



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

Wild About Wildlife Pre and Post-Program Activities

Grade Level: 3-5

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

- SC.3.L.15.1; SC.3.L.17.1
- SC.4.L.16.2; SC.4.L.17.4
- SC.5.L.15.1; SC.5.L.17.1

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: Classifying Animals

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

Materials: computer with internet access and a way to project the images to a larger screen for the class to observe, worksheets (provided)

Background:

Animals can be classified into six main groups: mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, birds and insects. Each type has its own specific characteristics that set it apart from the other animal classifications.

Mammals are warm blooded, covered with hair, give live birth and nurse their young. Reptiles are cold-blooded, covered with dry scaly skin, lay eggs and usually do not care for their young. Amphibians are cold-blooded, lay eggs and do not care for their young. Fish live in water, are covered with scales, breathe with gills, lay eggs, are cold-blooded and do not care for their young. Insects are warm-blooded, lay eggs, do not care for their young and are covered with a hard exoskeleton.

Directions:

1. Have the students watch this educational video about the six different animal types and the differences between them. Feel free to have the students take notes or pause the video at any significant sections and discuss:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ls7ds5Aqi4> (20 min).
2. Hand out the animal classification worksheets (see below).
3. You can have the students either work in groups, individually, or you can go over each box together as a class.
4. This will help the students understand the big differences between the different animal types.
5. For each type, the animal can be projected on a larger screen so the students can understand that some of these differences can be seen with the naked eye (skin patterns) while others cannot (warm/cold-blooded).

Classifying Animals

	Fish	Amphibians	Reptiles	Birds	Mammals	Insects
Warm or Cold Blooded						
Body Covering Type						
Live Birth or Hatched from an Egg?						
Feed Young with Milk? (yes/no)						
Has a Skeleton?						
Break with Lungs or gills?						
Example:						

Pre-Program Activity 2: Who Fits Here?

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

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

Students will identify characteristic life forms in ecosystems, describe the importance of adaptations in animals, and generalize that each ecosystem has characteristic life forms adapted to live there.

Materials: library research books, poster board for 10 posters; crayons, paints, or magazine photos for posters; poster board, index cards, or construction paper for 50 adaptation cards (label each card with a number 1-50)

Background: Each environment is suitable to those life forms that have adapted to its climate, soils, water, vegetation, and other life forms and to other ecological factors over a number of years.

Directions:

1. Divide the class into five equal groups- Scrub, Hardwood Hammock, Cypress Swamp, Mangrove Estuary, and Ocean. Explain that each group will make a game for the other. The object of the game will be to match animals to the environment in which they live.
2. Have students in each group research their ecosystem and learn its characteristic life forms, including adaptations of animals that enable them to survive in that environment.
3. Ask students to make a poster showing the characteristic vegetation, terrain, and so on, in the ecosystem they are studying, though do NOT include animals at this time. Posters of each ecosystem can be made with crayons and paints or magazine cut-outs.
4. For each ecosystem, students should make five cards, each with an animal which is characteristic of the ecosystem. On the front of each card should be one number, 1-50. On the back side, have students write a description of the animal's adaptations to its environment. Do not put the name of the animal or a picture of it on the card. The card should describe adaptations that enable the animal to survive in the ecosystem.
5. When posters are made and cards completed, have each group create a master list of the five animals that their cards represent, this time with the animal name, and turn it in to the teacher. Next, have all students put their animal cards in a pile and shuffle them.

6. Have students take their seats. Go over the posters (Florida ecosystems) as a class, mentioning distinguishing characteristics (vegetation, soil type, aquatic- fresh or salt, etc.).
7. Call on students one at a time to come up, select an animal card and read it aloud (if they choose one of their own, select a different one). Have the student then guess what animal he or she thinks it is, and which ecosystem/habitat it lives in. Confirm with the master list for correct responses.
8. Once animals have been placed in their proper ecosystems, have a discussion.
 - Were any animals found in more than one ecosystem? How can some animals live in more than one ecosystem but not others?
 - What are similarities and differences among the ecosystems and characteristic life forms?
 - What are some of the most interesting animal adaptations? What function do these adaptations serve? How do they relate to the nature of the physical environment?
 - Are there any other animals that could live in these ecosystems that we missed?
 - Ask the students what characterizes animals and the environments in which they live.

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

(more lessons on next page)

Post-Program Activity 1: Graph-An-Animal

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

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

Students will identify characteristic life forms in two different environments.

