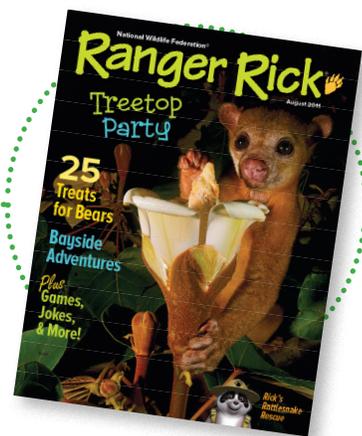


Educator's Guide

Educational extensions for the August 2011 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine



BEAR NECESSITIES

“Hungry As a Bear” (pages 6-11) takes you through a black bear’s year of seasonal eating. For humans, too, meals were once tied very closely to the seasons, and seasonal eating is enjoying a resurgence. Have students create a menu for bears and another for humans with options for each season, based on what foods are found in your area. Take it one step further and involve students in planning, cooking, and serving a seasonal meal.

CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION

Check out “Make a Fairy House” (page 12) and then head outside to build your own! An online image search for “fairy house” will turn up all kinds of inspiration. Discuss with students what kinds of materials are appropriate to collect, and then let them work on their houses in groups or individually. Afterward, stage a tour of all the houses or make a guidebook with photos and information about each one.

GEOCACHING FUN

Read about Ranger Rick’s Geocache Trails in “The Buzz” (pages 14-15). Visit rangerricktrails.com to find out more about how this high-tech treasure hunt works, and to see if there are trails in your area. If so, give geocaching a try! If not, perhaps you’d like to suggest the program to a local park or nature center.

FLOCK TOGETHER

Read “Birds in Bunches” (pages 16-19) and take students outside to look for flocking birds. Can you observe any of the flocking behaviors described in the article? Then try it

yourself: Play a game of tag in which students become birds, with one or two designated as predators and the others moving as a flock. Each bird tries to avoid the predators and, if tagged, is “out” for the rest of the round. After playing several rounds, discuss the students’ experience in the game and how it compared to what they learned about the advantages of flocks in the article.

NIGHT AND DAY IN THE BALSA

“Party in the Treetops” (pages 20-25) describes how a flowering balsa tree attracts many rainforest animals throughout the day and night. After students read the story, have them write a description of a 24-hour span in the balsa. Who visits? What sights, sounds, and smells might one experience? Ask the authors to use lots of descriptive words to bring the scene to life

WOW FOR WATERSHEDS

After reading “Chesapeake Adventure” (pages 30-35), find out more about your own watershed at epa.gov/owow/surf. Then engage students in a watershed study. For example, you might draw the outline of the watershed and trace its watercourses, visit several significant locations such as rivers or lakes, investigate issues that threaten water quality, and get involved in an action project to help protect or restore it.

ANIMALS WITH SPINES

This month’s “Fun on the Run” games (pages 36-38) are all about animals with spikes and spines. Get crafty and make puppets of these prickly pals. (Try toothpicks!) Then have fun staging a puppet show about the spiky life.



Capture the Moment



What does it mean to “capture the moment?” For the winners of the latest Ranger Rick Photo Contest (pages 4-5), it meant being in the right place at just the right time to snap a photo of a wild animal in action. But you can capture a moment in other ways, too—in words, in a drawing, in music, or just in your memory.

Think of a moment in your life when you were in the right place at the right time to see something amazing. What did you see?

Where were you? Why were you there at that moment?

Describe as many details as you can about the moment. Use your words to paint a picture of the scene, and also to describe what you heard or smelled or touched, and how you felt about what you saw.



Balsa Party Guest List



In "Party in the Treetops" (pages 20-25), you meet some of the many animals that come to the "party" when balsa trees flower. Below, draw a line from the name cards to the matching descriptions of each party guest.

Balsa Tree

Four-legged mammal that comes out at night to eat balsa nectar

Owl Monkey

Another four-legged mammal that eats balsa nectar at night

Katydid

Bird that pulls the balsa's fluffy seedpods apart to eat seeds

Woolly Opossum

Monkey that feeds in the balsa tree at night

Bee

Bird that pokes its bill between balsa petals to sip nectar

Bat

Night-flying mammal that spreads pollen from flower to flower

Kinkajou

Reptile that doesn't eat nectar but may spend time in the balsa to hunt its animal prey

Boa constrictor

Tree with big, cone-shaped flowers filled with nectar

White-faced capuchin

Insect that eats pollen from balsa flowers at night

Hummingbird

Daytime monkey that feeds on balsa nectar and flowers

Parakeet

Insect that goes inside the balsa flower to get nectar and pollen. Some kinds are active in the daytime and others at night.

Why is the balsa tree so important to these rainforest animals? Explain what makes it special.

