



WATCHING WILDLIFE: Who, what, when, where, why?

Every living thing, including plants, animals and even you and I are all part of our world's biodiversity.

This activity helps you play the role of an ecologist, a scientist whose job is to watch and study different living things to learn how they eat, hunt, shelter, have young, move, what other living plants or animals they live with and special adaptations or features they might have to help them survive.

This is your challenge!

Find an animal in or around your house – this could be a beetle, fly, mosquito, butterfly, moth, possum, magpie, wattlebird etc.

On the following pages, record information about your animals ecology. This might mean watching your animals at different times of the day, in different weather and up close. If you can't print off or use this on your tablet or computer, you can use any spare paper or exercise books to make your own booklet.

All the observations you make of an animal can lead you to understand the fascinating life of wildlife in our homes and backyards!

What you will need

- Something to take or draw pictures and notes with
- Internet or reference books (*see last page for a list of online resources*)
- An eagle eye
- Curious mind
- Patience.





WATCHING WILDLIFE: Animal Features

Animal name <i>(if you don't know it, describe it)</i>		
Date	Time	Location <i>e.g. rose bush, tree, lawn</i>
Animal features <i>(What does it look like?)</i>		Notes / sketches / pictures
What colour/ s is it? Are there different colours or patterns on different parts of the body? Describe and/or draw these.		
What sort of body covering does it have? E.g. Fur, feathers, scales, shell, skin, spikes. Draw and/or describe them.		



WATCHING WILDLIFE:

Animal Features

Animal Features (<i>What does it look like?</i>)	Notes / sketches / pictures
Can it camouflage (blend in) with its habitat? What can it blend in with?	
How big is it? e.g. As big as a pea, the size of your thumb, as long as a piece of spaghetti, or estimate using a ruler.	
Does it have legs? How many? Draw and/or describe them.	
If it doesn't have legs, what does it use to move?	
Does it have hands and/or feet? How many toes and fingers does it have? What shape are they? Draw and/or describe them.	



WATCHING WILDLIFE: Animal Features

Animal features (<i>What does it look like?</i>)	Notes / sketches / pictures
Does it have a tail? What does it look like? size, shape, covering.	
Does it have eyes? Draw or describe them.	
Does it have feelers or whiskers or antennae? What do they look like?	
Does it have wings? What do they look like?	
What does it use to eat or find food? Does it have a beak, long tongue, teeth, big mouth, small mouth, pinchers? Draw and/or describe them.	
Add your own notes/sketches of any other animal features.	



WATCHING WILDLIFE:

Animal Features

Animal behaviour (<i>What does it do?</i>)	Notes / sketches / pictures
Where is it? E.g. Wall, window sill, lawn, tree.	
What is it doing? Eg eating, drinking, cleaning itself, resting.	
How does it move? Eg walk, fly, swim, slide, fast, slow, in a pattern.	
Is it awake during the day (diurnal) or the night (nocturnal)?	
Does it interact or share its habitat with any other animals?	
Does it make sound? Describe this.	
Add any other interesting observations you make.	



WATCHING WILDLIFE: Animal Features

Habitat (Where does it eat, shelter?)	Notes / sketches / pictures
Is it in a web? Describe or draw it.	
Does it live on or in the ground? Where/ how? Describe or draw it.	
Is it in a nest? Describe or draw it, including what it's made of e.g. feathers, leaves, sticks, mud.	
Does it live somewhere else? Describe or draw it .	
What does it eat? Where does it find it's food? Describe or draw it .	



WATCHING WILDLIFE: Extension Questions

Extra questions	Your thoughts, feelings, ideas
<p>Why do you think the animal is in/ around your house?</p> <p>Why would it like or use your house?</p>	
<p>What do you think is this animal's 'job' or role in your house or yard's ecosystem?</p> <p>E.g. a hunter, food for someone else, pollinator.</p>	
<p>Do you want the animal to stay around your house? Why or why not?</p>	
<p>How could you take care or encourage the animal to live there?</p> <p>What could you provide to make a better home for the animal?</p>	
<p>What other questions or interesting facts have you learnt about your animal?</p>	



ONLINE RESOURCES

All animals

Australian Museum

<https://australianmuseum.net.au/learn/animals/>

Backyard Buddies

www.backyardbuddies.org.au/explore-backyard-buddies

Birds

Australian Museum: Urban Birds

<https://australianmuseum.net.au/learn/animals/birds/birds-in-backyards-top-30-urban-birds/>

Royal Botanic Gardens

www.rbg.vic.gov.au/documents/RBGV_Birds_of_the_Melbourne_Gardens_-_2017-FINAL.pdf

Insects and spiders

Australian Museum: Beetles

<https://australianmuseum.net.au/learn/species-identification/ask-an-expert/common-identifications-beetles/>

Backyard Buddies: Explore Bugs & Insects

www.backyardbuddies.org.au/explore/bugs-and-insects

Backyard Buddies: Butterflies

www.backyardbuddies.org.au/fact-sheets/butterflies

CSIRO: Insect Families

<http://anic.ento.csiro.au/insectfamilies/>

Spidentify: App store

<https://identify-spiders.com/>

How to make an animal friendly garden

Backyard Buddies: Create

www.backyardbuddies.org.au/create

Gardening Australia: Backyard Biodiversity

www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/backyard-biodiversity/11260610

Wildlife Rescue

www.wires.org.au/wildlife-information



**ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION**

Caring for the Coast
and Community

FIND OUT MORE

Visit the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee
at www.gorcc.com.au/education
for more great resources!