



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE DECEMBER/JANUARY 2014 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

WETLAND INVESTIGATION

After reading “Attack of the Meat-Eating Plants” (pages 6-11), investigate wetland ecosystems. What other plants live there? How do they survive the low nutrient levels? What animals live there? If possible, learn about and then take students to explore a wetland near you.

WEATHER MEASURING

As you learn in “Ask Rick” (page 12), snow takes on different characteristics depending on weather conditions. Have students take some daily weather measurements (temperature, humidity, etc.) in the winter months. Ask them to consider how their findings line up with the types of precipitation they observe.

POLES ON THE GLOBE

Read “Ends of the Earth” (pages 15-23) with students and then look at a globe together. Find the Arctic and Antarctic regions, note the land masses, countries, and oceans within the polar regions, and trace out the migration paths mentioned in the article. Notice how the tilt of the Earth's axis affects the angle of sunlight.

POLAR PUPPET SHOW

Have students create a puppet show featuring the polar animals mentioned in “Ends of the Earth” (pages 15-23). The northern and southern puppets can meet up (as they never do in real life) to discuss the similarities and differences between their lives at the “top” and “bottom” of the world.

ANIMALS WITH SNOWSHOES

In “Ranger Rick's Adventures: Ways of the Wolverine” (pages 24-27), Rick and his friends see how

useful snowshoes are for walking in deep snow. They meet a wolverine whose big feet serve this same purpose. Lots of other animals that live in snowy places also have built-in “snowshoes.” Research some of these animals and, if you live in a snowy place, arrange to try out some snowshoes yourselves to experience how they work.

INTERVIEW A GIRAFFE

“A Tall Tale” (pages 28-33) features the giraffe—an animal as tall as a tree! Have students write or record a made-up interview with a giraffe about its life in the treetops. They can write the questions, then compose the giraffe's answers using information they learned in the story. As a final product, aim for a polished magazine-style interview or a radio/television-style broadcast.

RECYCLED GIFT SHOW

Check out the clever gift ideas in “From Trash 2 Toys” (pages 34-36). Then challenge students to make one of these items or an original creation from recycled materials. Assemble an exhibit, have a show-and-tell session, or organize a contest in which students can share their handiwork to inspire others.

GAME: PENGUIN TALK

The “Just 4 Fun Games” feature penguin communication (page 37). When you need an active game to play, try this: Write each of the penguins' words on a separate note card. Give each student one card. (Make up a few extra rhyming word pairs if you need more.) Then have students move around the room, trying to find their “parent” or “chick” by saying only their assigned word. For an extra challenge, blindfold students first.





INVENT A MEAT-EATING PLANT

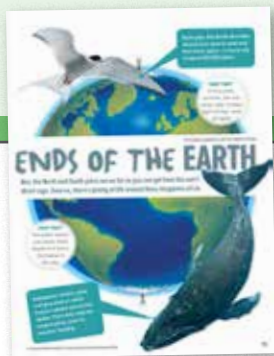
Read “Attack of the Meat-Eating Plants” (pages 6-11). The article features three meat-eating plants. Each one has the same problem—how to get food in a place where there aren’t many nutrients in the soil. But each one has a different way of solving the problem. How ELSE could a plant catch insects or other animals for food? Answer the questions below to design your very own kind of meat-eating plant.

Name the animal or animals that your plant catches and eats.

How does the plant trap its animal prey? Describe the specific parts that help it do this (such as specially-shaped leaves, sticky “glue,” or other adaptations). Try to think of a trick that’s different from the ones used by the three plants in the story.

Give your plant a name. _____

Draw a picture of your plant in action in the box below.



KNOW YOUR POLAR ANIMALS

Read "Ends of the Earth" (pages 15-23). Then follow the directions below to test your knowledge about the animals that live in the Arctic and Antarctic regions.

Draw a line connecting each of the animals listed below to the polar region where it can be found. One example is done for you. (Hint: One can be found in both places!)

ARCTIC (NORTH POLE)	ANTARCTIC (SOUTH POLE)
Polar bear	Icefish
Emperor penguin	Reindeer
Snowy owl	Musk ox
	Humpback whale
	Leopard seal
	Walrus

The polar regions are extreme places to live. The animals that live there have special adaptations to help them survive in cold, snowy, icy conditions. These adaptations may be either special **body parts** or **behaviors**. Choose six of the animals in the article and fill in the chart below with details about their adaptations.

ANIMAL NAME	ADAPTATION	HOW THE ADAPTATION HELPS WITH SURVIVAL
Arctic Fox	Fur changes color—white in winter, brown in summer	Fox is camouflaged all year round, when there's snow and when there isn't

