



Where Animals and Plants Are Found

What I Need to Know

Vocabulary

- ecosystem
- food chain
- food web
- marine
- prairie

What I Do

About Animals and Plants

Many animals live on Earth. Many plants live on Earth. The animals and plants are not the same. They live in different places. Animals and plants in each place are linked. They are connected. They are linked in a special way.

Animals and plants that are linked make up an ecosystem. Not all ecosystems are the same. All over the world, plants and animals make up different ecosystems.

You are part of an ecosystem. People can change ecosystems. They can change ecosystems by changing the land. They can grow new plants. They can bring in new animals.

Read and complete each Activity. When you are done, you will know about a bird that helps crocodiles, why the eagle has bumpy toes, and a pool you cannot swim in.



Name _____ Date _____

Activity 1

The Nile is the longest river in the world.

Crocodiles live in the Nile. They are big. They move quickly and have big, sharp teeth. Crocodiles catch and eat animals with their big, sharp teeth.

But some birds are not afraid of the crocodiles. They walk in the crocodiles' mouths! The crocodiles do not eat them. What is going on?

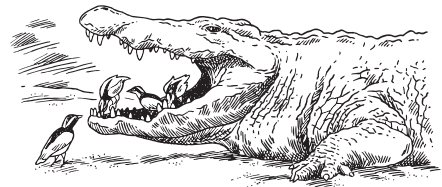
The birds are helping the crocodiles. Leeches are in the Nile. Leeches look like worms. They suck blood. Leeches get in the crocodiles mouths. The crocodiles cannot get rid of them. The birds eat the leeches! They pick the leeches off the crocodiles' gums!

Find the Nile River on the map.

What country starting with an *Eg* does the Nile River flow through? _____

What sea does the Nile River feed into? _____

What continent is the Nile River on? _____



Activity 2

The leeches, birds, and crocodiles on the Nile River are linked. They are all part of an ecosystem. An **ecosystem** is a system where plants and animals are linked. They are linked in a special way. Different ecosystems are all over the world. Not all ecosystems are the same. You are part of an ecosystem, too.

Think of cactus plants. Do you think cacti are part of the same ecosystem as the Nile crocodiles?

- A. no, because crocodiles are not plants
- B. yes, because crocodiles can eat cacti
- C. no, because crocodiles do not live in deserts
- D. yes, because crocodiles live where there is water

There are different kinds of crocodiles. Some kinds live in Australia. Some live in the United States. They live in Florida.

Most likely, the places crocodiles live are all part of

- A. cold, polar ecosystems
- B. warm-water ecosystems
- C. high-mountain ecosystems
- D. Mediterranean-climate ecosystems

Are crocodiles on more than one continent? _____



Name _____ Date _____

Activity 3

Think about where you live. List some animals and plants in your ecosystem.

Type of ecosystem (city, forest, lake, coastal area, mountain, desert, tropical): _____

Animals: _____

Plants: _____

Think of a different ecosystem from the one you live in. List some animals and plants found in this ecosystem. Circle the kinds that are in the ecosystem where you live, too.

