



## Introduction Session Outline

### For the Outdoor Skills Program

### 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4th Grade Lessons

- I. Welcome students. Introduce instructors. Have instructors name their favorite Nebraska wildlife animal.
- II. Activity: Protect the Nest
- III. Discussion: What is the predator's job? What is the prey's job? Can you name a predator, and how they catch their prey? Does the animal have any special skills?
- IV. Activity: What is Wild. Students will introduce themselves in this activity.
- V. Activity: Fight & Flight Zones
- VI. Discussion: What is the zone of a raccoon? Which wildlife can you get closer to? What does that animal do if you get to close? (ex. Opossum – they play dead or hiss at you)
- vii. Frisbee Moment: Ask the students what they enjoyed most about today's session and what they enjoyed the least.

The Outdoor Skills program is a partnership with Nebraska Games & Parks and the UNL Extension/4-H Youth Development Program to provide hands-on lessons for youth during their afterschool time and school days off. It provides the opportunity to master skills in the areas of hunting, fishing, and exploring the outdoors. This educational program is part of the 20 year plan to recruit, develop and retain hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts in Nebraska.

# Inventory

## Session: Introduction Curriculum Level: 3 - 4

### Kit Materials & Equipment

- Rope
- (6) Tennis balls
- (3) Green baskets
- What is Wild Animals
- “Food” laminated sign
- (4) Measuring tape
- Pennies

For information on restocking items contact Julia Plugge at 402-471-6009 or [julia.plugge@nebraska.gov](mailto:julia.plugge@nebraska.gov)

**All orders must be placed at least 2 weeks in advance.**

# Session: Introduction

## Activity: Protect the Nest

**Grade/Age Level:**  
3-4

**Objectives:** Participants will examine the relationships between predator and prey.

**Method:** Students will play a game of Protect the Nest.

### Materials Contained in Tub:

- Tennis Balls
- Rope
- Journal and pencil

### Materials Needed to Conduct Activity:

Some larger balls.

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Group Size:** any

**Setting:** Indoors or outdoors

**Key Terms:** Predator/Prey

**Fair Exhibit:** Journal Page

**SET Ability:** Collaborate

### Background Information:

Every animal has a way of avoiding their predator, or a way to keep from being eaten by a predator. Most wildlife is also very protective of their young. In this game, the youth will examine predator/prey relationships. They will discover (on their own through your questions) how predators become smarter such as trying to steal eggs while the nest has fewer guards. The prey also becomes smarter in strategizing how to exchange guarding eggs from predators.

### Activity

#### *Before the activity*

1. Use the rope, and make a circle in the middle of a wide room. This will be the “nest”.
2. In the circle, place the tennis balls, and if desired, a few larger balls.
3. Hang the “food” sign in a corner of the room. Make sure there are no obstacles between the nest and food.

#### *Procedure*

1. Explain that two students will be a Mama bird and a Dada bird. They will stay in the rope to defend their nest.
2. The other ten students are predators that eat birds’ eggs. The predators will prey upon the eggs in the nest.
3. The parent birds are going to defend their nest, however they must eat! So each birds take turns running/flying to the food pile and then has to return to the nest so the other parent bird can go get food.
4. However, the birds have very powerful beaks, and if the bird touches the predator when they are trying to steal the eggs out of the nest, the predator must sit out. (There is no touching a predator while trying to fly to get food).
5. After playing the game ask the following questions: What made the game easy for the predators? Is there anything the predators did to get smarter in how to steal the eggs? Did the parent birds get smarter in guarding the nest?
6. Applying Knowledge: Can you think of any animals that travel in packs to make catching prey easier? What are some other wildlife which are sneaky or smart when preying?



# Session: Introduction

## Activity: Fight & Flight Zones

**Grade/Age Level:**  
3-4

**Objectives:** Participants will  
1. Test fight/flight zones.

**Method:** Students will measure the distance of personal space.

### Materials Contained in Tub:

- Pencils
- Clipboard
- Tape Measure
- Pennies
- Journals

### Materials Needed to Conduct Activity:

- See list above.

