

Teacher's Guide



“Mammals”

Grade Level:
Ages 6 and up

GSE Reference:

SKL1a,b; SKL2 a;
S1L1 a, b, c; S2L1 a, c;
S3L1a, b, c; S4L1a, b, c;

Summary:

Participants will become familiar with the behaviors and characteristics of mammals. Participants will meet a live opossum.

Objective:

Participants will recognize the characteristics of mammals and their natural histories.

Essential Questions

- 🌀 What characteristics make an animal a mammal?
- 🌀 What mammals are found in Georgia?
- 🌀 How do mammals survive?
- 🌀 How can humans help mammals?
- 🌀 What role do mammals serve in our ecosystems?

Vocabulary

- 🌀 *Adaptation* - An organism's specific structure or behavior that promotes its survival
- 🌀 *Carnivore* - Any organism that obtains energy by consuming animals
- 🌀 *Herbivore* - Any organism that obtains energy by consuming plants
- 🌀 *Omnivore* - Any organism that obtains energy by consuming both plants and animals
- 🌀 *Insectivore* - Any organism that obtains energy by consuming insects.

Pre-Visit Activities

- 🌀 **Read** a book from the suggesting reading list.
- 🌀 Discuss the vocabulary words with the participants.
- 🌀 Create a predator/prey art project. Have each participant choose a predator and draw it at the top of the page with its prey at the bottom. Include as many prey items as possible.
- 🌀 **Get to Know our Wildlife** Visit the Chattahoochee Nature Center website (www.chattnaturecenter.org/wildlife) to learn about why these animals live here.

Post visit activities

- 🕒 **Crossword Challenge** Complete the attached crossword!
- 🕒 **Search your Schoolyard** Look for any signs of Georgia wildlife—hand students magnifying glasses and go on a wildlife clue hunt. You can search for gnawed leaves and sticks, chewed pinecones, tracks, webs, nests, scat, listen for sounds, look for shelters, etc. See if you can try to identify any clues you find. What animals left these clues? Wildlife is everywhere!
- 🕒 Create a healthy habitat diorama for any of Georgia's habitats—Mountains, Piedmont, or Coastal Plains. Include soils, plants, and some animals in your diorama.

Suggesting Reading and Websites

Opossums

Opossums by Mary Dunn

The Opossum's Tale by Deborah Duval

Lucy: A Virginia Opossum by Bonnie Taylor

Opossum at Sycamore Road by Sally Walker

An Opossum Dilemma: Crossing the Streets at Night by Roni Patton

<http://www.opossum.org/>

<http://www.opossumsocietyus.org/opossum.html>

Adaptations

Disguises and Surprises by Claire Llewellyn

Secrets of Animal Flight by Nic Bishop

Animal Adaptations by Frank Schaffer

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/ecological-adaptation/animals/6989.html>

What's Included!

- 🕒 The program includes discussion of concepts, a hands-on activity, and if time permits, an animal presentation.

What You Should Know

🕒 Know the Time!

Each program is one hour in length and is presented in the location specified in the contract. Please make sure that all office or administrative personnel know of the location of the program so that the naturalist may find the area quickly.

🕒 Prevent Distractions!

Please have participants ready before the naturalist arrives for the program. **Leaders are encouraged to participate in the program.**

