

## Wonders of wetlands wow students



From left, Grade 5 student Deliah, Grade 3 student Emmett, Grade 3 student Troy and Grade 5 student Cayte look for signs of life in a wetland environment. / SARAH SOBANSKI Staff

**By Sarah Sobanski**

Area school children are exploring what it means to be a good steward thanks to the Bancroft and Area Stewardship Council.

The council has again hosted its Wonders of Wetlands event. The bi-annual environmental stewardship day is open to all North Hastings school students from Grades 3 to 5. It ran all day at Joy Bible Camp June 6.

Students from as far as north as Whitney and as south as Apsley participated in 15 stewardship stations led by North Hastings High School NERDS students and other stewardship council partners, such as the Ontario Turtle Conservation Initiative, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and The Land Between.

“They learn so much,” said NERDS teacher Colleen Drew-Baehre who’s also a stewardship council director.

“They learn the importance of wetlands, about endangered species, pollution control,” she said listing a few of the lessons provided.

The interactive stations included learning the harmful effects of an oil spill, how invasive/non-invasive plants, fish and insects affect wetlands, about turtle, trout and duck populations and what man-made threats they face in their life cycles, what goes on beneath the surface of lakes and wetlands, how important they are and the effects of pollution on them.

Stewardship council chair Ian Hendry commended everyone on their hard work bringing the event to fruition.

?It's just a really good opportunity to reach out to young people and teach them good stewardship skills at a young age,? Hendry said.

Wonders of Wetlands has been happening bi-annually in the community for more than a decade. The event was originally founded by BASC director Betty Coutu.

?It was a fun day, the kids all have a blast,? Hendry said, later noting how inquisitive young students were and how excited they were by the stations. ?It's just good to teach them to respect the environment.?