balance the energy of the rushing water.

Text adapted from Streamkeeper's Field Guide. Adopt-a-Stream Fndtn; 3rd Revised edition (June 1991)