



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE OCTOBER 2015 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

COLORFUL CREATURES

As your students read “Colors Gone Wild,” pages 14–17, have them complete the Living Colors student page to help them focus on the important concepts in the story. Encourage students to refer to their completed grids as you ask: “How do some animals use bright colors to help them survive?”

Challenge students to beat nature at its colorful game this Halloween by making one of the vibrant animal masks in “Mask Mania!” pages 18–19.

BIRDBRAINS IN ACTION

Ravens are very clever birds. Google “raven intelligence video” to locate several videos that capture this behavior. Share a few of the videos with your students, suggesting they pay special attention to the way the birds (1) play, (2) get food, and/or (3) interact with other members of their species. Have students look for these same signs of intelligence as they read “Bird Brainiac,” pages 20–24. After everyone has read the article, encourage students to discuss their findings.

Then tell the class that ravens belong to a group of birds called corvids. The group includes crows, magpies, jays, and nutcrackers—all birds that are quite smart and worth watching! No matter where you live, there are probably some members of this family nearby. Use a field guide to determine which ones; then go looking. Have students record their observations, prompting them with questions such as: How many birds do you see? What are they doing? Are they alone or with others of their kind? Are they interacting with each other or with any other creatures? If so, how? Are the birds making any sounds? Do you see any “smart” behaviors similar to ones you read about in the *Ranger Rick* article on ravens? Back in the classroom, invite students to share their observations and interpretations with the group.

LEAFY LESSONS

After reading this month’s Adventures of Ranger Rick (“Leave the Leaves!” pages 26–28), discuss the following questions:

- How do fallen leaves help some plants and animals in winter?
- If fallen leaves are so helpful, why do people rake them up?
- What can you do with raked leaves to help wildlife?

While you’re on the subject of leaves, take the class on a “leaf lookout”—even if you live where leaves don’t fall in autumn.

1. Gather several leaves, each from a different type of tree in your schoolyard or a nearby park. Put the leaves in a bag and head out to the same location with your class.
2. Pull a leaf out of the bag and see if students can match it with the type of tree it came from.
3. If you take paper and crayons, everyone can also make bark rubbings of some of the trees.
4. Encourage students to compile a tree book, complete with the leaves, the names of the trees the leaves come from, and their bark rubbings.

HAUNTED MURAL

Cover a bulletin board or blank wall with dark blue paper and print “Spooktacular Sea” at the top. Encourage students to populate these haunted waters with illustrations of real sea creatures that have scary, Halloween-like names. Start with some of the creatures shown in “Boo!” pages 30–35, and add other ones such as the coffin fish, blob fish, ghost crab, spider crab, and witch flounder. For each creature, have a student write a factual paragraph about it on an index card and place the card next to the illustration. As a class, discuss how scary—or not—each creature actually is.



WHAT'S A MONGOOSE LIKE?



The article "Meet the Mongooses," pages 6–11, describes the daily life of a banded mongoose. After reading the article, describe how this kind of mongoose is like the following:

A TAXI DRIVER

A SECURITY GUARD

A GROUNDHOG

A PROFESSIONAL MOVER

BONUS QUESTION: How is a banded mongoose like *your* family?



LIVING COLORS



As you read "Colors Gone Wild," pages 14–17, fill in the chart below. The first one is done for you.

ANIMAL	WILD COLORS AND HOW IT USES THEM
Panther chameleon (male)	It turns bold blue, red, yellow, and orange when another chameleon comes near. That tells a male chameleon to go away. And it tells a female he would make a great mate.
Mandrill (male)	
Spiny flower mantis	
Mandarin fish	
Ring-necked pheasant (male)	
Keel-billed toucan	

