

## 14. WILDLIFE AT THE GARDEN

**Overview:** This activity will give students an opportunity to observe evidence of wildlife in the Garden habitat.

**Objective:** Students will observe an assigned area of the Garden to observe and record any evidence of wildlife.

**Time needed:** 30-45 minutes

**Group Size:** Small groups of 4-5 students at different locations in the Garden. When done with young children, each group may be assigned an older student or adult to help record and provide supervision.

**Age appropriateness:** Kinder and up

**Site:** any location

**Background:** Wildlife includes all animals that have not been domesticated by people. Domesticated animals have been tamed and bred for special purposes. Wildlife can be found in many sizes from microscopic to large. Spiders, insects, reptiles, amphibians, fish, birds and mammals can be wildlife. Observing wildlife means looking for evidence of animals such as tracks, webs, feathers and nests even when you don't see animals. Animal droppings or scat may also be observed.

**Materials:**

Provided at the Garden

Clipboards

Provided by the classroom teacher

Pencil and paper

**Preparation:** none required

**Pre Activity:** Students need to understand the difference between wild and domesticated animals. This can be accomplished with discussion and by sorting animal pictures. It is important that students realize that wildlife can be tiny as well as large. Students should practice making observations on their school campus. Process ways of observing using all the senses.

**Procedure:**

1. Divide the class into observation groups and assign them an area. Remind students to not touch any animal as some can bite or sting. Also remind them to stay on the paths.
2. They can make sketches or notes for 10-15 minutes of wildlife evidence they discover.
3. Gather the groups and discuss what they observed.
4. Assign groups to a different area of the Garden to do a second observation.
5. Regather the group and again discuss their observations. Make comparisons of observations at different sites in the Garden.

**Modifications:** Buddy an older student with a younger one.

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**Extensions:** Back at the classroom, students could make posters to illustrate their observations. They could also make a book or create a brochure advertising all the things one might see during a visit to the Garden. If pictures are taken while at the Garden, they can be incorporated into the book or brochure.

**Reference List:**

Project WILD

**Time of Year:** Any time - remember, if it is too hot for you, it will be too hot for the animals and they will be less active. The time of year may affect what can be observed.

\*\*This activity was adapted from Project WILD.