Polluting the Duck Pond

Is anything wrong with washing your clothes with detergent in a lake or a pond? Take a look!

What to do: Stuff the plastic bag with the small pieces of wax paper. Close the bag with its fastener. Draw a duck on the bag with the felt-tipped pen. Float your "duck" in the pan or bowl. Then add a little detergent.

What happens: The duck sinks.

Why: The wax paper and plastic are water-repellent—just the way a live duck is. A duck's feathers are oily. This oil repels water and helps a duck to float. But a detergent enables water to stick to oily materials. Detergent may be fine for wash-dishes and clothes, but it is deadly for the duck.

YOU NEED
• small plastic bag and fastener
• wax paper, cut into small pieces
• felt tipped pen
• large pan or bowl of water
• liquid detergent