
27. HABITATS OF THE CONSERVATION GARDEN

Overview: Students will explore the Garden and its various habitats.

Objective: Students will identify different habitats in the Conservation Garden and their significance concerning living things.

Time needed: 2 hours

Group Size: 3-6

Age appropriateness: 5th Grade and up

Site: any

Background: Within the Conservation Garden there exists areas which replicate riparian, aquatic, intermittent stream, mesquite bosque and desert habitats.

Materials:

Provided at the Garden

Clipboards

Provided by the classroom teacher

Preparation: Copy maps of the Garden for student use. Create codes for living things students might find in the Garden and locate on the maps.

Pre Activity: Create a 3-D model of the Garden using the topographical map as a guide. Lessons should be given on symbiotic relationships in a variety of ecosystems, especially the desert. Students also need experiences locating positions on a map.

Procedure:

1. Assign groups to an area of the Garden and instruct them to identify living things and record their code on their maps. If a code has not been assigned to something they would like to include on their map, they should create one.
 2. Back at the classroom, all information gathered should be transferred to one large map. Then add the living things to the 3-D model.
 3. Conduct a discussion about any patterns students might discover about types of plants or animals found in specific regions of the Garden.
 4. As a class identify different areas of the Garden by differing plant and animal types.
 5. Discuss how the living things in each area is affected by their environment and how they would be affected if moved to another region of the Garden.
 6. Using definitions of riparian, aquatic, intermittent stream, mesquite bosque and desert, have students locate and label them on the map.
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Extensions: Let each group make their own environment and decide what living things will live in it and how they will interact. Will they all be able to survive?
Look at implications of introducing a new species to a habitat (examples might include salt cedar in the Southwest, Brown Snakes on Pacific Islands, etc.)

Reference List:

Project WILD

Time of Year: any
