

ACTIVITY GUIDE



LET'S
TALK ABOUT
NATURE

WHAT CAN YOU SMELL?

WHAT CAN YOU HEAR?





NATURE IS A GREAT TEACHER

Try these fun and easy-to-do activity ideas from ZooTampa to connect your family with the outdoors and nature.

Suitable for children ages birth to five years of age. Some activities work better for younger children, others are more suited for older children. The way you present them will change depending on a child's knowledge and ability.

Table of Contents

- 3 Introduction
 - 4 "Thank you" to our Partners
 - 5 Important Dates to Remember
 - 6 Animals that Fly
 - 16 Shapes, Patterns, and Camouflage
 - 21 Senses in Nature
 - 25 Living vs. Non-Living
 - 28 Pictures and Journaling
- 

DEAR CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN FAMILY MEMBERS,

It is with great pleasure that ZooTampa at Lowry Park (ZT) shares our exciting program that has been developed in partnership with Champions for Children (CFC) and the Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative.

Through our **Zoo Access for All** program; we will provide CFC families with a multilayer program that provides long term nature-related family engagement opportunities.

ZooTampa is a wonderful environment that provides a safe, engaging outdoor experience in which families can make observations, draw conclusions, and nurture their genuine interest in the natural world around them. ZT's strategic mission is to support opportunities for our community to engage the next generation of conservation scientists.

Research supports that families are key to developing science interests and career aspirations of youth. ZT is here to provide a safe opportunity where families can connect outside and build a foundation for learners to appreciate, protect and understand the world around them.

The Natural Foundation to Learning program is specific to engage learners' birth to five years of age; and focuses on increasing knowledge of foundational skills needed to embark on a lifelong journey of exploration, learning, and wonder.

Our **Natural Foundation to Learning** program is set-up to provide several opportunities to create memories with your family in nature.

During this program you will be provided:

- *Activities that can be used during your day at ZT or in your neighborhood;*
- *Complimentary access to ZT during selected dates and times;*
- *Virtual story time and zoo experience hosted by Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative and ZT;*
- *Nature Activity Kit for your family to enjoy.*

As a participant, we would like your feedback in four online surveys to help us understand how the program impacted your family. We hope that you will find this guide a useful tool in preparing for your trip to ZT and provide unforgettable natural connections.

Please make sure to review the most recent guidelines on Zootampa.org. We very much look forward to having your family enjoy the day at ZooTampa.

Jennifer McLachlan
Vice President of Learning and Community Engagement





THANK YOU

We thank our many like-minded education partners for their support in making this an inspirational, hands-on learning experience.

The Spurlino Foundation



CATALINA® | CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



IMPORTANT DATES

Our Natural Foundation to Learning program is set-up to provide several opportunities to create memories with your family in nature. During this program you will be provided:

- Activities that can be used during your day at ZooTampa or in your neighborhood;
- Complimentary access to ZooTampa during select dates and times;
- Four virtual story time and zoo experience hosted by Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative and ZooTampa;
- Each family will receive a Nature Activity Kit.

TRIPS TO ZOOTAMPA

You will receive complimentary admission to ZooTampa on the following dates: November 2nd to 22nd, 2020 and January 19th to February 7th, 2021—for up to five people from 9:15 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

To receive your admission:

1. Reservations 48 hours in advance are required to ensure we have your tickets available for you at Will Call.
2. **Reserve your tickets at <https://zootampa.org/reservations/champions-for-children>**
3. Your tickets can be picked up on the day of your reserved visit under your last name at ZooTampa's Will Call booth at our main gate.

VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES

The Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative and ZooTampa will offer four virtual programs that enhance our Activity Guide.

- November 30 at 9:30 a.m. | Topic – Things that Fly
- December 14 at 9:30 a.m. | Topic – Real vs Not Real
- January 11 at 9:30 a.m. | Topic – Shapes and Patterns in Nature
- January 18 at 9:30 a.m. | Topic – Sense in Nature

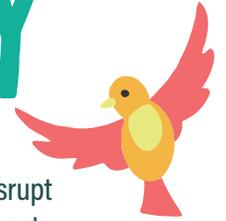
To participate in the virtual experiences, please go to hcplc.org/events

EVALUATIONS

As a participant, we would like your feedback about our program to help us understand how the program impacted your family. Evaluations should take 1-2 minutes. Program evaluations will be sent to your email address on:

- November 1st, 2020
- January 4th, 2021
- February 8th, 2021
- May 8th, 2021

ANIMALS THAT FLY



OBJECTIVE:

Learners will identify different types of beaks, feet, wings and other adaptations on birds at ZooTampa and in your own backyard.

INTRODUCTION:

Even though we think of wild animals as living far away from humans, there are many that live right in our backyards! Birds are one of the most frequent backyard visitors, and you can help them by making your yard a good habitat.

