



Playcard Environmental Education Center Pre-visit Information Sheet

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Playcard Pre-visit Information

Fourth Grade: Exploring Structures of Life In Habitats/Earth Systems

Fourth Grade:

Exploring Structures of Life In Habitats: Standards Addressed

Animal life cycles in habitats, plant part identification structures and functions, animal parts, animal classification, fossils, wetland collections, vertebrate vs.invertebrate, flowering plants vs. conifers, animal adaptations beaks, feet, necks, etc. Map reading, landforms. (4-ESS2-1, LS1.A, ESS-2-2)

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Students will receive first-hand experience exploring structural survival adaptations of plants and animals to their natural environment. The life within a primary successional field, an old-growth forest, and a black-water beaver-pond swamp habitat will be the focus. The students, working in teams, will explore the habitats and inhabitants of Playcard through the use of sampling equipment following landform maps. They will collect and observe a variety of biotic and abiotic components of habitats including soil samples, insects and their larva, crustaceans, vertebrate and plant species. Animal and plant sensory perception and structural adaptations to specific environments will be explored. Taxidermy specimens of wetland and upland mammals and birds will be included. Time will be shared between field and lab activities.

VOCABULARY (The following words will be used in your program. If possible, please investigate their definitions.)

[Adaptation](#)

[Vertebrate](#)

[Swamp](#)

[Herbivore](#)

[Dispersal](#)

[Aquatic Nymph](#)

[Invertebrate](#)

[Food Chain](#)

[Omnivore](#)

[Camouflage](#)

[Carnivore](#)

[Pond](#)

[Wetlands](#)

[Scavenger](#)

[Mimicry](#)

Preparing for your Visit

1. Please encourage students to wear clothing appropriate for the weather conditions and be ready to explore nature with all their senses.
2. CHAPERONES: Students should have a 1 adult for every 5 students. This is not a requirement, but does add to the program significantly.
3. Please bring ONE 1 GALLON SIZED ZIPLOCK BAG PER STUDENT for collections.

Post Visit Activity

As an assessment, each grade level is encouraged to create a learning, “feedback” project. These projects may be any appropriate feedback method as prescribed by the teacher. Some examples are, letters of what the students learned with drawings and/or photographs of the experience, learning logs, journals, projects (i.e. a bug collection, leaf collection, nature journal, copy of presentation, etc.)

Digital Resources:[Inaturalist](#) can be used as a resource for your students by having them to use the app to identify species in the field and then map them on the website. Have your students find and name using the app at least 5 different species of animals and plants around your school property.

Evidence of animals can be included in the survey including spider’s webs and animal tracks.

Extensions:

Please view these videos to extend your Playcard experience (Optional).

Videos:

[Forver Wild! Beaver Swamp Ecology](#) Filmed on site at Playcard Environmental Education Center [Beaver Swamp Ecology](#) focuses on the aspects of beaver ecology on site.

[Forver Wild! A River Runs Through It](#) with the Waccamaw Riverkeeper filmed along the Waccamaw River this episode focuses on the ecology of this amazing local treasure and conservation efforts to preserve this beautiful place.

[Forever Wild! Backyard Birds](#) with William Justin Johnson and staff we go outdoors to learn about one of nature's most beautiful creatures, our avian friends. Learn how to birdwatch and about educational links that let you become a birder.

[Forever Wild! Critter Catching on the Carolina Coast](#) Take a trip to Cherry Grove Beach SC to catch many creatures in this interesting episode that shows the ecology of a saltwater ecosystem on the Carolina Coast.

[Venomous Snakes of South Carolina](#) Filmed on-site at Playcard Environmental Education Center, this episode takes a look at our most common species of venomous snakes.