

Predator & Prey

Pre-Visit Activities



The activities included in your pre-visit packet have been designed to help you and your students prepare for your upcoming program at the St. Joseph County Parks. The purpose of the pre-visit packet is to help students begin to understand the relationships between predators and their prey. By becoming familiar with these terms and concepts, your students will have a better understanding of the activities we will conduct with them at the park. Of course, if you don't have the time to use these as pre-visit activities, you can also use them as post-visit activities to measure how much your students learned during the program!

Definitions:

Predator: an animal that hunts other animals. (Example: coyote hunts mice.)

Prey: an animal that is killed by another animal for food. (Example: field mouse is eaten by a house cat.)

Carnivore: an animal whose diet is mostly meat. (Example: red-tailed hawk.)

Herbivore: an animal whose diet is plants. (Examples: deer and rabbit.)

Omnivore: an animal that eats both plants and animals. (Examples: raccoon and opossum.)

Insectivore: an animal that eats insects. (Examples: bat and frog.)

Who Invited Whom for Lunch?

Background: Students will learn about the wild animals found in Indiana by identifying which animals fit into the above categories.

Materials Needed: Pictures of various animals from Indiana.

Directions:

1. Have students cut out or print out various pictures of animals native to Indiana.
2. Have each student choose one animal and do research to find out what it eats and/or what eats it.
3. Sort the animals according to which animals are predators and which are prey. Some animals are both!
4. Sort the animals according to whether they are carnivores, herbivores, omnivores or insectivores.

The Often Misunderstood Predator

Not all predators are well understood, especially predators like spiders, snakes and coyotes. Each one of these animals plays a critical role in the lives of other animals and the environment. Each sentence below contains extra letters that do not belong. With your pencil, cross out the extra letters when they appear in the sentences. Then write the correct sentences on the lines provided.



1. Spiders camn spinn eights differents kinds off silkk.

2. Brats canm weiagh lerss tharn a prenny.

3. Snakers arze nost slimrey.

4. Skunks gwill spragy gonly to protegct themseglves.

5. Ann powl's primcary diest is prodents.

6. Zcoyotes, liker wolbvves, ubse theirs keebn sense of rsmell.

7. Daddyz wlonglegs zeat vegetables mxatter asn well as insectds.

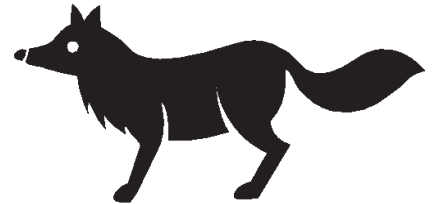
8. A redt foxz needsc 25 acrevs ofb jhabitat.