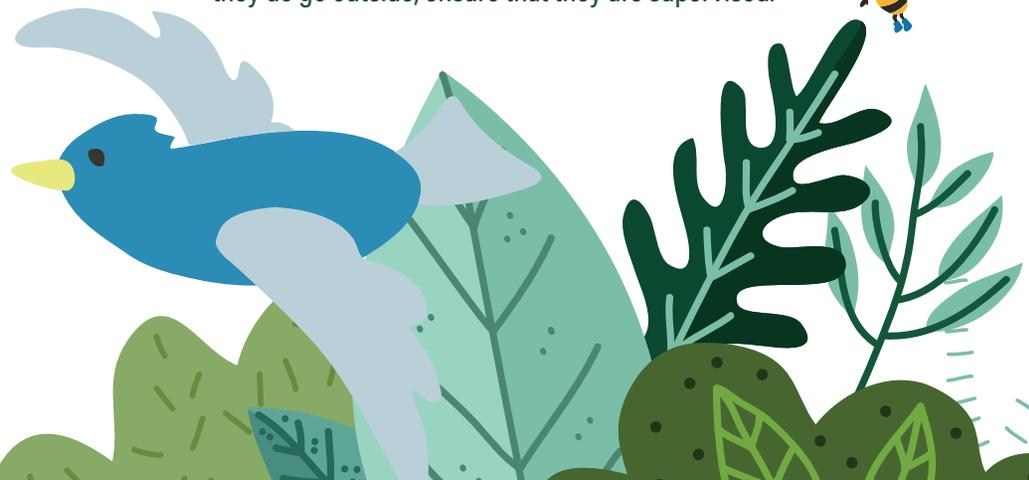
What are some threats facing wild birds?

1. Habitat destruction. Activities like deforestation, urban development, and resource extraction destroy bird habitats.
2. Light pollution. Migrating birds use the night sky to navigate, but bright city lights can cause them to become lost and disoriented. The birds fly around in confusion, becoming exhausted and more vulnerable to other threats.

3. Invasive species. Non-native animals hunt birds and disrupt natural ecosystems. Dogs and cats are two of the biggest threats to wild birds.
4. Glass collisions. Birds often don't see glass windows and doors and will fly right into them, causing injury or death.

How can I help wild birds?

1. Plant native plants. Do some research on what bird-friendly plants are native to your area and plant a few. This provides food, shelter, nesting materials, and nesting sites for birds.
2. Provide nesting materials. Twigs, leaves, straw, and grass clippings can all be used by birds to make nests. Avoid materials like yarn, human hair, and dryer lint.
3. Turn off lights during spring and fall migrations.
4. Close the blinds or curtains on your windows so the lights don't confuse birds at night.
5. Turn off unnecessary outdoor lighting.
6. Cats and dogs can both be threats to birds, so keep them inside. If they do go outside, ensure that they are supervised.



MORE ABOUT ANIMALS THAT FLY

"WORDS" FROM A SCIENTIST

Foraging: Get food by hunting, fishing, or the gathering of plant matter.

Preening: To trim or dress (feathers, fur, etc.) with the beak or tongue.

Flocking: Gather in a flock or large group.

QUICK FACTS

Birds are warm-blooded vertebrate animals that have wings, feathers, a beak, no teeth, and a skeleton—which the bones are hollow. Bird locomotion is quite varied; most can fly, some can run very well, some swim, and some do combinations of these. Some birds cannot fly, like the African Penguin.



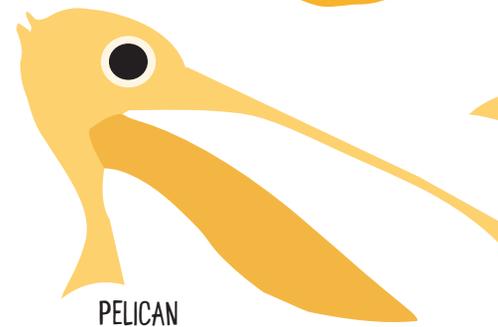
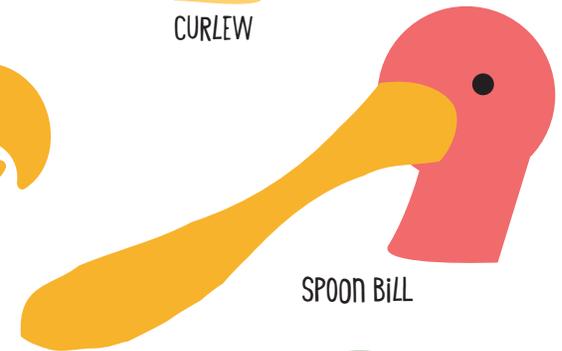
ZOO ACTIVITY

IDENTIFYING BIRD BEAKS

FOR LEARNERS 4 to 8 YEARS OLD

While your family is at ZooTampa, explore the three aviaries and notice the various types of bird beaks. Each beak is used in various ways to eat.

