Biodiversity

Wildlife | Insects | Forests | Habitats | Ecology | Ecosystems | Birds | Survival | Pollinators | Plants | Fish | Relationships | Structure and Function | Careers

Biodiversity is the variety of life on our planet. It can be studied on many levels. At the highest level, one can look at all the species on the entire planet. On a much smaller scale, one can study biodiversity within a single ecosystem (for example, a pond) or a neighborhood park. Identifying and understanding the relationships between all living things on Earth is one of the greatest challenges in science. Researchers have estimated that there are between 3 and 30 million species on Earth, with a few studies predicting that there may be over 100 million species. Currently, we have identified only 1.7 million species, so the vast majority of species on the planet are not yet known!

- Biodiversity provides us with a wide array of foods, fibers and other materials, which support our economy
- A diversity of pollinators, plants and soils provide a variety of foods for our diet.
- Most medical discoveries to cure diseases and lengthen life spans were made because of research into plant and animal biology and genetics.

Driving Questions

- ✓ How can we, as conservation botanists, increase the numbers of native plant species on our school grounds?
- ✓ How can we, as members of the community, work with our local government to bring awareness to the biodiversity needs of our community?
- ✓ How can we, as wildlife biologists, engage the community in the habitat needs of our local wildlife?
- ✓ How can we, as landscape architects, design a habitat on our school grounds that will provide a place for pollinators to flourish and serve as a demonstration pollinator habitat for the community?

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Top 10 Tips | Fast Facts | Standards Alignment |Sample Action Plan | Biodiversity Audit | Lesson Links