

# **Educator's Guide**

Educational extensions for the December-January 2011 issue of *Ranger Rick*® magazine

## ANIMAL POETRY

"Dear Ranger Rick" (page 4) and "Hey, Duckbills!" (pages 22-23) feature verse about wildlife—from backyard species to an extinct dinosaur. After students read these poems, ask them to compose their own. They could choose a free-form poem or a parody of Jingle Bells or another familiar tune, and they could choose to focus on nearby wildlife or something as farflung as a favorite dinosaur. Encourage them to find out more about their chosen species and incorporate facts about it, as in the examples.

#### **CHAMELEON CARE**

In "What Do You Know About Chameleons?" (pages 6-11), you learn that it is very hard to keep a chameleon as a pet. Why? Engage students in researching a chameleon's habitat needs. Then ask them to write an informational brochure or make a video to explain why chameleons are difficult to keep alive as pets and are best left in the wild.

## FIELD GUIDE TO CONIFERS

What kinds of conifers are growing near you? Have students read "Be Out There: Conifers" (page 12) and look carefully at the examples to see what features distinguish one species from another. Then head outside to meet your evergreen neighbors. See if you can identify the ones you find. Then engage students in making a field guide to the conifers on your school grounds or in the neighborhood. For each species, you might include photos or drawings, distinguishing features, natural history, importance to wildlife, and human uses.

### **PENGUIN SUMMER**

What do penguins do all summer? Find out by reading "Let's Spy on Penguins" (pages 14-20). Then have students write, in the voice of an Adélie penguin, a "What I Did on My Summer Vacation" essay that incorporates facts they learned from the story. Or, instead of an essay, they could draw a comic, make a video, or create and perform a skit.

#### YOGI BEAR MOVIE

National Wildlife Federation has teamed up with the film *Yogi Bear* to inspire kids and families to learn about wildlife and get outside. This 3D adventure opens in theaters December 17, 2010. Find lots of outdoor fun at <a href="mailto:nwf.org/yogi">nwf.org/yogi</a>.

# **EXPERIENCE THE EVERGLADES**

This month in "Ranger Rick's Adventures" (pages 26-29), the gang visits the Everglades. Have students investigate this unique ecosystem, the wildlife that lives there, and the problems that threaten the Everglades. Then hop on Imagination Airlines for a "field trip." Each student can take a turn as tour guide, explaining to the rest of the group a distinctive Everglades feature such as alligators or sawgrass.

# WHO'S THE SNOOZER?

Have students read "When Animals Snooze" (pages 30-35) and then take a closer look at each of the photos. Ask students to choose one of the photos that best describes how they personally feel about sleep. In small groups, ask them to explain why they chose the photo they did and to support their explanation with facts they learned in the story about that animal's sleeping habits.







What if, like a chameleon, you could change color to match your mood? Read "What Do You Know About Chameleons?" (pages 6-11 in the December-January 2011 issue of <i>Ranger Rick</i> ) to find out more about when and why chameleons change their color. Then imagine that you had the same ability. What moods would cause you to change your color? What color would you take on in each of these moods? Describe your ideas here.



Read "When Animals Snooze" (pages 30-35 in the December-January 2011 issue of *Ranger Rick*). Then find out if you were a wide-awake reader: See if you can fill in the missing facts about sleep below.

<ul><li>1. What is sleep? Describe three ways that a sleeping animal is different from one that is awake.</li><li></li></ul>
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2. Why do animals sleep? Describe the benefits of taking time to snooze.
3. Scientists say that some kinds of animals definitely sleep, but they don't know about other
kinds of animals. Two animal groups that sleep in similar ways to us are
and Some animal groups that don't sleep in the same way are , , and
4. What type of animal:
Sleeps during the day, hanging upside down:
Sleeps standing up with its legs locked to keep it upright:
Dozes in the water with only its eyes, ears, and nostrils showing:
Sleeps on ice and snow to cool off:
Lies down to sleep, but gets up for "midnight snacks":
Sleeps protected in a rock crevice in a mucus tent:
Curls up and uses its tail as a scarf to stay warm:
May sleep on the water or while flying—nobody knows for sure:
5. Does learning about how animals sleep help you understand something new about the way
you sleep? Explain why or why not.