What are some ways that birds use their feet? Walking, perching, swimming, running, climbing, and grabbing. Climbers such as woodpeckers have two toes in front and two toes in back for climbing tree trunks. Graspers such as owls, hawks and other birds of prey have large curved claws called talons, which dig into their prey and hold onto them in flight. Perches such as robins and doves have three toes that face forward and one long hind toe that helps them grip their perches tightly. Runners such as ostriches and killdeer have two and three toes and all their toes point forward for fast running. Scratchers such as pheasants, and chickens have rake-like toes for scratching in the soil. Swimmers such ducks use their webbed feet like paddles.



COMMON FLORIDA BIRDING GUIDE

FOR LEARNERS 2 to 8 YEARS OLD

Draw and count how many local birds you can find at ZooTampa or in your backyard.

Draw on page 28

White Ibis

Roseate Spoonbill

Wood Stork

Bald Eagle

American Kestrel

Red Shoulder Hawk

Egret

Barred Owl 8

Curlew

Parrot

Pelican

Grasshopper Sparrow

ZOO ACTIVITY

BIRDS OF FLORIDA STORY STONES

FOR LEARNERS 1 to 5 YEARS OLD

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

stones | picture | scissors | glue | story mat | cut outs for story stones

HOW TO MAKE STORY STONES

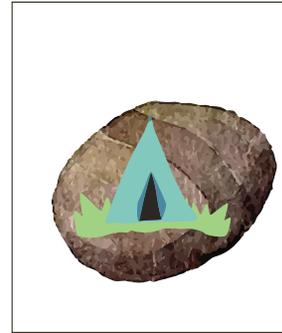
1. Go outside and respectfully collect a few stones. If you don't have a stone, find an alternate natural item.
2. Cut out one of the pictures and place. Adhere it with glue on to the stone or other natural item.
3. Paint over another layer of glue over the picture so it stays secure.

ACTIVITY

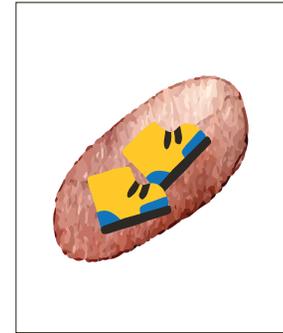
Learning should be hands-on and fun! Game-based learning gives children the chance to develop cognitive, social, and physical skills simultaneously. Start with creating a simple story about birds of Florida—possibly about where they live or what they eat.

Here are some **TALK, READ, SING TAMPA BAY** to help prompt the learner to create an imaginative story about birds.

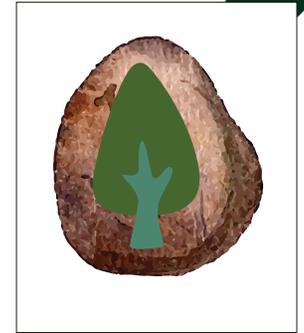
STORY MAT TEMPLATE



First



Next



Last

WHAT SHAPE AND
COLORS DO YOU SEE?

WHAT DO YOU THINK
IT MEANS?

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE
TO HAPPEN NEXT?
HOW DOES THE NEXT
STONE LINK TO THIS ONE?



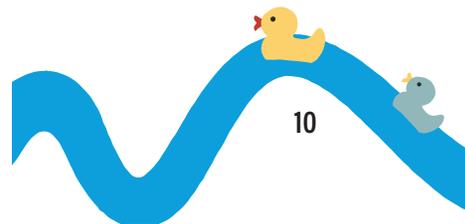
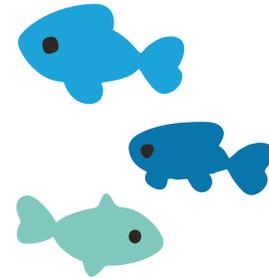
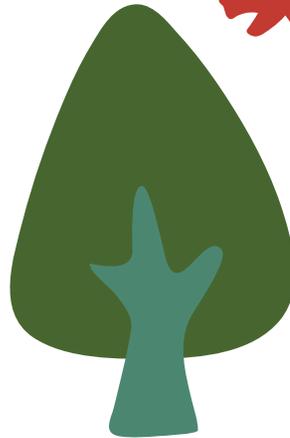
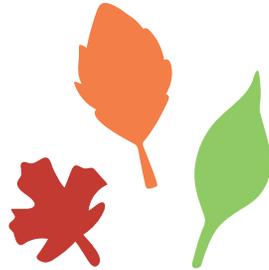
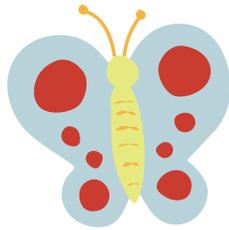
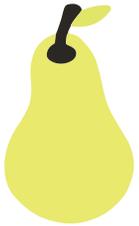


