



Educator's Guide

Educational extensions for the November 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

SEA OTTER STORY

In "Everything You "Otter" Know About Sea Otters" (pages 6-11), students learn that sea otters eat, sleep, and even give birth to their babies in the water. Have students create a picture book (fiction or nonfiction) about these endearing animals and how they are suited to aquatic life. Ask them to add illustrations and address these questions:

- 1) How does a sea otter spend its days?
- 2) What adaptations (body parts and behaviors) help it survive in its habitat?

SEEN FROM SPACE

"The Buzz" (pages 12-13) explains that the world's largest beaver dam was discovered using satellite photos. What other features on Earth are visible from space? With students, explore NASA's "Earth from Space" website at earth.jsc.nasa.gov/sseop/EFS/ and discuss which natural, human-made, and animal-made structures you can see.

BUILD A RATTLE

"Quick Bits: Rattlesnake" (pages 14-16) shows a cross-section of a rattlesnake's rattle. Engage students in finding out more about the physical structure of the rattle and how it makes its sound. Then challenge students to team up and design their own rattles. They should construct something using everyday materials that can be found in the recycling bin or around the home or classroom. Give each team a chance to demonstrate its rattle and then discuss which ones most closely mimic either the structure or the sound of a real rattlesnake's rattle.

THROUGH SNAKE EYES

How does a rattlesnake see the world? Very differently from you! After reading "Quick Bits: Rattlesnake" (pages 14-16) and learning how rattlesnakes use vibrations, heat-sensing pits, fangs, venom, and other features to hunt their prey, have students write a description of a hunt in the rattlesnake's own voice. As a group, brainstorm a list of sensory words and encourage students to use this descriptive language to fully express the snake's perspective.

MAKE A NATURE MOBILE

Check out the instructions on page 23 for creating a nature mobile. Then go out for a walk and collect fall treasures to make one!

CALLING ALL PHONES

"Ranger Rick's Adventures" (pages 24-26) explains that cell phone manufacturing impacts wildlife, notably gorillas. Recycling old cell phones can reduce these impacts. Have students investigate whether there is a convenient way for people to recycle cell phones in your area. If not, see about starting a program to collect them. Then have students make posters or pamphlets about the importance of recycling cell phones and how to do it.

ANIMAL DANCE MOVES

"Dancing with the Stars" (pages 30-35) shows off some of the great dance moves in the animal kingdom. Burn off excess energy by having students make up their own dances incorporating some of the animals' moves from the story or others they know of. Put on some fun music and get grooving!



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THE TRUTH ABOUT RED SQUIRRELS

Read "Red Squirrel Rescue" (pages 18-23 in the November 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick* magazine). Then test your knowledge about red squirrels with the following questions.

1. In what part of the world do Eurasian red squirrels live? _____

2. How did gray squirrels from North America get to the places where Eurasian red squirrels live?

3. Why are the gray squirrels a threat to the Eurasian red squirrels? Name three reasons:

● _____

● _____

● _____

4. Name two other threats for Eurasian red squirrels.

● _____

● _____

5. People in Europe are trying to help Eurasian red squirrels survive. Describe three different ways they are doing this:

● _____

● _____

● _____





WHAT MAKES AN OTTER

“Everything You “Otter” Know About Sea Otters” (pages 6-11 in the November 2010 issue of *Ranger Rick* magazine) tells you lots of interesting things about sea otters. The information is arranged into sections such as “They’re Waterproof,” “They’re Friendly,” and “They’re Neatniks.” Choose any two of the section titles from the story. Write them on the lines below, and then draw a picture in each box that shows how the phrase describes sea otters.

1.

2.

