

ACTIVITY 4 | TEACHER & FAMILY GUIDE

The Small Miraculous Thing

Choose one small action close to home, one for a refuge, or both.

Turning curiosity into action.

Choose one Small Miraculous Thing. Or choose both paths and make one Big Miraculous Thing. Help the wildlife who live around us close to home, help wildlife through a refuge, or do both.

FOR THE TEACHER / FACILITATOR

Students choose one or both paths: help the wildlife who live around us close to home, or volunteer with a refuge or conservation organization. They learn from a reliable source, complete an achievable action with appropriate adult involvement, and reflect on what they noticed or learned.

LEARNING GOALS	MATERIALS & SETUP
☐ Turn curiosity or concern into one achievable action - or two connected actions. ☐ Use trusted guidance before changing habitat or volunteering. ☐ Understand that meaningful wildlife stewardship can begin at home, even when travel to a refuge is not possible.	☐ Student sheets 1-4; pencils or pens ☐ Optional internet access to Audubon or an official refuge website ☐ 20-30 minutes to plan, plus time outside class to complete the action ☐ Adult or family involvement when appropriate

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

1. Choose one path - help wildlife close to home or help a wildlife refuge - or choose both and make it a Big Miraculous Thing.
2. Learn before acting. Use Audubon, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, or another teacher-approved conservation source.
3. Make a simple plan: what will you do, who will help, where will it happen, and when?
4. Complete the action safely. Do not handle wildlife or alter public land without permission.
5. Record what happened with notes, a photograph, a drawing, or another approved form of evidence.
6. Share one thing you learned, one thing you noticed, and one question you still have. If you chose both paths, compare the two kinds of impact.

SAFETY NOTE Small should mean safe and achievable, not insignificant. Follow adult guidance, site rules, volunteer age requirements, and all wildlife-protection rules.

TRUSTED PLACES TO START [Audubon Native Plants](#) • [Audubon Bird-Friendly Home](#) • [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)

STUDENT SHEET 1 | CHOOSE

Choose Your Small Miraculous Thing

Choose one path, or choose both and make one Big Miraculous Thing.

NAME _____

DATE _____

☐ PATH 1 | HELP WILDLIFE CLOSE TO HOME

Examples to investigate - choose one or create your own:

- Plant one locally native plant.
- Create a brush pile with an adult.
- Leave a safe patch of leaves or standing stems.
- Make one problem window safer for birds.
- Turn off unnecessary outdoor lights at night.

☐ PATH 2 | HELP A WILDLIFE REFUGE

Examples to investigate - choose one or create your own:

- Ask about a cleanup or habitat-restoration day.
- Help with trail or visitor-area care.
- Join an education, survey, or community event.
- Ask whether family, youth, or group opportunities are available.

☐ ANOTHER SMALL MIRACULOUS THING

Examples to investigate - choose one or create your own:

- Teach someone one thing you researched.
- Observe and document a local species.
- Remove litter from an appropriate place with an adult.
- Suggest another safe action and explain why it could help.

You can still be miraculous close to home.

If you cannot get to a refuge, your action still counts. You do not have to travel far to do something miraculous that helps wildlife live their best life.

My choice: ☐ Close to home ☐ Refuge ☐ Both - Big Miraculous Thing ☐ Another action

REMEMBER Before changing habitat, planting, volunteering, or doing work in a public place, check the rules and ask an adult or the organization involved.

STUDENT SHEET 2 | LEARN & PLAN

Learn Before You Help

Whether you choose one path or both, a good intention becomes better action when you check the facts first.

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 | USE A TRUSTED SOURCE

For an action close to home, start with Audubon. For a refuge action, start with the refuge or conservation organization itself. If you choose both paths, research both before you act.

TRUSTED PLACES TO START [Audubon Native Plants](#) • [Audubon Bird-Friendly Home](#) • [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)

The source or organization I checked:

One fact or guideline I learned before acting:

What could I accidentally do wrong if I skipped this research?

2 | MAKE THE PLAN

WHAT will I do?	WHO will help or supervise?
WHERE will it happen?	WHEN will I do it?
WILDLIFE COMES FIRST Do not handle, feed, approach, move, or disturb wildlife for the sake of completing the activity. Do not alter habitat on public land unless staff specifically authorize the work.	

STUDENT SHEET 3 | FIND A PLACE TO HELP

New England Refuges: Places to Start

A refuge visit is one path, not a requirement. Volunteer opportunities change, so check the official refuge page before making plans.

MASSACHUSETTS <u>Parker River National Wildlife Refuge</u> Newburyport / Plum Island Environmental education, trail maintenance, visitor support and other volunteer roles.	NEW HAMPSHIRE <u>Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge</u> Newington Managed by Parker River NWR. Check the refuge page and contact staff for current ways to get involved.
MAINE <u>Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge</u> Wells and southern Maine coast Habitat restoration, plant propagation, invasive-plant removal, surveys, visitor help and volunteer days.	VERMONT <u>Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge</u> Swanton Seasonal volunteering can include trail work, public events, grounds care, invasive-species work and waterfowl banding.
RHODE ISLAND <u>Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge</u> Middletown Part of the Rhode Island refuge complex, with volunteer, education and conservation opportunities across several refuges.	CONNECTICUT <u>Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge</u> Coastal Connecticut Volunteer roles can include visitor services, habitat and grounds work, bird-box projects, tours and other refuge support.

FIND THE REFUGE NEAREST YOU

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service lists volunteer opportunities by location, age requirements, time commitment, and type of work.

[Search current opportunities](#)

A refuge, nature center, or conservation group near me:

One opportunity I would ask about:

BEFORE YOU GO Contact the organization first. Some projects are seasonal, require registration, have age limits, or are designed for families or organized groups. If travel is not possible, return to Path 1 - helping wildlife close to home is every bit as real.

STUDENT SHEET 4 | REFLECT & SHARE

What Changed?

The action may be small. What you notice afterward might not be.

NAME _____

DATE _____

My Small Miraculous Thing - or Big Miraculous Thing if I chose both:

What I actually did:

Something I noticed, learned, or understood differently afterward:

One question I still have:

WOULD I DO IT AGAIN?

DID IT LEAD TO ANOTHER SMALL THING?

THE BIG IDEA One action can help the world close by. Two can connect your home to the wider wild world. You do not have to travel far to do something miraculous that helps wildlife live their best life.