ZOO ACTIVITY

STORY STONES CONT'D

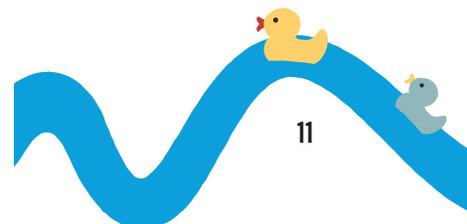
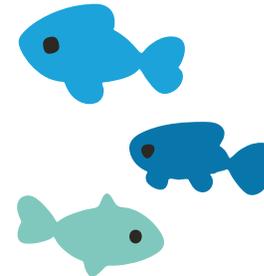
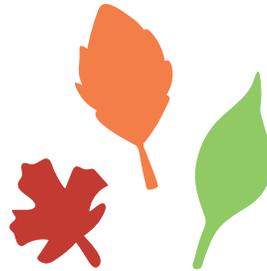
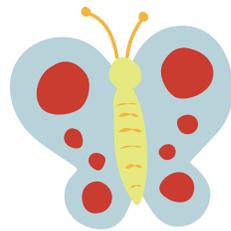
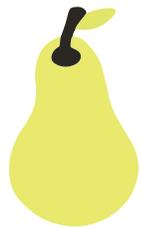
STORY STONE CUT OUTS

Suggested small pictures below that can be cut out and placed on rocks.



STORY STONE CUT OUTS

Suggested small pictures below that can be cut out and placed on rocks.



ZOO ACTIVITY

NATURE BAT

FOR LEARNERS 1 TO 5 YEARS

This is a fun craft activity for your family. Head outside and respectfully collect sticks and leaves. Cut out the bat template and glue on the sticks and leaves onto the bat. Use string to hang the bat upside down.

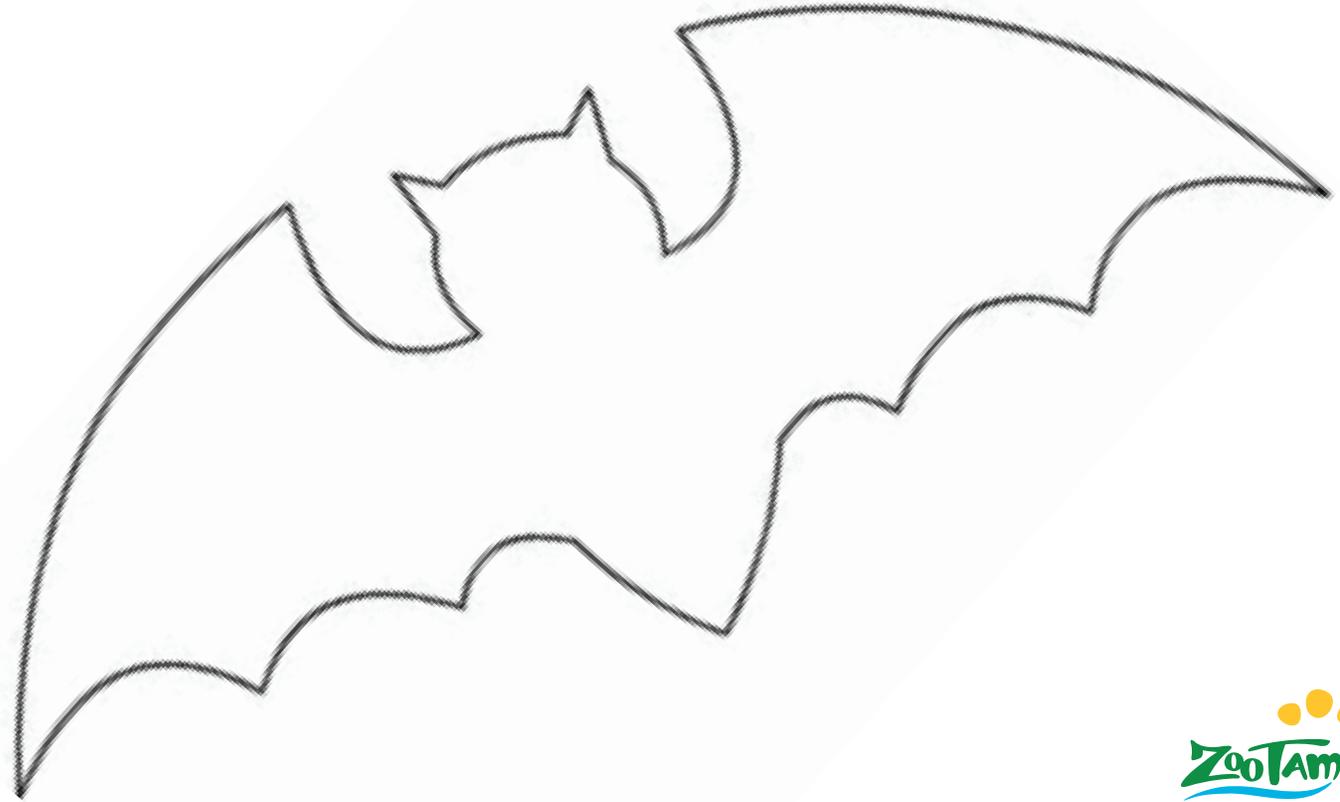
WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

sticks | leaves | scissors | string | glue | bat template



ZOO activity

NATURE BAT
CUT OUT



PARENT TIP

Animal Moves and Grooves Activity- Take turns pretending to move like different animals and guess which animal the learner is expressing. Use descriptive words like "Can you slither like a snake? Leap like a frog? Stand like a flamingo? Or swing like an ape?"

