



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE JUNE 2021 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

WHAT'S A WATERSHED?

A watershed is a land area that channels rainfall and snowmelt into creeks, streams, and rivers, and eventually into reservoirs, bays, and the ocean. We learn in **“Saggy, Baggy Froggy,”** on pages 14–18, that pollutants are washed from the local watershed into Lake Titicaca, causing serious harm to the frogs.

Students may use EPA’s My Waterway at mywaterway.epa.gov to explore their own local watershed. First, insert the school’s address or zip code. Then, allow students to explore the data, such as watershed name, condition of the waterways, and waterway health for swimming, drinking water, and eating fish. Finally, hold a class discussion about what students learned. Encourage them to look at other watersheds where extended family lives or in places they’d love to visit.

CALLING ALL POLLINATORS!

After reading **“The Other Pollinators,”** pages 20–25, your students may be excited to get outside and observe pollinators found in your area.

To get them started, have students create a pollinator handout for the school community to use. The handout will help identify plants and pollinators students can expect to see when they visit the schoolyard habitat. First, plan to spend time outside observing pollinators, allowing students to sit quietly and make mental notes about what they see. Next, have students use the free SEEK app by iNaturalist to snap photos of the pollinators they observe. The photographs and information in the app will help students create the handout.

Pollinator handouts can be laminated to increase durability. In addition, students can use a dry-erase marker to mark the plants and pollinators they see in the schoolyard habitat.

LIGHTS, LIGHTS, LIGHTS

Students learned that artificial lights harm fireflies in **“Lights in the Night,”** pages 26–28. As a class, explore *light pollution*—the excessive or inappropriate use of artificial light. Guiding questions can include:

- What causes light pollution?
- How does light pollution affect the environment?
- How does light pollution impact wildlife in my community?
- How does light color impact wildlife?
- What are solutions to light pollution?
- What can I do at home to reduce light pollution and be a better friend to insects and other animals?

SPONGEY RELATIONSHIPS

In **“Meet the Sponges,”** pages 30–36, students learn about the many ways different ocean animals rely on sponges. The story lays the foundation for learning about symbiotic relationships between species. Have students define three types of symbiotic relationships: *mutualism*, *commensalism*, and *parasitism*. Next, have students reread “Meet the Sponges” and discuss what types of symbiotic relationships sponges have with frogfish, sponge crabs, and other fish, crabs, and shrimps. Allow students to share their responses and their reasoning.



