

Educator's Guide



Educational extensions for the February 2012 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

CALLING ALL CHICKADEES

In “**Dear Ranger Rick**” (page 4) a reader reports success in feeding chickadees from her hands. As she says, it’s amazing! It’s also not hard. Why not try making your own chickadee feeding station at school? Check the May 2011 issue of *Ranger Rick* (or search online) for tips. When the chickadees land, the looks on your students’ faces will be priceless!

SLOTH HANDBOOK

After reading “**Bringing Up Baby Sloths**” (pages 6–12), ask students what the orphaned sloths need to learn before they can be released from the sanctuary. Have students use the information in the story to write a handbook for sloths that will prepare them for life in the wild. Encourage them to make the project creative and fun with illustrations, lists of tips, and more.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Are you surprised by the news that parrot parents name their babies (“**The Buzz**,” pages 14–15)? Invite students to discuss this information in pairs or small groups. Ask them to also consider what names are, how humans use them, and what it means that some animals use them, too.

HEART HUNTING

Check out the heart shapes on display in “**Hearts of Nature**” (pages 26–29). Then challenge students to search for hearts in the natural world around them. (Suggest they look in rocks, tree branches, bark, clouds, etc.) Encourage them to take photos of the hearts they find to make unique Valentine’s Day cards.



KELP FOREST MURAL

Read about the many inhabitants of a kelp forest in “**The Kelp Club**” (pages 30–35). Then work with students to create a mural of a kelp forest. Each student can make an animal cutout to tape onto the mural, writing a caption for the back of the cutout that describes the species’ role in a kelp ecosystem.

LEAPING INTO MATH

In honor of the leap year, have students choose one of the leaping animals in the “**Fun on the Run**” games (pages 36–38). Ask students to research their animal’s leaping abilities. Which animal jumps the greatest distance? Which one jumps farthest relative to its size? Then try it yourselves: How far can individual students jump, and how far can the class go if they add all of their leaps together?

MUSICAL METHOD

According to “**Ask Rick**” (page 39), some studies suggest that listening to music can benefit both plants and animals. Have students design their own experiments around this theme, using the scientific method to investigate questions about how music affects plants, pets, or even people.

RAIDERS OF THE LOST AARDVARK

A rare mummified aardvark has been discovered in Africa by archaeologist Jack Snare. But en route to the Natural Science Museum in Africa, Snare’s precious discovery is stolen! Help Ranger Rick track down the clues to solve the mystery of the missing mummy with this new app for iPad, iPod touch, and iPhone. Learn more at nwf.org/Kids/Kids-Apps.aspx.



Join the Kelp Club



Would you like to be part of the Kelp Club? Take this quiz to see if you have all the kelp knowledge you need. To find the answers, read "The Kelp Club" (pages 30-35).

A kelp forest looks like trees growing underwater. But kelp is actually not a true plant, it's a kind of _____.

Kelp grows fast—up to _____ in a single day! It also grows tall—as tall as a _____ building.

Kelp clings to the rocky ocean floor with a root-like base called a _____.

Many kinds of animals live in the kelp "clubhouse." Scientists found over _____ species living in the kelp forest off the coast of California.

Name some animals that live on the "ground floor" of a kelp forest: _____

Name some animals that live in the middle level among the kelp's leaf-like blades: _____

Name some animals that hang out on the "roof," at the water's surface: _____

What are three ways that animals living in a kelp forest use the seaweed?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Name a food you eat that probably has kelp in it: _____

Which animal can destroy a kelp forest by eating too much of it? _____

Which animal eats the kelp-eaters, protecting the forest? _____

Congratulations! Now you're ready to join the Kelp Club!



Tooth Time



Teeth come in different shapes and sizes. That's because animals use them in different ways. Read about teeth in "Open Wide" (pages 16-21). Then fill in the chart below with information about how teeth match up with animals' eating habits.

	WHAT DO THEY EAT?	DESCRIBE THEIR TEETH	WHAT JOBS DO THEIR TEETH DO? (Be specific: tear, grind, cut, pierce, etc.)
CARNIVORES			
HERBIVORES			
OMNIVORES			
INSECTIVORES			

What kind of eater are you? How do your teeth help you with foods you eat?

