

Woodsy Owl's Curiosity Club- Your Big Backyard

Safety Disclaimer: This program is designed for children WITH their parent or caretaker. Please review this program and designate a safe place for you and your child to participate. Woodsy Owl's Curiosity Club usually takes place at the Cradle of Forestry in America during the summer, weekly from 10:30am to 12pm. Since the Corona Virus we are designing new ways for children to learn about nature and stay safe. For 2020 we are offering these Digital Woodsy Owl programs for adults to be able to lead at home. Please enjoy and we hope to see you and your child for our 2021 programs at the Cradle.

About Woodsy Owl:

Caring, friendly, and wise, Woodsy Owl is a whimsical fellow and he's got his heart set on motivating kids to form healthy, lasting relationships with nature. As Woodsy flies across our land, he encourages youngsters to marvel at and explore the natural world, even in the city. His motto "Lend a Hand - Care for the Land!" encourages everyone to make a positive difference in their world. Woodsy Owl was created by the US Forest Service and these educational programs are brought to you by forest service partners- FIND Outdoors.



Story Time:

Jo MacDonald Hiked in the Woods by Mary Quattlebaum

Listen to Stephanie read the story here: <https://youtu.be/GNZNpPU2ECU>

Activity: Zooming into Nature

Set-up: Visit the site you will be investigating before taking your child there. Be sure there are no hidden bees' nests, prickly plants, poison ivy or other hazards. You are looking for a space with plants and insects for your child to investigate. There could be a tree in the middle of it, grass, leaves, clover, etc. Children will be counting the different types of plants and creatures found in their focus space and observing all they find there.

Materials: Something to define the work/focus space. A hula hoop works really well or a piece of string about 6 ft long and laid on the ground in a circle.



Options: Bring a jar to collect insects, field guides, magnifying glass, paper and markers so children can draw what they see.

Introduction: In this activity, children are going to be scientists and work on their observation skills. It is easy to get overwhelmed trying to observe EVERYTHING, so for this activity we are going to focus all of our attention on a very small area. Discuss the following with your child to help them better understand what to expect and what questions they should think about answering after the activity.

- This is a good time to introduce or review habitats with children. What does an animal need in their habitat? (Food, Water, Shelter and Space)
- Do they see evidence of any habitat needs in their focus space?
- What do they see in the focus space?
- Are there living and non-living elements there?
- Have children count or tally the different types of plants and animals they find in their focus space.
- Have children draw in great detail their favorite thing from their focus space.
- If children collected insects to observe, have them release them when you are finished.

Once children have engaged in the previous questions ask them to look around the rest of the space, your yard or park. Does it look similar to their focus space? Can they find similar plants or animals? Explain that their focus space could be a habitat for a very small creature and the rest of the yard could act like an ecosystem. Sometimes scientists have to go small or very focused to better understand the larger picture of what they are studying. It is also helpful to learn good observation skills by focusing small at first, then observing over larger spaces.

Craft:

Make a Nature Journal: Children love to collect leaves, sticks, flowers and everything that attracts their attention to study and research the things of the world. Make a nature journal that can collect your child's thoughts and neat nature finds!

Materials:

- 3 Food paper bags
- Scissors
- Adhesive tape
- Blank paper to add to the pages
- Ribbon or yarn to close
- Stapler

