

WILDLIFE IN THE CITY DIORAMA

Grades 2 to 6 - Individual, small group

In this activity, students create a diorama that displays wild animals in a location where people live, work or play. Examples include a busy downtown area, a school, a park or a neighbourhood. It should demonstrate the challenges faced by urban wild animals and present ways to mitigate harm.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- ▶ Box (shoebox size or larger), or other empty container with space to fill (get creative!)
- ▶ Glue and scissors
- ▶ Nature/wildlife magazines, clip art or pictures of wild animals (or DIY)
- ▶ Craft supplies (optional – e.g. wildlife stickers, toys like lego animals, felt, bobbles, etc.)
- ▶ Upcycled materials (optional – e.g. toilet paper rolls, lids, bottle caps, packaging, etc.)
- ▶ Construction paper
- ▶ Paint, markers or crayons

INSTRUCTIONS:

- ▶ Using this guide, educators should facilitate a conversation with students about the most common threats faced by wildlife. It may be necessary to discuss the natural behaviours and basic needs of wildlife for younger students – e.g. water, food, shelter, nesting/denning sites.
- ▶ Students should choose a wild animal(s) to focus on and consider:
 - What does the animal eat? Where can the animal find food and water?
 - What kind of shelter does it need? Where can it find this in a city?
 - What are the dangers in their selected setting (e.g. downtown, house, park) and what difficulties will the animal have getting to necessities?
 - Older students can do further research into the natural behaviours of the wild animal (e.g. When are they active? Where do they nest/den? How do they care for babies?) – How does this affect the diorama?
 - Is there anything people can do to make the situation safer for wildlife?



This diorama was made with a delivery food box and features components of a city safe for wildlife including:

- High-rise buildings with lights out at night to avoid bird strikes
- Bird-friendly visual markers on windows
- Pet cats indoors to avoid predation on wildlife
- Slowing down on roads to avoid car strikes on wildlife
- Picking up garbage to keep habitats clean and safe for wildlife
- Planting native trees, shrubs and native plants

TIP!

Youtube has many videos on how to make both simple and complex dioramas!

- ▶ It is recommended to pose at least one threat and solution. Older students may incorporate a number of threats and solutions. Some examples include:
 - **A pet cat outside** (threat) near an American robin (wild animal), but on a leash with its owner beside it (solution)
 - **A blue jay** (wild animal) flying past a big window of a house (threat) that has bird-safe markers on the outside of the window to break up the reflection (solution)
 - **A snapping turtle** (wild animal) near a highway (threat) that has “slow down for turtles” signs posted and a culvert under the road for turtles to crawl through (solution)