

# TEACHERS GUIDE

## TO “RICH IN BEAUTY”

Multidisciplinary classroom activities based on the Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, November–December 2017, [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine).

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*Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* magazine tells stories that connect readers to wild things and wild places. Subjects include earth science, wildlife biology, botany, forestry, ecology, natural and cultural history, state parks, and outdoor life.

**Education has been a priority** for this magazine since its beginning in 1940. “One word—Education—sums up our objective,” wrote the editors in the first issue. Thanks to the MCV Charbonneau Education Fund, every public library and school in Minnesota receives a subscription. Please tell other educators about this resource.

**Every issue now features** a Young Naturalists story and an online Teachers Guide. As an educator, you may download Young Naturalists stories and reproduce or modify the Teachers Guide. The [student portion of the guide](#) includes vocabulary cards, study questions, and other materials.

**Readers’ contributions** keep *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* alive. The magazine is entirely financially supported by its readers.

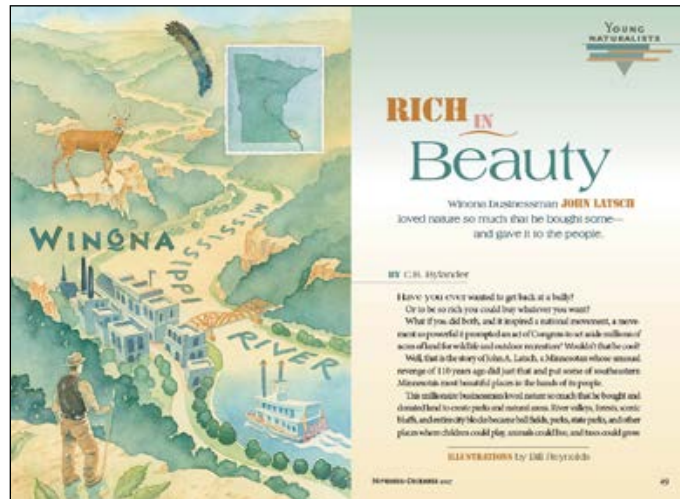
**Find every issue online.** Each story and issue is available in a searchable PDF format. Visit [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine) and click on *past issues*.

**Thank you** for bringing Young Naturalists into your classroom!

# “RICH IN BEAUTY”

Multidisciplinary classroom activities based on the Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, September–October 2017, [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine).

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**SUMMARY.** John Latsch was a 20th century businessman who bought up thousands of acres of land in southeastern Minnesota and made it available for public use. “Rich in Beauty” talks about why and how Latsch helped set aside land from development, and describes some of the places he preserved for future generations.

**SUGGESTED READING LEVELS.** Third through middle-school grades

**MATERIALS.** Poster board, colored pencils, crayons, pens, markers, art supplies, digital recorders, print and online resources your media specialist may provide

**PREPARATION TIME.** One to two hours, not including time for extension activities

**ESTIMATED INSTRUCTION TIME.** One or two 50-minute class periods (not including extensions)

**MINNESOTA ACADEMIC STANDARDS APPLICATIONS.** “Rich in Beauty” may be applied to the following Minnesota Department of Education standards:

## LANGUAGE ARTS READING BENCHMARKS INFORMATIONAL TEXT 4–8

Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

**WRITING BENCHMARKS 4–8** Text Types and Purposes, Writing Process, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, Range of Writing

## READING BENCHMARKS: LITERACY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS 6–8

Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

## WRITING BENCHMARKS: LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS 6–8

Text Types and Purposes, Writing Process: Production and Distribution of Writing, Research to Build and Present Knowledge, Range of Writing

## SCIENCE 5, 7, AND 8

Content from this article may be applied broadly to standards from:  
Human Interactions with Living Systems

## SOCIAL STUDIES 3,4,5 AND 6

3.1.1.1.1; 3.3.1.1.1; 4.3.4.9.1; 5.2.2.2.1; 6.3.4.10.1

## ARTS K–12

1. Artistic Foundations: Visual Arts
2. Artistic Process: Create or Make: Visual Arts
3. Artistic Process: Perform or Present: Visual Arts; Music
4. Artistic Process: Respond or Critique: Visual Arts; Music

Current, complete Minnesota Academic Standards are at [www.education.state.mn.us](http://www.education.state.mn.us). Teachers who find other connections to standards are encouraged to contact *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*.

