NEIGHBORHOOD ANIMAL SURVEY

Wildlife Champions at Home Science Experiment

3-LS4-2: *Use evidence to construct an explanation for how the variations in characteristics among individuals of the same species may provide advantages in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing.*

What is a survey?

A survey is a simple method of collecting data. Scientists can use surveys to collect all kinds of information! To conduct a survey, a scientist must ask a question and try to answer it by collecting lots of data. Let's say a scientist wants to know the average length of great white sharks. They can answer this question with a survey by measuring as many sharks as they can, recording these measurements and calculating the average. What if we wanted to know if more people like cats or dogs? We would need to ask a bunch of people what they think and record their answers!

Today, you are going to become a community scientist: a non-professional scientist who helps other scientists by collecting or analyzing data! Your task as a community scientist is to conduct a wildlife survey of your neighborhood. You will observe the animals in your neighborhood and count how many of each species you can find. You will record your findings on the page below.

As you observe these animals, think about the adaptations they have that help them to live in this urban habitat. An **adaptation** is something that helps a plant or animal survive in their habitat. Many adaptations develop in a population or species over a looong period of time, such as polar bears gaining the white fur that camouflages them in the arctic tundra. Other adaptations develop quickly in an individual organism, such as a human rock climber developing calluses on their hands or a raccoon learning to beg for food around a new neighborhood. There are two kinds of adaptations to keep in mind during your survey: physical adaptations and behavioral adaptations. A **physical adaptation** is a change of the physical body (the long tail squirrels have to help them balance in the trees), where a **behavioral adaptation** is a change in behaviors or habits (squirrels learning to use a bird feeder as an easy food source).

Materials

1 Animal Survey sheet, 1 pencil, someone to explore with (optional, but more fun!)

Nature at Home

Directions

Survey the animals in your neighborhood and count the number of each species you find. Record your findings on the Animal Survey sheet provided with this activity.

Step 1. Print out the Animal Survey Sheet. If you do not have a printer, you can copy the species names onto any blank sheet of paper.

Step 2. Go explore! Hit the sidewalk and walk around your neighborhood. Bring a partner for safety & extra fun.

Step 3. When you see an animal, place a tally mark next to the species on your paper. This helps you keep track of what *kinds* of animals you saw as well as *how many*. If you do not know how to count with tally marks, see the picture below.

1	I	6	ЖI
2	II	7	ЖII
3	III	8	ЖIII
4	IIII	9	ЖIIII
5	Ж	10	ЖЖ

Reflection

1. How many different *kinds* of animals did you see?
2. What animal did you see the most?
3. What animal did you see the least?
4. Did you see any animals that were not on the survey sheet?
5. What is an **adaptation** each of these animals has that helps them survive in an urban/city environment?

Helpful Links

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SCVBkUcpOY

Nature at Home

ANANIMAL SURVEY *of my Neighborhood*

Coyote:

Crow:

Snake:

Rabbit:

Stellar Jay:

Ant:

Chickadee:
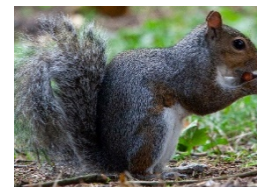
Squirrel:

Seagull:

Earthworm:

Scrub Jay:

Deer:
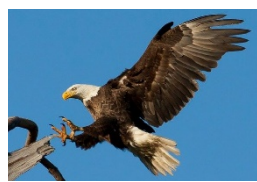
Eagle:

Bee:

Robin:

Hawk:

Raccoon:

Flicker:
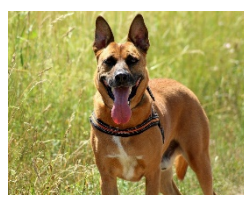
Pet Dog:

Pet Cat:

Adaptations I notice: _____

POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM
Metro Parks Tacoma

Northwest Trek Wildlife Park
METRO PARKS TACOMA

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