

Project WildLIVE – Small Mammal Project Educator Resource Sheet

Post-video Activity suggestion:

Have your students make fake ‘ear tags’ for a stuffed animal at home using an unfolded paperclip, twist tie, rubber band, etc. Students should label these simple ‘ear tags’ with a number that represents the tag number of the individual animal. If you’d like, expand this activity into a project where students collect various samples of ‘data’ (ex: height, weight, age, sex, etc) from their model animal and compare / analyze data with the rest of the class. Encourage students to formulate a possible hypothesis that would explain why they are collecting data from their animal (ex: for a stuffed animal rabbit, a student could say that they want to collect the ages of a population of rabbits to determine if the species population is increasing or decreasing (if there are more young rabbits vs old rabbits present)).

Make *sure* to tell your students never to place an ear tag on a pet or a wild animal.

How your students can get involved at home:

Providing habitat for small mammals in your yard / property can go a long way in helping maintain a healthy ecosystem. First, you can create brush shelters out of logs and branches to provide cover for small mammal species. Leaving dead trees, called snags, in place also provides important places for cover and food sources (where small mammals can find insects and fungi). Finally, provide a water source like a bird bath. Having small mammals on your property indicates a healthy ecosystem. They help keep insect populations under control and attract exciting wildlife like raptors, owls, and foxes! However, it’s important to remember when attracting mammals to your yard, never feed mammals, refrain from storing trash and pet food outdoors, be mindful of critter-proofing your house (so they can’t enter your basement, attic, deck, etc). More details can be found on the website linked below about attracting small mammals to your garden.

Snapshot Wisconsin is a citizen science project partnership to monitor wildlife year-round, using a statewide network of trail cameras. The project provides data needed for wildlife management decision support. It is also a unique opportunity for individuals, families and students to get involved in monitoring the state’s valuable natural resources. You can volunteer to classify trail camera photos, explore photos already taken, or apply to host a wildlife trail camera on your property. There are also helpful resources for teachers who are interested in incorporating *Snapshot Wisconsin* into their classroom. The following is a link to the *Snapshot Wisconsin* website: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/research/projects/snapshot> .

Why is this research important?

This project studies and tags small mammals in order to determine the diversity and populations of small mammals in Schmeckle Reserve. This helps to indicate the health of the



ecosystem as well as indicate what sorts of other organisms may be present because of the small mammal population.

Resources for further learning about small mammals:

<https://www.eekwi.org/explore/animals/mammals>

Flying squirrel - <https://www.eekwi.org/animals/mammals/flying-squirrel>

Meadow vole - <https://www.eekwi.org/animals/mammals/meadow-vole>

Chipmunk - <https://www.eekwi.org/animals/mammals/chipmunk>

Thirteen lined ground squirrel - <https://www.eekwi.org/animals/mammals/13-lined-ground-squirrel>

https://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Peromyscus_leucopus/

How to attract small mammals to your yard:

<https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Wildlife/Attracting-Small-Mammals>

