



Protecting Southwest Florida's unique natural environment and quality of life ... now and forever.

Wild About Wildlife Pre and Post-Program Activities

Grade Level: 1-2

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

- SC.1.L.14.1; SC.1.L.14.3; SC.1.L.17.1
- SC.2.L.17.1; SC.2.L.17.2; SC.2.N.1.1

Program Overview

Explore the diverse habitats of Southwest Florida and meet some of the species that call these areas home. Learn how these animals have adapted to live in unique environments and what you can do to help protect wildlife in your own backyard.

Learning Objectives Students will be able to:

1. Recognize the basic necessities of all living things including air, water, food, and space.
2. Compare and contrast different habitats in Florida and how each habitat meets specific needs of the plants and animals that live there.
3. Explain how humans can help protect wildlife and habitats.

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Conservancy of Southwest Florida has been awarded Charity Navigator's prestigious 4-Star top rating for good governance, sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency. Charity Navigator is America's largest and most respected independent evaluator of charities.

Pre-Program Activity 1: What's Wild?

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

Adapted from Project WILD: K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide

Students will distinguish between wildlife and domesticated animals, and recognize that wildlife occurs in a variety of forms.

Materials: magazine or newspaper pictures of a wide variety of animals, poster board or heavy construction paper, glue

Background: Differences between wild and domesticated animals are important. Wild animals live in a natural state, providing their own food, shelter, and other needs in a suitable habitat. Domesticated animals are tamed and cared for by people. The process of domestication takes place over a long period of time and has involved genetic manipulation through selective breeding. All domestic animals have their origins in wild ancestors. Livestock (such as cattle, sheep, and pigs) and pets (such as dogs and cats) are all examples of domesticated animals.

Remember that wild animals basically take care of themselves as long as they have a suitable environment or habitat in which to live. Domesticated or tame animals basically depend on people to feed and take care of them, and are typically used by people (for example, as a source of products and as pets). Whereas domesticated animals like cats and dogs are normally considered suitable pets, wild animals- even if tamed- are nearly always unsuitable, inappropriate, and frequently illegal pets.

The major purpose of this activity is for students to understand the concept of wildlife by learning to distinguish between wild and domesticated animals.

Directions:

1. Ask students to bring in pictures of as many animals as they can find in magazines, in newspapers, or on the internet. For the purpose of this activity, reinforce with the students the concept that animals are any living things except plants.
2. Discuss with students the difference between wild and domesticated animals. Then either alone or in groups, have the students classify their collection of animal pictures into these categories. Discuss the kinds of animals found in each group and how wildlife was differentiated from domestic animals.

3. Once the students have classified the pictures, ask the students to use poster board or construction paper and glue to make two collages: one featuring wildlife and the other featuring domesticated animals. Design an art gallery using the students work.

Sources: Project Wild K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide, © Council for Environment Education, Houston, TX, rev. 2001

Pre-Program Activity 2: Creating Habitats

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

Adapted from Project WILD: K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide

Students will identify the basic components of a habitat as food, water, shelter, and space, and generalize that these components of habitat are needed by all animals – including people and wildlife.

Materials: paper and crayons

Directions:

1. Write on the board and discuss with students what a habitat is: *where an animal lives*. Next, discuss what all living things need to survive: *food, water, shelter, and space*, and that these basic needs can be found in an organism's habitat.
2. Ask the students to draw a picture of where they live- their habitat- and include pictures of where they find food, water, shelter, and space. Have students label (or circle) these parts of their drawings ('space' can include rooms of the house, a yard, etc.).
3. Ask students to write 'My Habitat' in big letters at the top, and review the importance of a habitat and its components for people.
4. Give students another piece of paper (or use the back), and ask them to think of an animal. Have students decide if it is a **wild** animal or a **domestic** animal (see Pre-Program Activity 1 for a review of these terms).
5. Ask students to draw a picture of their chosen animal in its habitat. Be sure to have them include drawings of the animal's survival needs, including

food, water, space, and shelter. Again, have them label (or circle) these parts of their drawings.

