

LOOK AROUND YOU

One of the most important skills you can learn as a naturalist is to be still and quiet, so you don't scare away wildlife. While observing nature you should use your senses, but also use good sense! This means don't touch unfamiliar plants and insects and never taste something unless you have safely identified it with an adult. You should, however, pay close attention to colors, shapes, sounds, and smells. These important details can help you identify what you find. When you observe an animal or bug closely, you can learn where it lives, what it eats, and its common behaviors. Let's see what you notice when you observe wildlife from ground level.



Skills

NOTICING
ADVENTURING
IDENTIFICATION

Materials

CAMOUFLAGE
CLOTHING (OPTIONAL)
BLANKET (TO LIE ON)
(OPTIONAL)
MAGNIFYING GLASS
(OPTIONAL)
BINOCULARS
(OPTIONAL)

- 1 Find a spot on the ground, sit or lie down, and get a bug's eye view. Imagine using your magical magnifying glass to shrink down to the size of a small bug, and examine the world around you.
- 2 Stay still and quiet while you watch for wildlife. Are there grasshoppers jumping by, ants carrying food home, or bees pollinating nearby flowers? Pay close attention to what you see and hear. You will need to remember these details for your next activity!
- 3 Now that you know what to look for when observing nature, try this activity in different environments. What do you see by a pond, in the woods, in a tall grassy field, or on a cement walkway? How is the wildlife the same? How is it different?

DID YOU KNOW?

In order to hide from predators (animals that hunt and eat other animals) many creatures will **camouflage** (disguise) themselves. A walking stick bug gets its name from its ability to blend in with sticks and branches. When we camouflage ourselves, we can often observe nature more closely without being noticed. Try wearing brown and blending in with a tree trunk, patch of dirt, or pile of brown leaves!