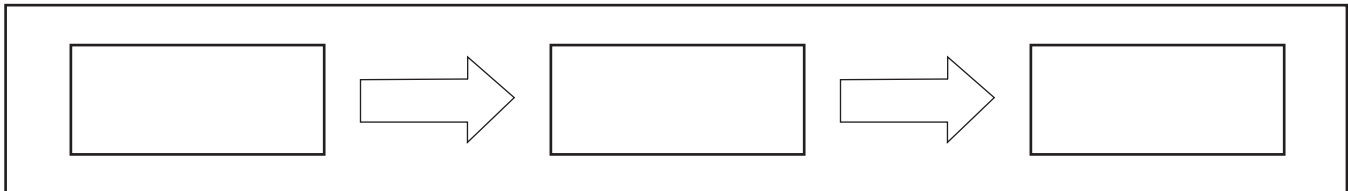
Type of ecosystem: _____

Animals: _____

Plants: _____

Activity 4

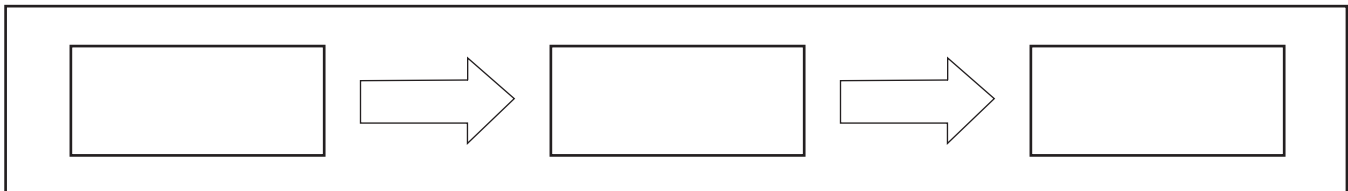
A **food chain** shows how plants and animals are linked. It shows what eats what in an ecosystem. Think again about the leeches, Nile crocodiles, and birds. You can make a food chain with them. The food chain shows how they are linked.



The food chain helps show us how

- A. birds eat crocodiles
- B. crocodiles live near water
- C. leeches only live in the Nile River
- D. leeches, birds, and crocodiles are linked

Make another food chain. In your food chain, show how a mouse, seeds, and a hawk are linked.



Write the words *food chain*.

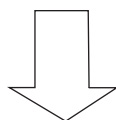
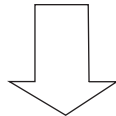
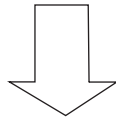
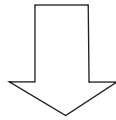


Name _____ Date _____

Activity 5

Some eagles have rough bumps on their toes. Why? The eagles catch fish. Fish are slippery. The bumps help the eagles hold on to the fish. What do some fish eat? They eat plankton. Plankton is a mass of tiny plants and animals that float in water. Make a **food chain** below with eagles with bumps on their feet.

Some eagles have short, strong toes. Why? The eagles eat snakes. Snakes wriggle. The short, strong toes are perfect for holding a wriggling snake. Snakes eat small animals like mice and frogs. The small animals may eat insects. The insects may eat seeds. Make a food chain with eagles with short, strong toes.



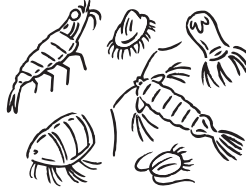


Name _____ Date _____

Activity 6

What are plankton? Plankton are very small animals and plants. Plankton floats in the water. Bigger animals eat them. Plankton are most like what in a land food web?