6. Have students write 'Habitat' in big letters at the top and review the importance of a habitat and its components for wild animals as well as for domestic animals.
7. Discuss with students similarities and differences between animal and human habitats. While all living things share the basic needs of survival (food, water, space, shelter), those needs look different depending on the animal or person.

Sources: Project Wild K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide, p.56 © Council for Environment Education, Houston, TX, rev. 2001.

Post-Program Activity 1: Outdoor Wildlife Count

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

Adapted from Project WILD: K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide

Students will observe and count wildlife in an area, discuss why wildlife is or is not present, and consider ways in which the presence of wildlife can be seen as an indicator of environmental quality.

Materials: writing materials, poster board or construction paper, colored pens, pencils, or crayons

Background: Wildlife is an important indicator of the overall health of the environment. If there are few wild animals – or little evidence of wildlife – present in an area, it is likely there is little available food, water, or shelter in the area, or there may not be enough space.

Even if these necessary components of habitat are available, they may not be arranged to meet the needs of wildlife. The kinds of wildlife present are also indicators. The presence of raptors, for example, indicates that an area has some variety of trees for perching and building nests, as well as small mammals and other animals for food.

Directions: NOTE: Several possibilities may arise when doing this activity. The school or organization may be in an area where there are few, if any, wild animals

present. If little or no wildlife is spotted, talk with the students about what that means. Perhaps resources such as food, water, space and shelter are limited.

1. Before going outside, make sure students understand that the term “wildlife” includes insects, spiders, and other invertebrates, as well as birds, fish, reptiles, mammals, and amphibians.
2. Go outside and complete a wildlife count. Distribute writing materials to the students, and then have the students work alone. Ask each student to find a spot, sit quietly for 10 minutes, and observe (quiet is very important to increase the likelihood of seeing wildlife). The students should record any wildlife that they see or hear. They can include evidence of wildlife in addition to actual sightings (i.e. feathers, snake skin sheds, scat, etc.). Ask the students to total the number of each type of wildlife they observe and then make a grand total. Put all students’ information on one master chart.
3. Follow up discussion questions:
 - Was this a good habitat for wildlife?
 - Why or why not?
 - If not, how could it be improved for wildlife?
 - What types of wildlife were found/seen/heard?

Sources: Project Wild K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide, © Council for Environment Education, Houston, TX, rev. 2001

Post-Program Activity 2: Ethi-Thinking

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

Adapted from Project WILD: K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide

Students will generate a list of activities that are harmful to wildlife and the environment, discuss reasons these activities are inappropriate, and recommend alternative activities that are not harmful.

Materials: art supplies (crayons, construction paper, magazine photos) to make discussion cards

Background: The major purpose of this activity is for students to discriminate between outdoor activities that are harmful to wildlife and the environment and those that are not.

Directions:

1. Ask students to make a list of human activities that seem harmful to wild plants and animals. Ask them to think about things they've seen or know about that might be harmful. Some ideas could include:
 - Picking up baby wild animals in the environment (birds, fawns, etc.)
 - Carving initials into trees
 - Driving vehicles or even walking over fragile environments
 - Removing plants from the environment
 - Destroying bird nests
 - Feeding, taking, collecting, possessing, harassing, or killing wildlife
2. Next, discuss ways that students can *help* wildlife:
 - Do NOT feed, take, collect, etc.
 - Plant trees
 - Pick up trash/litter, even if they did not put it there
 - Reduce, reuse, recycle
 - If they see an injured wild animal, call the Conservancy's Wildlife Hospital at (239) 262-CARE to find out what to do
3. Have students create posters/pictures portraying how they can help wildlife.
4. If time allows, have students present their picture and then hang them up around the room or in the hallway.

Sources: Project Wild K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide, © Council for Environment Education, Houston, TX, rev. 2001