



Ranger Rick

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

EDUCATIONAL EXTENSIONS FOR THE AUGUST 2016 ISSUE OF RANGER RICK® MAGAZINE

THINKING ABOUT RED PANDAS

Use the following as discussion questions or writing prompts before and after students read “Red Panda,” pages 6–11.

Pre-Reading Questions

- When you hear the word *panda*, what do you think of?
- Have you ever heard of a red panda?
- What do you think one looks like?

After-Reading Comprehension Checks

- Where do red pandas live?
- What physical features help red pandas survive in the chilly forests of the Himalaya Mountains?
- What do red pandas and giant pandas have in common? How are they different?

Critical and Creative Thinking Connections

- How does relying on bamboo for food affect the way red pandas live?
- Why are red pandas in trouble?
- What are people doing to help them? What are some other ways people could help?

CRAB FAMILY REUNION

“Crab Bag,” pages 14–19, describes how features and behaviors vary greatly among crab species. What if these crabs held a family reunion where many crab cousins had a chance to meet each other? Have students make up a skit or story describing the scene. What tales would the crabs exchange about their lives? If they had a talent show, what talents would the various species display? Encourage students to do additional research to enhance the final product, especially if it’s a skit and they decide to make costumes or other props!

Then exercise children’s critical thinking skills with the Crabby Questions student page.

WADING THROUGH JACANA PHOTOS

Before students read “Little Bigfoot,” pages 20–24, guide them through a “picture walk” of the article. Start by reading the article’s title and deck aloud. Then point to the opening photo and ask students to describe what they see. Have one child read aloud the quote that goes with the photo. Follow this procedure for each photo you encounter as you page your way through the story. Then discuss the following:

- What is this story about?
- Why do you think the birds in this story have big feet and long legs?
- Why do you think these birds have long bills?

After students have read the story, ask the three questions again and have children discuss how accurately they “predicted” the answers. End the lesson by distributing the Invent a Wading Bird student page. This page has students use newly acquired knowledge about jacanas to invent their own wading birds.

BACKYARD PHOTO SHOOT

If students have access to cameras, suggest they spend half an hour photographing nature in their own backyards, schoolyard, or a local park. They can follow the tips in “Six Tricks for Great Pics,” pages 30–35, and use the Backyard Photo Shoot page in this month’s Nature Notebook (<http://www.nwf.org/Kids/Ranger-Rick/Ranger-Ricks-Nature-Notebook/2016.aspx>) to document their experiences. Set aside class time for students to share their nature photographs and documentation. Then suggest children enter their favorite images in Ranger Rick’s ongoing photo contest at nwf.org/rrphotocontest. The current winners and their nature photos are featured on pages 4–5 of the June/July 2016 issue of Ranger Rick.



CRABBY QUESTIONS

Read "Crab Bag," pages 14–19. Then use what you learned from the story to help you answer the questions below.

1 Why do you think we call someone who is in a bad mood "crabby"?

Do you think this has anything to do with a characteristic of real crabs? Why or why not?

2 How do crabs use their claws?

Would you like to have a claw? What would you do with a claw if you had one?

3 Crabs eat lots of different things. Name some of the things they eat

Sometimes crabs are called "the ocean's trash collectors" because many eat dead plants and animals. Why might this be an important job?



INVENT A WADING BIRD

If someone asked you to think up a new bird species that wades around in shallow water eating little fishes and frogs, what would it look like? Answer the questions below.

1 What would its legs look like? Why?

2 What would its feet look like? Why?

3 What would its bill look like? Why?

4 What would its neck look like? Why?

5 How large would your wading bird be?

6 What colors would it be?

7 What would you call your wading bird?

8 Now draw a picture of your wading bird on the back of this paper.