- A. deer
- B. bears
- C. grass
- D. tigers

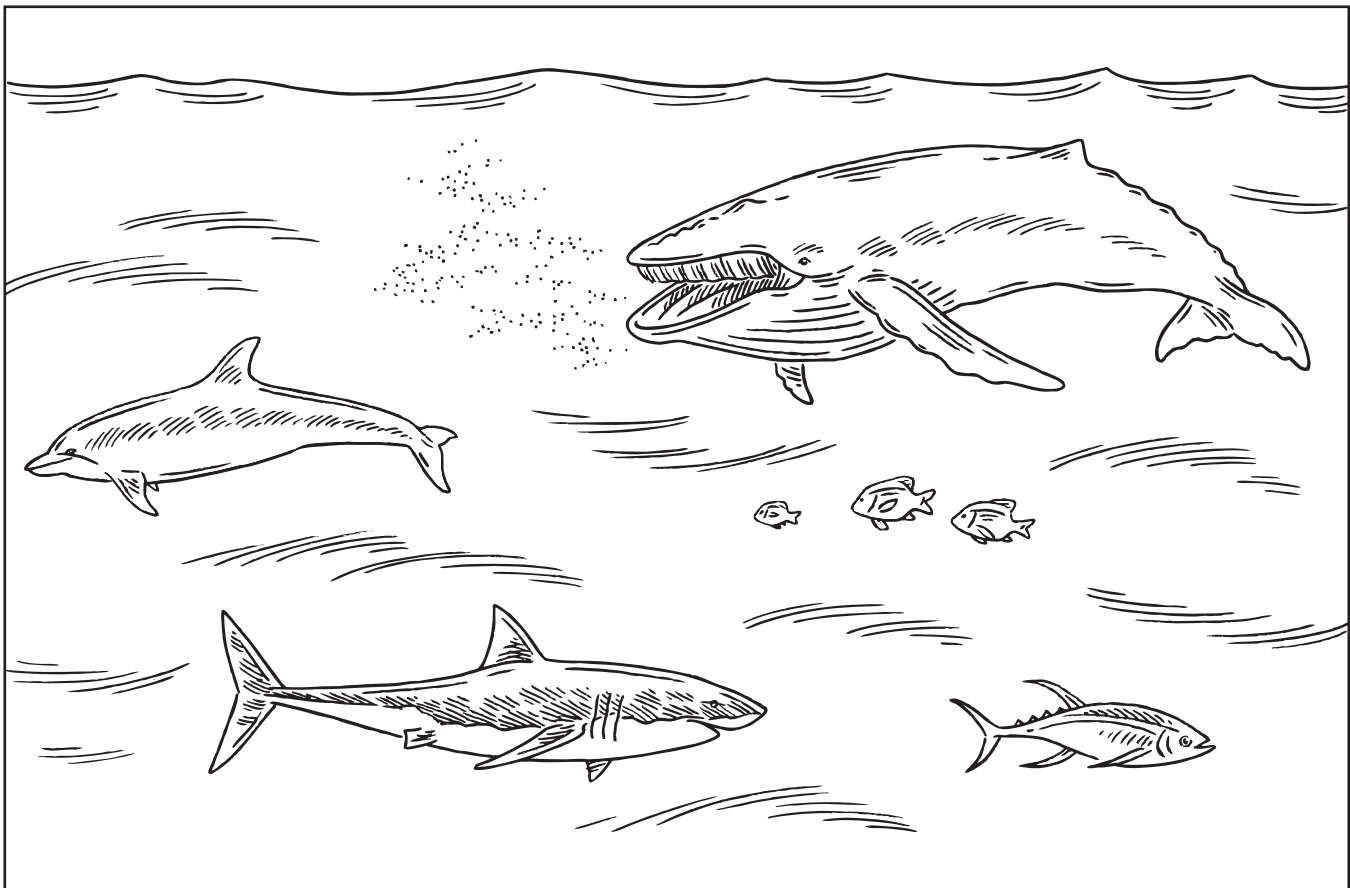


Sometimes food chains are linked. The food chains make a food web. A **marine** ecosystem is an ecosystem found in or by water. Think about marine animals. Think about marine plants. Make a marine food web. Put these things in your web: shark, dolphin, small fish, big fish, plankton, whale.



p _____ s _____ b _____ d _____ sh _____ w _____

Write your name by the food web below. Draw lines to what you eat.



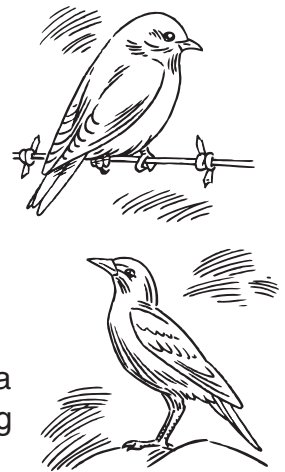


Name _____ Date _____

Activity 7

Sometimes we can change ecosystems. We can drive out native plants. We can drive away native animals. Native plants and animals were not brought to a place. They were already there.

Eastern bluebirds are birds that live east of the Rocky Mountains. The bluebirds began to disappear. Why? Starlings are birds. English house sparrows are birds. These birds were brought from England. They were brought to the United States. These birds nested where bluebirds liked to nest. They nested in holes in trees and posts. The bluebirds did not have a place to nest. Today, there are more Eastern bluebirds. They are beginning to come back.



One reason the bluebirds may be coming back is that

- A. people took bluebirds to England
- B. bluebirds started laying eggs on bare ground
- C. people made special nesting boxes for bluebirds
- D. bluebirds began to nest where Western bluebirds nest

Color in the part of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains.

Activity 8

Find England on the map. Look at England. Look at the eastern part of the United States. People brought starlings to the United States. They brought English house sparrows. Why don't you think the birds were here before?

The birds could not

- A. know what way to go
- B. learn to eat insects
- C. find a place to nest
- D. fly across the ocean

Western bluebirds live west of the Rocky Mountains. For Western and Eastern bluebirds, the Rocky Mountains make a

- A. food web
- B. ecosystem
- C. natural barrier
- D. physical landform





Name _____ Date _____

Activity 9

Think about where you live. Think of the names of some native plants and native animals and write them below. Now think of some plants and animals that have been introduced to your area. Introduced plants and animals are not native. Write them below.