Nature Activity Guide provides some ideas on key questions to keep the back and forth conversations happening in nature.

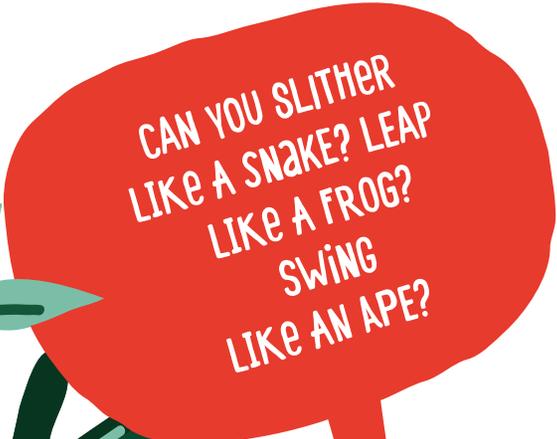
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LITERACY CONNECTIONS

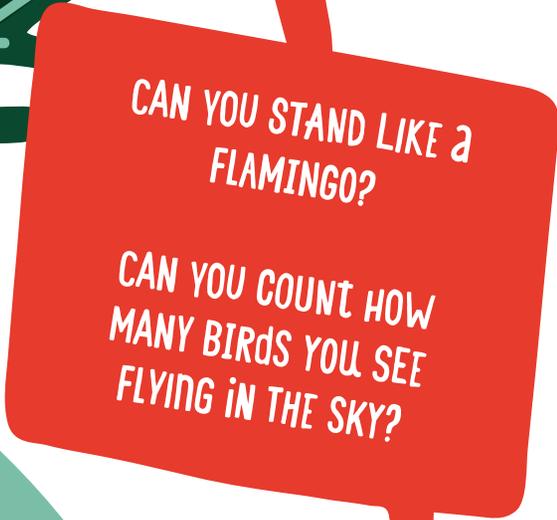
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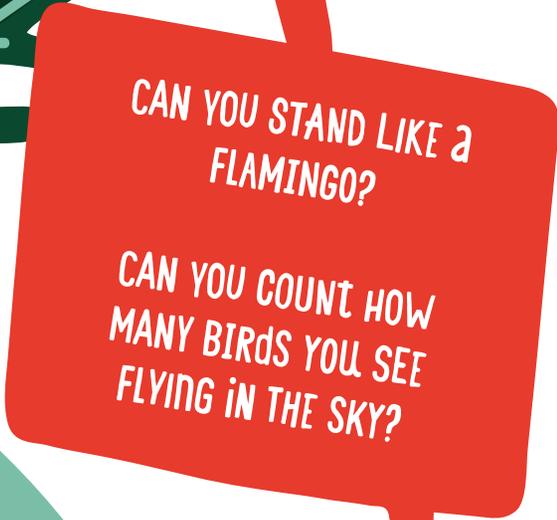
https://hcplc.bibliocommons.com/list/share/1283720637_hcplc_kidspicks/1722623189_animals_that_fly



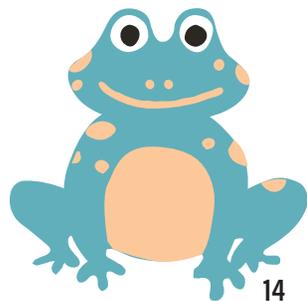
CAN YOU SLITHER
LIKE A SNAKE? LEAP
LIKE A FROG?
SWING
LIKE AN APE?



CAN YOU STAND LIKE A
FLAMINGO?



CAN YOU COUNT HOW
MANY BIRDS YOU SEE
FLYING IN THE SKY?



SHAPES, PATTERNS, AND CAMOUFLAGE

OBJECTIVE

Learners will gain knowledge about different types of camouflage as well as mimicry and how these physical characteristics help the animal stay alive.

INTRODUCTION

Camouflage can be thought of as a color or shape in an animal's body covering that helps it blend into its environment. Most animal species have developed camouflage that helps them find food and avoid predators. In contrast, predators may use their camouflage to hide when stalking prey. Camouflage varies between species, but an animal's environment often directs the color and shape of it. Camouflage patterns may match or blend into the habitat surroundings. These patterns may disguise animals, or mimic a harmful or distasteful animal.

"WORDS" FROM A SCIENTIST

Hypothesis- An idea or explanation that you then test through study and experimentation.

Species- A group of animals that share common characteristics and mate to produce fertile young.

Predator - An animal that hunts and eats other animals for food.

Prey - An animal that is taken and eaten by another animal (predator) for food.

