



Ecology in the Field: Habitats and Ecosystems

OUTDOOR PROGRAM SUMMARY

Level: Grades 6-12
Program Length: 40–50 minutes

Maximum: 32 students
Minimum: 15 students

Description

How do habitats connect and influence each other? Students will compare the habitats of micro-scale organisms to those of the macro-scale by investigating the habitat diversity of several different groups of organisms. This program incorporates observation, comparison, journaling, discussion and creativity to connect with students of all learning styles.

Curriculum Correlations

Students will:

1. Recognize the significant role of water in earth processes and understand that the earth is one interconnected system. **S6E3, SEV2**
2. Examine the dependence of organisms on one another and their environments. **S7L4, SB5**
3. Analyze how biotic and abiotic factors interact to affect the distribution of diversity of life on Earth and how animals interact with their environment. **S7L1**
4. Assess the impact of human activities on the natural world, and evaluate the relationships between humans and other animals. **SEV4, SEV5, SB5**

Main Themes

- Discover different habitats within Fernbank Forest and the relationships between biotic and abiotic factors within the ecosystem.
- Identify plant and animal species from their characteristics and habits.
- Explore the natural world through the hands-on scientific process, journaling and discussion.

Vocabulary

Biodiversity
Macroinvertebrate
Tolerance
Bioindicator
Biotic

Abiotic
Anthropogenic
Habitat
Ecosystem
Taxonomy

Ecology
Decomposer
Terrestrial
Organic

Pre-Visit Activities

Review vocabulary with students. Explore your schoolyard or a local space and identify the types of habitats present (wetland, woodland, grassland, shrubland, etc.) and the types of animals that could be found there. Discuss how each habitat relates to another in the same ecosystem.

At the Museum

Explore WildWoods and Fernbank Forest to discover more about the natural world. Visit A Walk Through Time in Georgia to learn more about the distinctive features of Georgia's physiographic regions and compare to the Piedmont forest. Download grade-specific activities from our website to use while at the Museum at <http://www.fernbankmuseum.org/learn/downloadable-resources/>.

Post-visit Activities

Have students research and create a habitat ideal for 1-3 different native plant and/or animal species. Discuss with students the scientific process and challenges one might face during the study.

Resources

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/Soil_food_webUSDA.jpg
<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/13/TrophicWeb.jpg>
<http://www.hvatoday.org/assets/PDFs/Benthic-Macroinvertebrate-Study.pdf>
<http://www.fishwildlife.org/files/ConEd-Schoolyard-Biodiversity-Guide.pdf>