



Virginia Wildlife Calendar Possible Activities for the Classroom

Virginia Wildlife calendars are more than just pretty pictures for your classroom. There are many activities that will support the Virginia Standards of Learning. Below are just a few ideas to get you started:

Science/Math:

- ★ Calendar pictures can be used for food chains, habitat, adaptations and ecosystem studies.
- ★ A few times a year divide the class into groups, each group gets a picture and must research their animal's habitat, niche, additional habits (mating, time of day, etc), food source, and identification markings using traditional field guides like Peterson's. Students then present their findings to the class. Once you accumulate pictures over the years, you can break the class groups into fish, mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians! *Don't forget to record the name of the organism on the back of the picture.*
- ★ Graph the sunrise and / or sunset times for one month. What do you observe? Is there a pattern? Choose the months of March, June, September and/or December when the season's change. Does the time on the calendar correspond with what the students actually observe each day? The time of day would be on the Y axis and the date on the X axis.
- ★ Create a bar graph of the number of "Best, Good, Fair and Poor" fishing days. This rating was based on several factors including the phase of the moon, tides, average temperatures, historical information etc. Can the students find a pattern? There may not be a noticeable pattern since many variables are included in the development of the charts. How many "poor" fishing days occur on weekends?
- ★ Extend the habitat around each species by placing it in the center of the bulletin board and drawing the rest of the scene the photographer didn't capture. Be sure to add seasonal characteristics to the drawing.

Social Studies / Language Arts:

- ★ Which physiographic region of Virginia can each species be found in? Are any species confined to one region of Virginia? Why would a species only be found in the coastal areas or in the mountain region? Range maps for individual species may be found at the website www.dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/
- ★ Choose a species and write a poem about it.
- ★ Write a descriptive paragraph about what the animal is doing in the photo.
- ★ Hand out the pictures and create a verbal story, each student introduces their animal into the story when it is their turn. Photos may be passed around as a species reenters the story or additional wildlife species may be cut from *Virginia Wildlife* magazine.

Other:

- ★ In art, students can draw each species; tear the pictures into smaller pieces to make interesting collages, or combine parts of different species to create fanciful new species.
- ★ Cut the pictures into puzzle pieces.
- ★ Create a mural and place each species in its proper habitat.

Math Activities using Virginia wildlife research data can be found at www.dwr.virginia.gov/education .
For more information about the Department's Pre K-12 wildlife educational programs contact Courtney.hallacher@dwr.virginia.gov