QUICK FACTS

Many animals have fur, feathers, and other body coverings in earth tones that blend in well with many natural environments. Other animals like zebras and tigers display disruptive colorations—patterns of light and dark that break up the shapes of the animals' bodies. These make them hard for color blind predators or prey to detect against patterns of light and shadow in the environment. Many insects, amphibians and reptiles exhibit color patterns and/or shapes that closely mimic the patterns and shapes of the environment.



ZOO ACTIVITY

COLOR & PATTERN SCAVENGER HUNT

While you are at ZooTampa, use the color/pattern hunt to identify an animal and talk about why might the pattern be important for survival. This activity also can be adapted to use in your neighborhood.

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

Learners will create camouflaged animal artwork and then see how well their creations blend into an outdoor area.

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

pencil | crayons | markers | small replica animals

ACTIVITY

To introduce the learner, discuss (or play) the game of hide and seek. What do we do when we don't want someone to find us?

Where are the best places to hide? How could we be better hidden? What can we do to blend in with the environment?

Introduce the word camouflage. Brainstorm what kinds of animals might want to hide, and where they might hide. Talk about ways animals in the wild use to protect themselves from predators.

Now head outside, ask the learner to pretend that they are going to be an animal that needs to hide from a predator. Ask them to think about what colors would best blend in with the background. Ask your caregiver to hide your animal art work and real pictures of animals in a few locations in your environment. From afar, observe the patterns and colors that you can see. Make scientific observations and create conversations using strategies from Talk, Read, Sing Tampa Bay. More at talktreadsingtampabay.org.



ZOO ACTIVITY

EXPLORING SHAPES & COLORS IN NATURE

While you are outside, respectfully collect natural items and create a home for your replica animal using a variety of materials. As the learner constructs, ask them to point out details of their design. Listen for questions they ask each other about the materials they chose and how they are assembled.

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

magnifying glass | bag to collect items | replica animals

ACTIVITY

Bring your magnifying glass, replica animals and go on a walk in your neighborhood to look at different shapes and patterns in your environment.

Responsibly collect and observe items in nature. Use the magnifying glass and notice the details of the items in nature.

Once the activity is complete, return the collected items to the places where they were found or create an Animal Leaf Art (see next page).

WHAT DO NATURAL ITEMS
HAVE IN COMMON?

HOW MANY ARE CIRCLES?
HOW MANY ARE RECTANGLES?

HOW MANY OVAL LEAVES
YOU WILL FIND?

HOW MANY ROUND PINE
CONES WILL YOU SEE?



TALK
READ
SING

TALK READ SING TAMPA BAY FLORIDA

ZOO ACTIVITY

ANIMAL LEAF ART

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

leaves (varieties of color, size, and shape)
glue | replica animals

1. Go outside and collect items in nature.
2. Make sure you have all the items on your materials list.
3. Create your replica animal completely out of leaves.
4. Glue the Animal Leaf Art in your Nature Activity Guide on page 30 of the guide.



WHAT DOES THE
ANIMAL EAT?
WHERE DOES HE SLEEP?



HOW CAN I HELP ANIMALS
SURVIVE IN NATURE?

ZOO ACTIVITY

CAMOUFLAGE DETECTIVES

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

Nature Activity Guide | magnifying glass | crayons

1. Search for camouflaged animals in your neighborhood.
2. When you find one, draw a picture of it in the back of you Nature Activity Guide on page 29.



WHAT KIND OF ANIMALS DID YOU FIND?

WHY IS CAMOUFLAGE IMPORTANT TO THIS ANIMAL?

PARENT TIP

LITERACY CONNECTIONS

We have partnered with HCPLC to offer to the community Virtual Storytime to complement this theme; please reserve your space by going to <http://hcplc.events>. For dates and times refer to your "Important Dates" page in this Activity Guide.

HCPLC has provided a list of books that will complement the activity at the Zoo or in your neighborhood. HCPLC book list can be found: https://hcplc.bibliocommons.com/list/share/1283720637_hcplc_kidspicks/1722627739_animal_shapes_and_patterns



Everywhere you go, talk about what you see. A stop sign, a traffic light, or a tree might seem boring to you, but it's a whole new world to your child, so teach them about it!

Young children learn best during playful, everyday activities. Play "I-Spy" in the nature together. Choose a color and encourage your child to point out objects that match the color to items that can be found in nature.

Nature Activity Guide provides some ideas on key questions to keep the back and forth conversations happening in nature.

You can find more tips like these—as well as videos, information, and more at <https://talkreadsingtampabay.org/>



SENSES IN NATURE

OBJECTIVE

Learners will use their sight, hearing, smell, and touch senses to explore ZooTampa at Lowry Park and in your own backyard.

INTRODUCTION

Our senses tell us what we need to know about our environment. They help to keep us out of danger and enable us to find food and shelter. As humans, we use the five senses; other animals need different information about the world to survive.