Materials: pictures of animals, cardboard for mounting photos, notebook paper, graph paper, and pencils

Background:

Different animals are found in different environments. Each type of animal is adapted to survive in its environment based on the climate, soil, water, vegetation, and other ecological factors. Every living creature requires food, water, shelter, and space in which to live. Through this activity, students will learn how different habitats support different kinds of animals, and how some animals can be found in two different habitats.

Directions:

1. Pick two environments from Southwest Florida (e.g. Pine Upland Forest and Freshwater Marsh). Provide students with pictures of animals, and have each student pick two animals for each habitat. Glue the pictures onto heavy paper or cardboard.
2. Have the students tell where their animals live. Create a pile for each habitat, and have the students put their pictures in the pile where their animal lives.
3. Create a list of the animals in each pile to show the students which species of animals live in each habitat, and have the students copy down the list. Some animals will appear on both lists.
4. When the students are out of the room, find an area of the classroom that can hypothetically serve as the appropriate habitat. Label each habitat, and place the pictures of the animals in the appropriate place. Some animals may be in both habitats. Put the animal pictures in all sorts of places to simulate where they might actually live, such as a window sill, in a cubby hole, or a table leg.
5. Bring students back into the classroom for a “nature walk”. As the students walk around, have them use their lists to tally the animals they see in each habitat. At the end of the walk, have the students total their counts, and write the total number of each animal on their lists. Have students take turns walking along the “path”.

6. Show the students how to make a bar graph for each of the environments. Give each student a piece of graph paper, and show them how they can fill in each square for the number of each animal they saw, or they can use a computer to compile and portray the data.

Pine Upland Forest Habitat										
Raccoon	■				■	■	■	■	■	■
Florida Panther	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Rattlesnake	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Rabbit	■				■	■	■	■	■	■
Red-Tailed Hawk	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

7. Using the graphs, compare the two environments. Which animals were seen the most? Which animals were seen the least? Why might you see more of one animal than another? How can some animals live in both places, and what are some examples of those animals? Why can all the animals live in both places?
8. Discuss the different types of requirements (food, water, shelter, space) for a few of the animals, and how each habitat provided that requirement.

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

Post-Program Activity 2: Wildlife Is Everywhere!

Duration of Activity: 1 hour

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

Students will explore human and wildlife habitat, and generalize that wildlife is present around the world.

Materials: none

Background:

When people think of wildlife, they often think of large animals such as elephants, lions, whales, and bears. Wildlife, though, includes any animal that has not been domesticated by people. These animals not only include the large animals, but everything down to the smallest organisms- even those that can only be seen through a microscope. Spiders, insects, reptiles, amphibians, and most species of fish, birds, and mammals are considered wildlife. Even though animals might not be readily visible or heard, they still exist somewhere around us. Thousands of organisms live both within and on human skin, hair, and bodies. Often times, most of the organisms that inhabit human bodies play a large part in human survival. The goal of this activity is to familiarize students with the knowledge that wildlife isn't just the large animals we typically think of, and that in some form or another, animal life is always nearby.

Directions:

NOTE: Ask students to observe, but not touch or disturb, any animals they may see.

1. Invite students to explore the classroom looking for signs of wildlife. Even clean rooms will have some sign of wildlife. It could be signs such as spider webs, dead insects near lights, or insect holes along baseboards and behind books. After the search, have the students discuss what they might have found, and introduce the idea that people and other animals share the same environment. People will sometimes not even notice that they are sharing the environment with other living things.
2. After the initial search indoors, take the search for animals outside. Have the students separate into pairs, and give each pair five minutes to find an animal or some sign that an animal has been there (e.g. tracks, feathers, nests, and webs). When searching for these signs, be sure not to disturb any

evidence that is found. Remind students to look all around themselves to find signs of wildlife, and not just at eye level. Afterwards, sit down and discuss what everyone found.

3. Discussion:

- a. Discuss with the student what they have learned, and stress how we are surrounded by wildlife and that people share the same environment with wildlife. Have the students come up with ideas as to what people might be able to do to increase the numbers and types of animals in an area that might not have much evidence of wildlife.
- b. Have the students draw from their own experiences, and give examples of areas they have been and seen wildlife (including the smaller organisms).
- c. Give examples of different habitats (forests, deserts, in a lake or river, on the top of a mountain, prairies, in the city), and ask the students what kind of animals they think might live there. What different adaptations might these animals have to live in such different, and sometimes extreme, environments?
- d. If humans and wildlife share the same environment, what can humans do to help protect the environment for our wildlife neighbors?

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