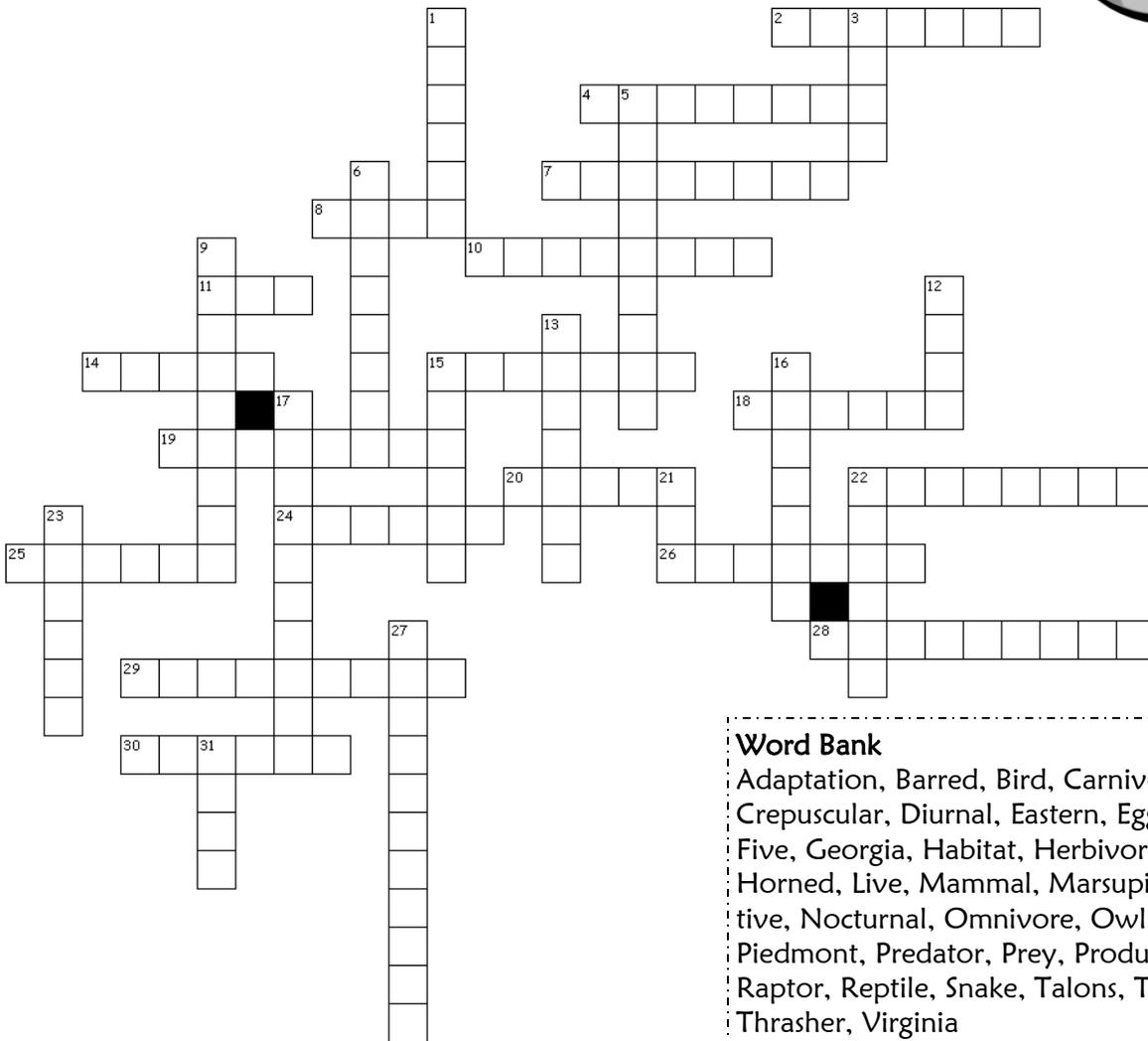
🕒 Keep the Animals Safe!

It is important to remind participants to be respectful during the animal presentation. Please make sure that the area for the program is in the shade and has adequate seating so that all participants will be in front of the presenter and animal.

🕒 Make Us Aware of Special Needs!

If you have participants with special needs, let us know. Preparation for special needs ensures a quality experience for all participants.

Further Investigations!



Word Bank

Adaptation, Barred, Bird, Carnivore, Crepuscular, Diurnal, Eastern, Egg, Fifty, Five, Georgia, Habitat, Herbivore, Horned, Live, Mammal, Marsupial, Native, Nocturnal, Omnivore, Owl, Pellet, Piedmont, Predator, Prey, Producer, Raptor, Reptile, Snake, Talons, Tailed, Thrasher, Virginia

Across

2. An animal with dry scales.
4. The Virginia Opossum is this type of eater.
7. An opossum's first name, male or female!
8. An animal with feathers.
10. Another name for a plant.
11. A nocturnal raptor.
14. The number of teeth an opossum has.
15. Plants and animals need this.
18. Being from an area, like _____ Americans.
19. An animal that eats other animals.
20. A reptile with no limbs.
22. Georgia's state bird.
24. Made by any raptor after a meal and digestion.
25. An animal with fur or hair.
26. Atlanta is its capitol.
28. Also could be called a primary consumer.
29. An animal that does not eat plants.
30. The claws found on a raptor's foot.

Down

1. This owl prefers a riparian, watery habitat.
3. Predator versus _____.
5. The Virginia Opossum is the only _____ in North America.
6. The eco-region where Georgia's capitol is located.
9. Being active in the nighttime.
12. The number of digits on an opossum's hand.
13. Being active in the daytime.
15. Great-_____ Owl, the largest owl in Georgia
16. _____-Screech Owl, the smallest owl in Georgia.
17. Something that helps a living thing survive.
21. A bird and a reptile both make this.
22. Red-_____ Hawk, the largest hawk in Georgia
23. A carnivorous bird with sharp beak and talons.
27. Being active at dawn and dusk.
31. Mammals give _____ birth.