"WORDS" FROM A SCIENTIST

Sight: the ability to see using the eyes

Hear: to perceive or be able to perceive sound

Smell: to detect or recognize something through the nose

Touch: to put a part of the body, especially the fingertips, in contact with something so as to feel it

Adaptation: a part, covering, or behavior that helps a plant or animal survive in its habitat.

QUICK FACTS

ANIMAL SUPER SENSES

Some owls have ears that are asymmetrical in size and shape.

This enhances the stereo effect... the subtle difference between the sound reaching one ear relative to the sound reaching the other ear. This enables precise location of prey. A barn owl can hone in on and catch a mouse in a pitch-black room within seconds, because its ears are adapted to extremely accurate sound location. Ears of owls have openings in the side of their head surrounded by deep soft feathers which the owl can spread to make a funnel to each ear opening.



ZOO ACTIVITY

EXPLORING YOUR SENSES

FOR LEARNERS 2 to 5 YEARS OF AGE

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

Nature Activity Guide | pencil | crayons | markers

ACTIVITY

Use a pencil/crayon/marker and fill out the sections using observations made at the zoo or your neighborhood.

Draw something you enjoyed seeing at the Zoo.

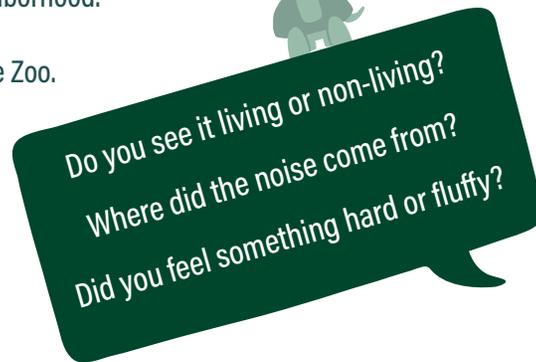
Draw something you heard at the zoo.

Draw something you touched at the zoo.

Draw something you smell at the zoo.

Draw something that you tasted at the zoo.

***Use page 31 in this book to draw your senses.**



ZOO ACTIVITY

MAGNIFYING NATURAL OBJECTS

HOME ACTIVITY

FOR LEARNERS 6 TO 9 YEARS OF AGE

This activity will have your family outside, respectfully collecting and identifying materials with interesting textures. What might a person or animal use these items for in nature?

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

pencil | crayons | markers | stop watch | magnifying glass
unused egg carton | variety of materials with interesting textures, such as leaves, rocks, shells, feathers, fabrics, coins, and blocks

ACTIVITY

Go outside and respectfully collect natural items and some textured items in your home. Store the small items in an egg carton to securely carry.

Discuss the sense of sight with the learner. Tell them that they will be using magnifying glasses to explore different things and to see how the magnifying glass can change the way an object looks. Have the learners look at their hands with the magnifying glass; encourage them to move the magnifying glass around, alternately closer to and farther away from their hands.



WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR HANDS WHEN YOU LOOK THROUGH THE MAGNIFYING GLASS?

Look at the items that were collected with the magnifying glass. Encourage the learner to compare the items, first without and then with their magnifying glass. Discuss what they see and how the magnifying glass changes the objects.

PARENT TIP

INVITE YOUR CHILD
TO TALK ABOUT
WHAT THEY SEE,
HEAR, AND SMELL.

WHAT IS YOUR
FAVORITE FOOD TASTE?
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE
SMELL?
WHAT DO YOU HEAR AS YOU
ARE WALKING?

You can inspire a love of books and words in your young child by reading or telling a story together every day. Point to the pictures, letters, and numbers in the Nature Activity Guide. It's OK if they skip pages, or like a few pages better than others. You just want your child to get used to touching books.

Nature Activity Guide provides some ideas on key questions to keep the back and forth conversations happening in nature.

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LIVING VS NON-LIVING

OBJECTIVE

Learners will gain a greater understanding of the basic concepts and skills as you learn about living and non-living things.

INTRODUCTION

Learner may have trouble distinguishing between living and non-living. Learners may consider everything that moves to be alive, including cars and clouds. Often learners pretend that objects are alive so that they can talk to them. Learners also have difficulty comparing once-living objects with objects that have never lived. Living and nonliving are scientific terms. Learners are more used to hearing living or dead. By exploring various objects and animals, they can begin to distinguish between things that are living, things that were once-living, and things that are non-living.

"WORDS" FROM A SCIENTIST

Living: having life; having the characteristics of living things; all living things need food, air, water, and shelter to survive.

Non-living: lacks or has stopped displaying the characteristics of life.

Reproduce: to cause to exist again.

