

# WEEKDAY WONDERS



## Diversity in Ecosystems: Day 3

This week, Weekday Wonders will help young scientists explore the variety of living things in our world. To do this, they will consider where animals live in different habitats, including oceans, rivers and streams, and forests. Young scientists will also have a chance to consider what lives in their own backyards and what the difference is between a habitat and an ocean.

These curated activities are listed in a suggested sequence but may be done in the order that works best for you and your young scientists. Learn more about this series in the [Introduction to Weekday Wonders](#).



### Question of the Day

**Where do animals live in the forest?**



### Daily Nature Journal

Send your young scientists outside to complete their daily nature journal. Is it raining? Is it hot? Scientists can go outside in any weather and see what is different based on the weather. If you need support on how to nature journal, check out the [Guide to Nature Journaling](#).



### Animals Who Live in the Forest

Have your young scientists list 10 animals that they think live in the forest. If they can think of more, have them list as many as they can!



### Forests All Around

Give your young scientist the map on page 4 along with access to the data table on page 3. They will also need blue, red, and green colored pencils or pens.

Have your scientist mark the countries where each animal is found using the color and letter in the right (symbol) column of the data table. If you have younger scientists, you might choose to limit them to marking only the first country for each animal. *Note that the countries listed do not represent the complete range of the animals but are examples to help them get an idea of where the animals live.*

Once your young scientist has marked the countries, ask what patterns they notice. They should see that the blue letters are mostly in Canada, the red letters are mostly in the United States, and the green letters are mostly in Central and South America.

Discuss with them that each of the colors represent a different kind of forest where animals live.

Blue letters show **boreal forests**. These forests have fir trees and other trees that bear cones. These areas have long, cold winters, so the animals that live there need thick fur to survive.

Red letters show **temperate forests**. These areas have four seasons. The trees in these areas have leaves that change color and fall off in the autumn months.

Green letters show **rainforests**. Rainforests have the highest diversity of animals anywhere in the world. They have a lot of rainfall, large rivers, and green vegetation.

All of the animals have special adaptations that help them survive in whichever kind of forest they live.



## Move Like a Forest Animal

Have your young scientist write the names of the animals from the “Forests All Around” activity on small slips of paper. If they can think of other animals, have them write those as well. Place the slips into a container. Find a clock or alarm that scientists can use to time 20 seconds.

Without looking, have your young scientist choose a slip from the container. They should mimic that animal for 20 seconds by moving, sounding, or acting like that animal. Once 20 seconds have passed, have them pick a new slip and mimic the new animal. Continue until they have chosen all the slips.

For young scientists who are working together, turn the activity into a game of charades and have them take turns mimicking an animal while the other scientists guess which animal they are portraying.



## Favorite Forest Animal








Ask your young scientist to choose which forest animal is his or her favorite. In the nature journal, have your scientist write a story from the perspective of the animal. Have them think about questions such as

- What kind of forest do you live in?
- Where do you hide? Why would you hide there? Is it easy or hard to hide?
- How do you move?
- What animals do you keep an eye out for all the time? Why do you look for each one?
- Do you sleep at night or during the day?

If you have younger scientists, have them draw pictures for their story and add captions for them when they are done.

# Forests All Around Data Table and Graph

Picture	Animal	Range	Symbol
	Piranha	Brazil Venezuela Guyana Suriname	Green P
	Moose	Canada	Blue M
	Opossum	United States	Red O
	Snowy Owl	Canada	Blue O
	Bobcat	United States Canada	Red B
	Black Howler Monkey	Brazil Bolivia Paraguay Argentina	Green G
	Jaguar	Mexico Bolivia Brazil Honduras Costa Rica	Green J
	Black Rat Snake	United States	Red R

Picture	Animal	Range	Symbol
	Arctic Fox	Canada	Blue A
	Chestnut-Mandibled Toucan	Honduras Panama Costa Rica Nicaragua Colombia	Green T
	Box Turtle	United States	Red T
	Gray Wolf	Canada United States	Blue W
	Poison Dart Frog	Costa Rica Panama Columbia Brazil	Green F
	White-Tailed Deer	Canada United States Mexico	Red D
	Snowshoe Hare	Canada	Blue H