9. Opossumsz ared the onlyg marxsupial livingv inr Indianam.

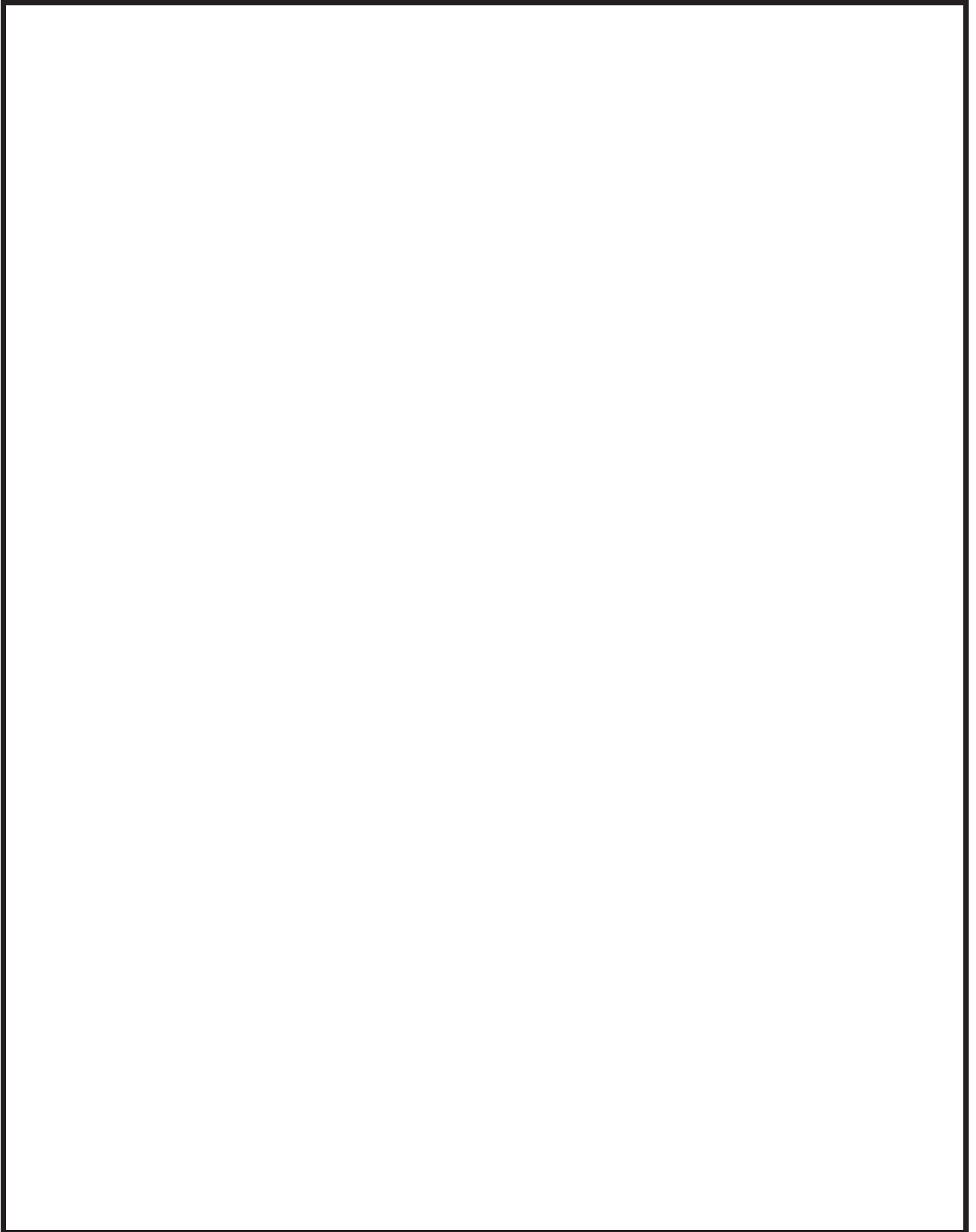
10. A shrewn injects itsg victimb withk vernom.

Answer sheet for The Often Misunderstood Predator

1. Spiders can spin eight different kinds of silk.
2. Bats can weigh less than a penny.
3. Snakes are not slimy.
4. Skunks will spray only to protect themselves.
5. An owl's primary diet is rodents.
6. Coyotes, like wolves, use their keen sense of smell.
7. Daddy longlegs eat vegetable matter as well as insects.
8. A red fox needs 25 acres of habitat.
9. Opossums are the only marsupial living in Indiana.
10. A shrew injects its victims with venom.



Below, draw a picture of your favorite Misunderstood Predator!





Name: _____

Let's Compare Predators

Overview: Students will apply the systematic method of comparing data for research. Students can compare different animals for size, range, and animal behaviors.

Background: Predators may seem similar but their needs for survival may be very different. For example, a fox and a coyote are compared below.

Directions: Students will collect biological data and fill in the blank spaces in each table at the bottom of the page. Choose any predators that interest you. If you need suggestions, how about a grizzly bear and a mole? Websites like www.nwf.org/Wildlife or animals.nationalgeographic.com are great places to do research about predators.



Predator	Coyote
Size	head and body 32-37 inches
Range	10 mile hunting range
Habitat	open woodlands, prairies
Usual prey species	rodents
Behavior	nocturnal/tail held down while running



Predator	Red Fox
Size	head and body 32-40 inches
Range	1 to 2 square miles
Habitat	forest and open fields
Usual prey species	rabbits, mice
Behavior	nocturnal/holds tail straight while running

Predator	
Size	
Range	
Habitat	
Usual prey species	
Behavior	

Predator	
Size	
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Habitat	
Usual prey species	
Behavior	

Predator and Prey Word Search



D V U P B B I K Y E H L W O P
Z F C M M M G L M K J A P Z N
V S F D I J F D D A Q A W V I
E D L X Q N N C P N T V O K M
K D X U O Y I H C S T Y L Q D
A Z B G G S Z F R H E H S K Z
I M A U B S U T X E N J X W H
C R Q V O V E D U L X Q S O Z
D O O F R O R M O S Q U I T O
M L Y G O K A P X V E S G K N
E T O O W S B L S O P S T U E
O R F I T Y B K E I F R U K M
F S I H L E I E D E E R T O A
X Y S B K V T E F K E O D L M
Z S H J F M R N I B O R W G T

COYOTE
DRAGONFLY
FOX
HAWK
MOUSE
RABBIT
SNAKE
VOLE

DEER
FISH
FROG
MOSQUITO
OWL
ROBIN
SPIDER