Program Overview

In Understanding Ecosystems from Home, middle school students (grades 6-8) will investigate the guiding question, “What is my relationship with my local ecosystem?” By carefully observing local ecosystems through nature journaling activities and citizen science data collection, students will understand what an ecosystem is, the benefits people receive from ecosystems, and steps they can take to explore, appreciate and protect their local ecosystems.

- Introductory videos: Welcome to Understanding Ecosystems; Meet the Educators
- Activities
  - Introduction to Ecosystems
  - People and Ecosystems
  - Observing Ecosystems with iNaturalist
  - Imagining Ecosystems
- Nature journaling activities
  - Introduction to Nature Journaling
  - Nature’s ABC’s Scavenger Hunt
  - Sound Mapping

Program Goals

1. Students will learn about the interdependence between people and ecosystems through hands-on, inquiry-based activities.
2. Students will participate in outdoor activities that strengthen their connection to nature.
3. Students will document local organisms and phenomena through citizen science data collection and nature journaling.

Standards Connections

Understanding Ecosystems supports learning and engagement in the following Next Generation Science Standards:

- Practices: Constructing explanations and designing solutions; Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information
- Disciplinary Core Ideas: LS2 - Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy and Dynamics; ESS3 - Earth and Human Activity

The Watershed Project’s mission is to inspire Bay Area communities to understand, appreciate, and protect our local watersheds.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact us at: education@thewatershedproject.org