EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE SEPTEMBER 2020 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

WILDLIFE WATCH

“Owl Patrol,” pages 6-11, offers an example of how members of a community can support professional scientists and help protect wildlife and habitat.

There are 19 owl species in the United States. Have your children find the species that live in their state. After learning more about them, each child should choose one species and make a spotlight poster to raise awareness about that species. The poster should include how to identify the owl and what kind of habitat the owl needs to survive.

As a family you can also engage in numerous community science programs all year long. A catalog of projects across the country, supporting wildlife of all types, can be found at scistarter.org.

FOREST LIFE

Reading Ranger Rick’s Adventures, “Fire Escape,” on pages 21-23, your children learned about the benefits of small forest fires. Managing a forest is important for the health of the forest ecosystem and for the animals that call it home.

Have your children research forest management and the wide variety of jobs and skills required to support a healthy forest. Using the resources below, instruct them to explore different career opportunities, such as fire scientist, wildlife biologist, and vegetation ecologist.

- NPS unveiled: Meet the people that make the national parks run
- Careers in the National Park Service

Have your children create a set of 3-5 mini posters promoting different park service career opportunities. Together decide what information should be on the posters. Consider what would be interesting and exciting. Identify what would make a person want to have that job.

 ALL ABOUT ANEMONES

In “Anemones,” pages 24-27, your children will meet a variety of these amazing, colorful ocean creatures. Encourage your children to close their eyes while you read the story. Ask them to visualize what they hear. Once you have finished reading, ask each child to create a story map using anemones as the main characters in an ocean adventure story. Their map must include a minimum of three facts from Ranger Rick’s Anemones story. Then using their story map, each they should write an anemone adventure story complete with illustrations.

MOUNTAIN SCENE

In “Growing Up Elk,” pages 30-35, your children learned that some of North America’s elk herds live in the expansive and beautiful Rocky Mountains. Photographs, such as the ones in the article, are one way to help tell stories. Dioramas are also visual tools used in storytelling.

Use the internet to look up examples of dioramas with your children. What are the elements of a diorama (3-D, small-scale model)? What purposes do they serve (creative, visually appealing storytelling or teaching tool)? Allow space for your children to brainstorm the Rocky Mountain elk story they want to tell through a diorama, using the knowledge they gained reading “Growing Up Elk.” Then ask each child to make a list of the materials needed to construct a diorama. Provide ample time and space for your children to be creative and build their dioramas, as well as a place to display their work. (Consider placing it central to where you eat and use it as a conversation piece.).
Test your comprehension after reading Ranger Rick’s Adventure “Fire Escape” on pages 21–23. Circle the correct response. If the statement is false, rewrite the statement to make it true.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</table>
| 1 | Ranger Rick’s adventure takes place in Wyoming’s Huron National Forest.  
   TRUE FALSE |
| 2 | Several forest animals are fleeing the forest because a forest fire has started.  
   TRUE FALSE |
| 3 | Ranger Rick and friends use a hidden trail to escape the fire.  
   TRUE FALSE |
| 4 | It takes a very long time for the forest to recover from a fire. It is hard for forest animals to find food and the ash contaminates the soil.  
   TRUE FALSE |
| 5 | The fire opens the pine cones so they can spread their seed.  
   TRUE FALSE |
| 6 | Kirtland’s warblers only nest on the ground beneath young jack pine trees.  
   TRUE FALSE |
7. Forest managers set small, controlled fires to help prevent larger fires. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRUE</th>
<th>FALSE</th>
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8. The Kirtland’s warbler is currently listed as an endangered species. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRUE</th>
<th>FALSE</th>
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</table>

**ANSWERS**

1. True
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. True
6. True
7. False
8. False
**GROWING UP ELK**

How “grown up” is your elk vocabulary? After reading “Growing Up Elk,” pages 30–35, test your skills below by drawing a line from the vocabulary word to its meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOCABULARY</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 wapiti</td>
<td>a soft, fuzzy skin on elk antlers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 herd</td>
<td>b elk mating season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 steppe</td>
<td>c adult female elk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 bull</td>
<td>d bull elk’s loud call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 velvet</td>
<td>e Native American word for elk, meaning “white rump”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 cow</td>
<td>f adult male elk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 rut</td>
<td>g wide, treeless area of grass and shrubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 bugling</td>
<td>h a large group of elk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANSWERS: 1-e, 2-h, 3-g, 4-f, 5-a, 6-c, 7-b, 8-d
UNDER A ROCK

If you lift up a rock, you’re likely to find many creatures living underneath it. Go ahead—take a peek and see who’s at home!

Keep a Record!

Date _____  Time _____

Location _____________  Weather _____________

Helpful Things to Take Along

[ ] Garden trowel  [ ] Small transparent containers

[ ] Magnifying glass

Find a rock that’s small enough to move, but big enough to be a home. (A log would work, too.) Roll it over and take a close look at what’s creeping and crawling underneath. If you have some tools with you, try:

• Spying through a magnifying glass for a zoomed-in view.
• Scooping a creature into a small container to watch it for a while.
• Digging with a trowel to see what lives further down in the soil.

Draw or describe the creatures you find in the boxes below.

UNDER A ROCK: WHO’S AT HOME?

When you’re done, be sure to free any creatures you’ve caught and roll the rock back into place.