



Nature Activity

Catching Snowflakes

Snow is special in so many ways! There's many activities that you can enjoy only when it snows, like skiing, sledding, tubing or tobogganning. Have you ever tried catching a snowflake, on your tongue or in your hand just to see it melt away? Here's an easy and fun way to catch snowflakes without them melting away so you can take a closer look!

Winter wonders

So many of us in Canada relish a big snowfall. The winter season brings with it the excitement of "snow days" - getting out of class and spending time outdoors throwing snowballs, outlining snow angels and building snow forts. Have you ever wondered how snowflakes are formed?

Snowflakes are truly amazing wonders of nature with their delicate structures and unique crystal patterns. They are created when water droplets freeze around a particle of dust in the air. As the snowflake continues its descent through the air towards the ground, more water droplets collect and freeze, forming a beautiful six-armed pattern.

Different temperatures and moisture levels help determine the shape of the snowflake. While no two snowflakes are ever truly identical, they do share some impressive similarities. You too can look at the different shapes and patterns of snowflakes with the help of your very own snowflake catcher.

1

Make your own snowflake catcher.

Find some dark coloured pieces of paper. You can use construction paper, bristol board, cardstock or any other paper type as long as it's dark in colour. Cut the paper into a small enough size that it's easy to hold (smaller size for smaller hands). It can be any shape too - square, rectangle, triangle, or freeform.



2

Take a clothes pin (wooden or plastic) and clip it to the dark piece of paper.



3

On a snowy day, bundle up and go outdoors. Let your snow catcher cool down to the outside temperature. Once the paper is cold, hold your snow catcher out to let the snowflakes land on it. When you've caught a few, bring the snowflake catcher towards you so you can take a closer look at the snowflakes you caught. Try not to breath on the snowflakes too much as your warm breath can start to melt them. Look for different patterns and shapes.



If you want to get an even closer look, use a magnifying glass to enlarge your view!



Take some photos of the outdoor family fun enjoying snowflakes, snow or any winter activity and share with us on Instagram @lakesimcoeconservation or Twitter @LSRCA.