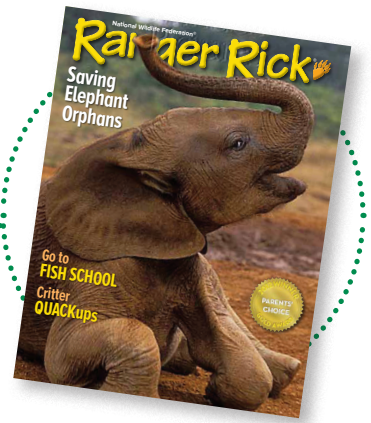


Educator's Guide



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

GOODS FROM THE GARDEN

This month's "**Dear Ranger Rick**" letters (**page 4**) focus on vegetable gardens at home and school. Does your school have a garden? Do students have gardens at home? In this season of harvest, gather some fresh garden produce and have students help prepare a healthy snack. As you eat, discuss the various parts of plants (roots, stems, leaves, fruits) on your plates.

MANTIS TRUTHS AND MYTHS

As students read "**Mighty Mantis**" (**pages 6-11**), ask them to compile a list of true and false statements about these unusual insects. Then let them quiz *you*, their teacher! Can they stump you?

ANIMALS WITH TOOLS

"**The Buzz**" (**pages 12-13**) explains that a brown bear was observed using a rock to groom itself—the first report of a bear using a tool. What other animals use tools? For what purposes? What's the significance of tool use in relation to animal intelligence? Engage students in investigating these questions and sharing what they learn with the group.

SCHOOL TAG

You learn in "**Fish School**" (**pages 14-19**) that swimming in schools can help keep fish safe from predators. Test the effectiveness of schooling with a fun game of tag. Go outside, choose one or two students to be big, hungry fish, and warn the others that they are small fish and must run to escape being "eaten" (tagged). Play one standard game. Then challenge students to work together, moving like fish in a school. Is it harder for the big fish to catch a meal?

FISHY OR NOT?

Certain characteristics listed in "**Fish School**" (**pages 14-19**) distinguish fish from other animals. On a set of index cards, write the names of a variety of fish as well as other animals that have some things in common with fish. Give one card to each student and provide time for students to look up information about their assigned species. Then play Twenty Questions, with the group questioning each student in turn and attempting to identify his or her species and decide whether it is a fish or not.

BEES, PLEASE

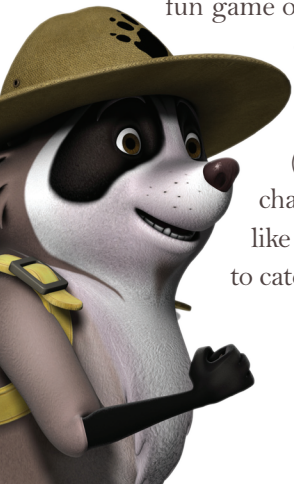
"**Ask Rick**" (**pages 28-29**) notes that social bees are the ones that make honey. Honeybees lead fascinating lives. Invite a local beekeeper to visit your class and talk with students about the experience of observing and interacting with bees.

ANIMALS UNDERGROUND

The animals in the "**Just for Fun**" games (**pages 37-39**) all live underground. Head outside to look for signs of underground animals in your neighborhood. Then invite students to create a mural that shows a cross section of life underground. Each student can choose a different animal to draw or paint. They should start by finding information about their animal. (Where does it live? What does it eat?) Then they can incorporate what they learn into their artwork.

RECYCLE-BOWL

Want to save resources by enhancing recycling at your school? Join the Keep America Beautiful Recycle-Bowl competition. Find details and register your school at recycle-bowl.org.



Elephant Empathy



Read **"Little Orphan Elephants"** (pages 22-27). Then think over what you learned about the Nairobi Elephant Nursery as you answer the questions below.

What do human babies need to survive?

How are baby elephants similar to human babies? How are they different?

Why do you think visiting the elephant nursery helps people value and protect elephants?

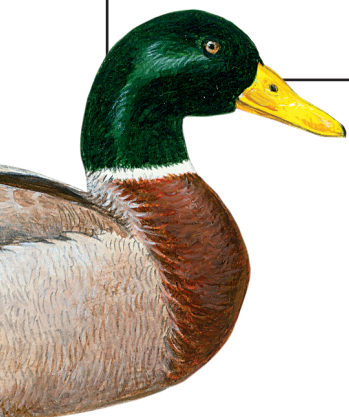


Dabbling Ducks, Diving Ducks



Read **"Quackers: Dabblers or Divers?"** (pages 30-35) to find out what makes a duck a dabbler or a diver. Then fill in the chart below with information about the two groups. ART BY JOHN DAWSON

DABLERS	DIVERS
What do they eat? Where do they find their food?	
What's special about their feet and wings?	
If you were watching them hunt for food, what would you see?	



BONUS: Go search for ducks! Can you find some hanging out in a pond, lake, or river near you? Look at their bodies and watch what they do. Use your chart to decide if each kind of duck you spot is a dabbler or a diver.



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