QUICK FACTS

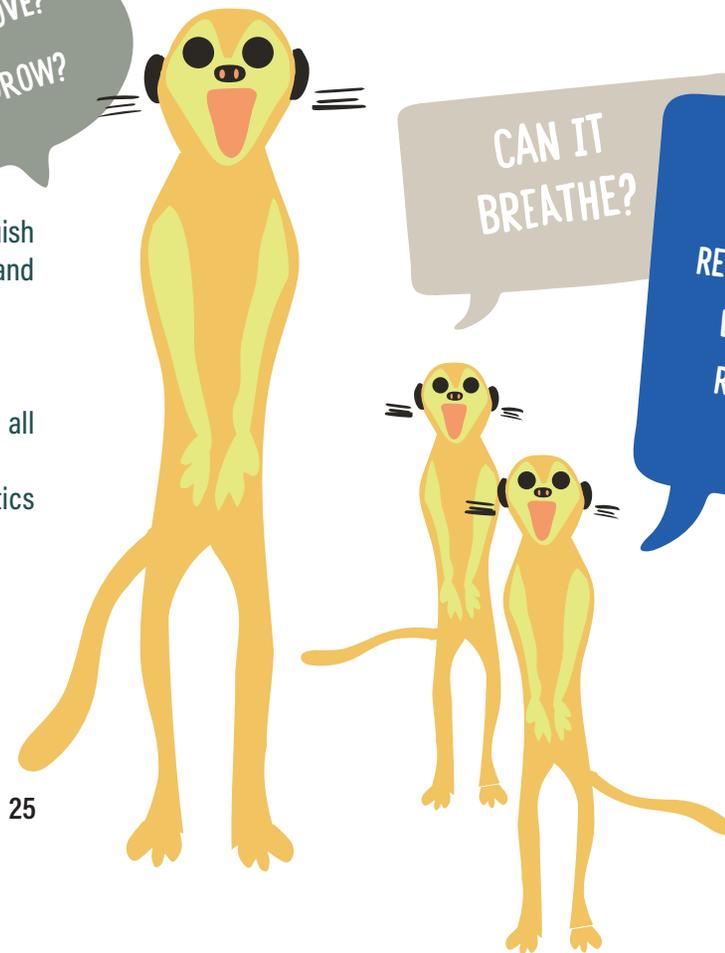
Questions to ask when you are trying to identify if something is living or non-living:

IF YOU SAY YES TO ALL THE QUESTIONS,
THEN THE IT IS LIVING.

CAN IT MOVE?
CAN IT GROW?

CAN IT
BREATHE?

DOES IT
REPRODUCE?
DOES IT
REACT?



I SPY AND SORTING GAME ZOO ACTIVITY

PLAY A GAME OF I SPY

During your trip to the zoo or in your neighborhood, identify four to six living and non-living things as you are enjoying nature. Start by saying, "I spy something that needs food." If you have a learner that is younger, use more simplistic words such as, "I spy something round." Let the learner ask yes and/or no questions to discover the answer. Every time you talk and have a high-quality back-and-forth interaction, new connections in your learner's brain are made. These language-rich conversations will help solve the I Spy mystery. Below are a few suggestions for I Spy living and non-living things.

LIVING VS NON-LIVING SORTING GAME

Use a marker and draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. Label one side of the line living and the other side non-living. Gather ten items from inside and outside your home that are living and non-living. Sort the items on the side of the paper that you think they belong; use *Quick Fact questions on previous page to guide you on your decision.*

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED

bag | natural items | plastic items | paper | markers | pencil

LIVING



NON-LIVING



PARENT TIP



Talking with babies and toddlers is a brain-building activity! Every time you talk and have a high-quality back-and-forth interaction, new connections in that baby's brain are made. The more you engage with young learners in this way, the more they learn to understand and use new words and concepts.

The Nature Activity Guide provides some ideas on key questions to keep the back and forth conversations happening in nature.

You can find more tips like these—as well as videos, information, and more at talkreadsingtampabay.org

LITERACY CONNECTIONS

We have partnered with HCPLC to offer to the community Virtual Storytime to complement this theme; please reserve your space by going to <http://hcplc.events>. For dates and times refer to your "Important Dates" page in this Activity Guide.

HCPLC has provided a list of books that will complement the activity at the Zoo or in your neighborhood. HCPLC book list can be found at:

https://hcplc.bibliocommons.com/list/share/1283720637_hcplc_kidspicks/1722617059_animal_babies



WE WANT TO SEE YOUR EXPLORATION!
TAKE A PICTURE OF YOUR ACTIVITY OR DRAWINGS
AND SHARE IT WITH US!

#ZOOTAMPA OR #ZTSAVES

**DRAW
AND
BIRDS COUNT**



ZooTampa
AT LOWRY PARK



DRAW CAMOUFLAGED ANIMALS

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#ZOOTAMPA OR #ZTSAVES



ANIMAL LEAF ART

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DRAWING
YOUR
EXPLORATION
SENSE





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RACHAEL ROSS

TCDESIGNSFL.COM

About ZooTampa at Lowry Park:

ZooTampa at Lowry Park is operated by the Lowry Park Zoological Society, an independent 501(c)(3) charitable organization committed to excellence in conservation, education, recreation and research. The Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and is featured among the "Top 25 Zoos in the U.S" by TripAdvisor. The Zoo is located at 1101 W. Sligh Avenue in Tampa, and is open seven days a week, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. with extended hours for select events.