**PREVIEW.** 1) Show students a map of Minnesota that highlights state parks, state forests, and other public lands. Discuss what public lands are and how they differ from private lands. 2) Show students a map of the Winona area. Point out the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and the state parks mentioned in the article (Merrick and Perrot state parks in Wisconsin and Whitewater and John A. Latsch state parks in Minnesota). If time allows, look at a couple of the park websites together to see what they offer.

**VOCABULARY PREVIEW.** You can find a copy-ready vocabulary list at the end of this guide. Feel free to modify it to fit your needs. Share the words with your students and invite them to guess what they think they mean. Tell them you will be reading a story that will help them understand these words so they can use them in the future.

You might wish to use the study cards (adapted from *Strategic Tutoring*) found at the end of the [Study Questions](#) for this Young Naturalists feature. On one half of the card, in large letters, is a key vocabulary word or phrase with smaller letters framing the word or phrase in a question or statement. On the other half is the answer to the question or the rest of the statement. Cut along the horizontal line, fold in the middle, and tape or staple, then use like flash cards. We've included a few blanks so you or your students can add new words or phrases if you'd like.

**STUDY QUESTIONS OVERVIEW.** Preview the study questions with your class before you read the article. Then read the story aloud. Complete the study questions in class, in small groups, or as an independent activity, or use them as a quiz.

**ADAPTATIONS.** Read aloud to special needs students. Abbreviate the study questions or focus on items appropriate for the students. Adapt or provide assistance with extension activities as circumstances allow.

**ASSESSMENT.** You may use all or part of the study guide, combined with vocabulary, as a quiz. Other assessment ideas include: (1) Ask students to describe what they learned about John Latsch. (2) Have students write multiple-choice, true-false, or short-answer questions based on the article. Select the best items for a class quiz. (3) Posters and presentations are an excellent strategy for allowing students to demonstrate what they have learned. (4) Have students write and perform a play or podcast based on Latsch's life.

**EXTENSION ACTIVITIES.** Extensions are intended for individual students, small groups, or your entire class. Young Naturalists articles provide teachers many opportunities to make connections to related topics, to allow students to follow particular interests, or to focus on specific academic standards.

1. Invite students individually or in teams to produce a creative work around John Latsch's story: write a play or podcast, produce a painting or sculpture, write a poem or song, etc. Share the works in a classroom talent show.
2. This Young Naturalists tells a story. Explore the art of storytelling with your students. Learn about the elements of a good story and how to present them (see Web Resources below). Invite students to use their new skills to craft and share a story about a person they know who has done something positive for your community.
3. If you had \$1 million to use to do good, what would you do with it? Invite students to imagine what they would do. Have students pair up and take turns being the reporter who interviews the philanthropist. Then have them write a news article or do a TV or radio spot telling the story.
4. In this Young Naturalists we learned about Will Dilg, the found of the Izaak Walton League. If there is an IWL chapter in your area, invite a representative to speak to your class about the organization, what it does, and how your students might become involved.
5. If you are in the Winona area, visit land that Latsch donated.
6. If you live elsewhere, work as a class to identify public lands in your area. Choose a park, nature preserve, etc., and do research to find out how it became public land. If the park has a website, volunteer to create content for a history page.

## **WEB RESOURCES**

### **GENERAL TEACHER AND STUDENT RESOURCES**

[Minnesota DNR Teachers' Resources](#)

[DNR Kids Page](#)

## JOHN LATSCH

[John A. Latsch: The Man, the Legacy](#)

[The Legacy of Latsch](#)

## PUBLIC LAND

[Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge](#)

[Merrick State Park](#)

[Perrot State Park](#)

[Whitewater State Park](#)

[John A. Latsch State Park](#)

[Winona Parks](#)

## STORYTELLING

[The Art of Storytelling](#)

[Introduction to Storytelling \(video series\)](#)

