

Utah's Ecosystems

Program Outline

Welcome and Introduction

Behavioral Guidelines for visit:

- We are in the animals' neighborhood
- Stay on trails with your group unless taken off trails with class activity
- Leave flowers and plants for animals (don't pick anything)
- Pick up trail treasures to enjoy on-site, but no collecting (leave everything, including feathers)

Utah's Ecosystems

Students will learn the basic characteristics of Utah's desert, wetland, and mountain/forest ecosystems.

Students will Learn about deserts through a live animal presentation.

Explore and discuss the formation of Utah's mountain ranges and the adaptations needed by trees and animals in mountainous regions through dramatic play.

Explore and discuss the relationships among plants and animals in a wetland ecosystem by playing a game and visiting a pond.

Rotations

1. Deserts

Students will discuss characteristics of arid and semi-arid deserts and the adaptations that plants and animals need to live in them. They also will meet a desert tortoise or gopher snake and learn about how that animal survives in the desert environment.

2. Wetlands

Students will gather near one of the Nature Center's ponds and play a game about a wetland ecosystem. They will then get a chance to walk around the pond (time permitting) to see whether they can spot any of the organisms mentioned in the game.

3. Forests & Mountains

Students will learn how Utah's various mountain ranges formed through a body movement exercise, then will discuss the adaptations trees and animals need to live at Utah's various mountain elevations. Elevation has a lot to do with how forests and the trees in them appear and grow.

Topics are covered by varying degrees depending upon the maturity of students and time constraints.