**Duration:** 20-30 minutes

**Group Size:** any

**Setting:** Indoors or outdoors

**Key Terms:** Fight, Flight

**Fair Exhibit:** Journal Page

**SET Ability:** Test, Use Tools

### Background Information:

Many animals become worried when someone intrudes into their personal space. They respond either by flight (moving) or by fight (defending themselves). Before fighting, an animal usually gives some warning signals, like a hiss or growl, baring its teeth or puffing up. Knowing an animal's flight zone (how close a person can get

before the animal gets nervous) is important for the safety of both people and animals.

### Activity

#### *Before the activity*

Set 2 parallel lines on the floor so students know where to stand. The lines should be about four feet apart. Have one penny for each person, and a couple of tape measures.

#### *Procedure*

1. Read the background information to the youth. Divide youth into duos. It should be someone they know pretty well.
2. Each youth needs a coin, a pencil and their journal page.
3. "Explore your partner's flight zone. The person standing on this line (point to a line) needs to put their penny down in front of their big toe. Their partner needs to start a conversation as they talk, slowly inching closer.
3. When your partner moves back or says she is uncomfortable, then stop moving forward and talking
4. Use the coin to mark where you stopped.
5. Measure the distance between the coins.
6. Record the distance on the chart in your journal.
7. The partners need to trade places, and run the test again.
8. Now test someone you don't know really well.
8. Ask them to tell you when they begin to feel slightly uncomfortable.
9. Record your results on the chart in the journal
10. Try again switching places. Record your results again.
11. Average your distances. (To average, add all the distances together and divide by the number of tests.)

## Session: Introduction

### Title of Activity: What is Wild?

Grade Level: 3-4th

**Objectives:** Participants will  
1). Learn the different between wild and domestic animals.

**Method:** Categorize animals into three categories: wild, domestic, both.

#### Materials Contained in Activity Tub:

Three baskets with signs – “WILD”, “DOMESTIC” and “BOTH”  
Small plastic animals

**Materials Needed to Conduct Activity:** none

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Group Size:** all students together – 12-15 students.

**Setting:** Indoors or Outdoors

**Key Terms:** Domestic, Wild

**SET Ability:** compare, categorize/order/classify

#### Background:

What makes an animal wild? And, what characteristics make an animal domesticated?

A **wild animal** is defined as an animal which lives in nature (is not provided shelter by a human), is responsible for getting its own food and water (is not provided food or water by humans), and is not cared for by humans. Examples include red foxes, pheasants, songbirds, channel catfish, or white-tailed deer.

A **domesticated animal** is an animal which is dependent on humans for its shelter, food, water, and general care. Domesticated animals have generally lost the ability to hunt or provide food for themselves, or find adequate shelter. Examples include house cats, dogs, parakeets, a cow, or a pig.

Some animals could be considered either wild or domesticated depending on the situation. For example, a cottontail rabbit is a wild animal, but many people have domesticated rabbits as pets. Or, most horses are domesticated, but some states in the West have wild populations of horses.

There are also **feral animals** which are once domesticated animals that are now living on their own in the wild. Examples of feral animals include some cats, occasionally dogs, and sometimes pigs.

## The Activity:

### Before the activity:

1. Set the three baskets in a central location where all students will be able to see both the baskets and the signs on the baskets.
2. Place the small plastic animals in a pile or in a container for students to pick one animal.

### Doing the activity:

1. Invite one student to come up to the front and choose an animal from the container. Ask the student to put the animal in one of the three baskets – whichever one they believe the animal belongs.

2. As the students come to the front have them state their name.
3. Invite another student to the front to choose another animal and place it in the basket they believe it belongs.
4. Continue this process until all the animals have been placed in a basket.
5. Review with all students the animals in each basket. Ask students if there are any animals they would move to another basket. Allow for animals to be moved until all students are in agreement with the location of the animals.

This activity adapted from Growing Up WILD: Engaging Young Children in Nature Curriculum and Activity Guide.

For more information on this guide, please contact Lindsay Rogers at [lindsay.rogers@nebraska.gov](mailto:lindsay.rogers@nebraska.gov).