Plants	Animals	Native	Introduced
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Circle the native plants and animals that still live in your area or country.

Next to the plants and animals, write what type of areas they grow or live in (forest, lake, mountain, plain, city).

Activity 10

Long ago, lions lived in the United States. The lions were American lions. Big cats lived in the United States, too. The cats were called saber-toothed cats. How do we know?

The La Brea Tar Pits are in Los Angeles, a city in California. Long ago, there was not a city. Oil seeped up from the ground. Part of the oil evaporated. Sticky pools were left. Animals got trapped in the pools. The pools are still there today. Scientists found fossils in the pools.

Fossils are bones that turned to stone. The bones were from American lions. They were from saber-toothed cats.

Where are lions found today?

- A. dry desert regions of Asia
- B. tropical grasslands of Africa
- C. temperate forests of Australia
- D. tundra regions of North America

Find and label Los Angeles on the map.

What direction do you live from Los Angeles?





Name _____ Date _____

Activity 11

Nebraska is a state that had a nickname. It was known as “The Tree Planter’s State.” In 1945, the name was changed. It was changed to “The Cornhusker State.”

Nebraska has a national forest. A national forest is a forest that belongs to a country. This forest is the only national forest that was planted by people. Nebraska has **prairie**, too. A prairie is a flat plain. It is treeless. Grass grows on it. Nebraska has the largest stretch of native prairie in the United States.

From the story, you can tell that

- A. corn is a native prairie grass
- B. Nebraska is the same as it was long ago
- C. people made a forest ecosystem in part of Nebraska
- D. Nebraska has the longest stretch of native forest in the United States



List three things about prairies.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

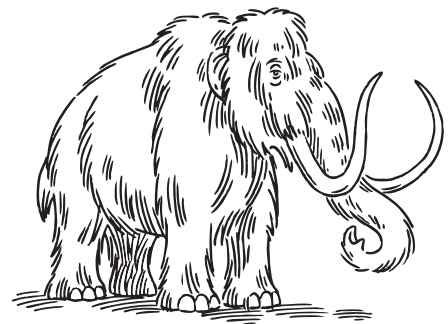
Activity 12

What crop is most likely grown in Nebraska today?

Hint: Think about information in Activity 11 (see above).

- A. corn
- B. cotton
- C. apples
- D. peanuts

Fossils have been found in Nebraska. The fossils are very old. They are fossils of elephants. The elephants were very big. They were hairy. They had huge tusks. Scientists called the big elephants *mammoths*. Today, elephants are found in



- A. polar regions of Antarctica
- B. tropical grasslands of Africa
- C. temperate forests of North America
- D. tropical rain forests of South America

Which state is to the south of Nebraska? _____



Name _____ Date _____

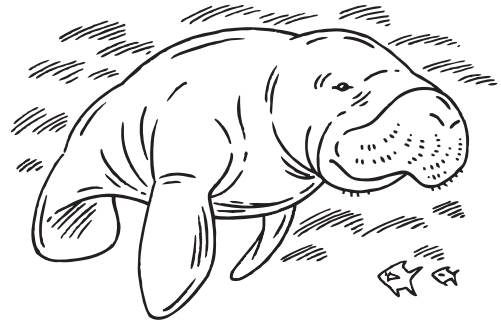
Activity 13

A manatee is a mammal that lives in the water. It is known as a sea cow. Manatees belong to an ocean ecosystem. They eat water plants and move slowly. They began to disappear. There were fewer and fewer manatees. Why?

One reason is boats. Manatees come up to the surface to breathe. While close to the surface, they were hit by boats that were moving quickly. The manatees moved too slowly to get out of the way.

What can people do to protect manatees and their ecosystem? (Pick two.)

- A. Catch manatees and put them in zoos.
- B. Allow fewer boats in places manatees live.
- C. Make boats go slowly in places manatees live.
- D. Start growing the water plants that manatees eat on land.



Manatees live off the Florida coast. They swim to the Gulf of Mexico. Find the Gulf of Mexico on the map. Which state does not border the Gulf of Mexico?

- A. Texas
- B. Georgia
- C. Alabama
- D. Louisiana