## STUDY QUESTIONS ANSWER KEY

1. Why was Latsch on the farmer's land? **Because he got caught in a rainstorm and wanted to get off the water until the storm was over.**
2. Who bullied John Latsch, and how?
  - a. A grocery store owner made him work long hours.
  - b. A farmer chased him off his property in the rain.**
  - c. His friend and business agent, Frank Fugina, took his money to buy land.
  - d. His family wouldn't let him buy a car or live in a big house.
3. On the day he got caught in the rain, Latsch was paddling upstream on the Mississippi River. Why is it a smart idea to start a round trip in a canoe by paddling upstream instead of downstream? **It's harder to paddle against the current than with it. If you paddle upstream first, you increase the chances you'll have enough time and energy to get back to where you started when it's time to go home.**
4. How did John Latsch get the money he used to buy land to share with other people? **He inherited a family grocery business and worked hard to manage it.**
5. What does it mean that Latsch viewed the Mississippi River corridor as one of America's great public playgrounds?
  - a. He thought that landowners should share their land with other people.
  - b. He thought it should be public property so everyone could use it.**
  - c. He thought it should be filled with climbing bars and swing sets.
  - d. He thought it should have more towns like Winona.
6. Why did Latsch tell Frank Fugina to buy land up and down the river? **So everyone could use it.**
7. Who was mainly responsible for setting aside land for current and future generations during Latsch's lifetime? **State and national governments**

8. Name five public areas that include land made available through Latsch's contributions. **Answers may vary, but may include Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Merrick State Park, Perrot State Park, Whitewater State Park, John A. Latsch State Park, Bluffside Park, Prairie Island, Westfield Golf Course, Athletic Park, Gabrych Park, Aghaming Park**

9. Why did Latsch donate land? **Because he cared for people, loved the outdoors, and wanted others to have a chance to experience and love the outdoors too.**

10. Why did Latsch set up public beaches? **He heard stories of children drowning in unsupervised swimming holes and he wanted them to have a safe place with life-guards to swim.**

11. True or false: Latsch donated land so other people would like him. **False. He did not want to be famous, he just wanted others to have a place to play.**

12. Who was Will Dilg?

a. a farmer who chased John Latsch from his property

**b. the founder of the Izaak Walton League**

c. a Winona artist

d. a Winona storyteller

13. What did Latsch inspire Dilg to do? **Work to have the government protect land along the Mississippi River as a wildlife and fish refuge.**

14. This article is titled "Rich in Beauty." Knowing what you know now about John Latsch, what does that mean? **Answers may vary. Latsch had a lot of money, but instead of keeping it to himself, he used it to make sure the beautiful land along the Mississippi River was protected for all to enjoy. His wealth was not stuck in things he owned, but invested in sharing scenic places with others.**

BONUS: The Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge is 261 miles long and covers more than 240,000 acres. If 1 square mile is 640 acres, what is its average width in miles?  $240,000/640 = 375$  square miles.  $375/261 = 1.4$  miles.

### **MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENTS ANSWER KEY.**

1. How did Latsch get back at the farmer who treated him poorly?

a. He bought the farmer's land

b. He bought other land along the Mississippi River

c. He donated the land to the public so others could use it in ways he wasn't able to.

**d. All of the above**

2. Why do you think Latsch bought the farmer's land? **Answers may vary. They should include the idea that he was upset that he was not able to freely use the open spaces around Winona, and wanted others to be able to do so.**

3. What evidence is there that Latsch's actions were part of a larger movement? **Yellowstone National Park and Itasca State Park were both established during his lifetime.**

4. True or false: The Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge once belonged to Latsch. **False. Latsch donated land that became part of the refuge, but the story implies that the refuge also includes other land.**

5. The writer describes John Latsch's house as "modest." What does that tell us about the house?

- a. It was not very fancy.
- b. It had few windows.
- c. It had been built very recently.
- d. Latsch lived there alone.

### VOCABULARY LIST

**bottomland** low-lying land along a river

**dike (v)** to install a barrier that keeps water away from a certain area

**floodplain** land near a river that becomes covered with water during floods

**heir** someone who inherits money or things from another person

**lavish (adj)** full of many fine things

**nestled** tucked cozily

**sandbar** island or shallow spot in a river formed by sand carried and deposited by the water

**spearhead** start or take the lead