

Wild Waters Downtown

Grade

4

Topic: Water
Grade: 4
Duration: 30 - 45 minutes

Students will learn how wild animals living in urban settings also need sources of clean water.

Curriculum Expectations

- 4s1: Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of habitat and community, and identify the factors that could affect habitats and communities of plants and animals
- 4s2: Investigate the dependency of plants and animals on their habitat and the interrelationships of the plants and animals living in a specific habitat
- 4s3: Describe ways in which humans can change habitats and the effects of these changes on the plants and animals within the habitats
- 4s4: Identify, through observation, various factors that affect plants and animals in a specific habitat
- 4s7: Describe structural adaptations of plants and animals that demonstrate a response of the living things to their environment
- 4s8: Recognize that animals and plants live in specific habitats because they are dependent on those habitats and have adapted to them
- 4s10: Formulate questions about and identify the needs of animals and plants in a particular habitat, and explore possible answers to these questions and ways of meeting these needs
- 4s11: Plan investigations for some of these answers and solutions, identifying variables that need to be held constant to ensure a fair test and identifying criteria for assessing solutions
- 4s12: Use appropriate vocabulary, including correct science and technology terminology, in describing their investigations, explorations, and observations
- 4s13: Compile data gathered through investigation in order to record and present results, using tally charts, tables, and labelled graphs produced by hand or with a computer
- 4s14: Communicate the procedures and results of investigations for specific purposes and to specific audiences, using media works, oral presentations, written notes and descriptions, drawings, and charts
- 4s16: Describe ways in which humans can affect the natural world
- 4s18: Show the effects on plants and animals of the loss of their natural habitat
- 4e2: Begin to write for more complex purposes
- 4m101: Collect and organize data and identify their use
- 4m103: Interpret displays of data and present the information using mathematical terms
- 4m107: Before gathering data, predict the possible results of a survey based on their experiences
- 4m110: Explain how data were collected and describe the results of a survey

Background Information

All animals need a habitat to survive successfully. Food, shelter and space are easily seen but from where do urban animals get their water supply? As mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, insects, spiders and other invertebrates move around, where do they get their water?

Creatures are creative even during droughts to find water or move to the areas where water can be found. Family pools, wet grass, dog and cat bowls on decks of houses and the occasional “in the doggie door” for a quick raccoon snack are not unheard of. Creatures can be very resourceful when looking for the natural resource they need.

Accountability

Teachers, neighbours of the school and students will be aware of the need for water if they wish to see wildlife around their homes. Students will be able to name how creatures get water in an urban setting.

Teacher Notes

1. Materials: paper, clipboards, field guides, binoculars, etc.
2. Make a list of animals and their needs in the wild for food, water, shelter, and space. Try to translate that list for the same creatures in an urban setting.
3. Go on a field trip around the local area or, if unsafe, to a safer park within the school boundaries.
4. Look for animals and be specific as to what they are. Check the walls around the school for insects as well as the dirt around the school building. Whenever a creature is sighted, fill in the chart: what is it, where was it seen and what is its water source.
5. Discuss the open water issues of West Nile Virus and what will happen to urban animals as these pooling areas are cleaned up. As animals become more desperate for water, where will they go?
6. Discuss with your class how can we create a safe place for us and creatures of the wild and still maintain an area free from West Nile Virus. Share students' ideas with the health department and your local conservation authority.

Home Extension

Look around yards and gardens for areas to create safe watering for urban wildlife.

Lesson comments

What did your students find?

Who did they tell?

What creative plans did they come up with?