



**Central  
Lake Ontario  
Conservation**

**SEASONAL CHANGES in the WATERSHED  
Needs of Living Things**

*Fall*

**Activities and Program Information**

*Teachers are reminded to bring a signed permit and payment with them the day of their program.*

**Materials for Trip**

Proper dress

Small leaf collection bag (optional)

Litterless snack (optional)

**Activities**

Before participating in Seasonal Changes in the Watershed students should be familiar with the following terms:

Deciduous Trees:	trees that lose their leaves
Coniferous Trees:	trees that have cones- usually stay green all year
Hibernation:	when animals sleep through winter
Dormant:	similar to hibernation, but animal will awaken and eat on warm days.
Fall Migration:	when animals move to a warmer place for winter
Camouflage:	when an animal blends into its surroundings.
Flooding:	when water rises over the sides of a creek.
Watershed:	an area of land that empties rain or snow melt into a body of water (creek, lake, pond)

**Activity #1 - Invite a Bird to Lunch**

1. Make a bird feeder – it could be as simple as a flat plate filled with seeds or as extravagant as a pinecone with peanut butter rolled in seeds.
2. Place the feeder on a window ledge or in a tree visible from the classroom window. Put out a dish of water as well.
3. Watch and identify the birds visiting your feeder. Are the visitors storing up for a long journey or are they fattening up for the winter?
4. Observe the different kinds of food eaten by the birds and how they eat it.

## Activity #2

Discuss what animals hibernate and what things migrate.

Chipmunks, groundhogs, honey bees, bumble bees, lady bugs, Mourning Cloak butterflies all hibernate. Skunks, raccoons and squirrels will be active on warm days. Hummingbirds, Red-winged black birds, swallows, orioles, Monarch butterflies, Green darner dragonfly all migrate. This is a good time to discuss Canada geese. The geese that remain are most likely from further north and have learned that they don't need to go any further as there is plenty of open water and food. Most people will feed geese bread; this is not a good idea. First, it encourages them to stay, and then people complain about the mess. Secondly the bread fills the bird with bulk and they quit eating before they have actually eaten enough to survive very cold days.

## Activity #3 How do Animals Survive in the Winter?

### 1. Some animals change colour to white.

The **ermine**, like hares turn white in the winter. In the summer it is called a weasel. Weasels are reddish-brown.

The colour change camouflages them and offers protection from predators.

Hawks and owls love to eat ermines. Do you think they can catch the ermines?

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### 2. Some animals grow thick long hair in the winter.

The **wolverine** is one of these. It does not turn white in the winter. It is a strong predator. Most animals are afraid of it. Can you name other animals that grows more hair in the winter?

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Birds like the Ruffed Grouse will grow extra feathers on their feet, these feathers help the bird walk on top of the snow like snowshoes.

### 3. Some animals change their behavior.

Some animals cannot turn white, and some cannot grow more hair. They have to change their behaviour. This means they do something so they can survive. Chickadees will flock in groups to stay warm.

### Activity # 4 What is Migration?

This bird is a **Northern Harrier**. It will fly south in the winter. This bird eats insects, mice and other small animals. Why do you think it has to migrate?



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Canada geese also fly south. They eat grass and plants that grow in the water. Why do they have to fly south?



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Some Canada geese don't fly south. They stay all winter in places like Toronto. They usually stay near the lake. Why don't they fly south?

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Monarch butterflies also migrate. They fly south to Mexico or If they are from the west coast they fly to California for the winter. Look on a map, measure how far Monarch butterflies migrate? \_\_\_\_\_ km.  
They average 15km/day.

### Activity # 5 What is Hibernation?

This animal is a **groundhog** or woodchuck. When Autumn comes, it eats until it is very fat. Then it goes into its burrow and falls asleep. It may sleep for 8 months. When it is asleep, its heart beats only 4 times in one minute. In the summer it beats 200 times a minute. What day do we celebrate in honour of this creature? \_\_\_\_\_  
How fast does your heart beat in one minute? \_\_\_\_\_  
How fast does your heart beat after you have been running for 2 or 3 minutes? \_\_\_\_\_



## Activity # 6 What is Dormancy?

Some animals like bears, raccoons and skunks, sleep most of the winter. But they wake up more than hibernators do. On sunny days, they may leave their looking for food. On cold days they stay curled up in their homes, sound asleep.



Find out where bears live in the winter.

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Find out where raccoons live in the winter.

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Find out where skunks live in the winter.

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## Activity # 7 What do Animals Need from their Environment?

In order to stay alive, animals need four things from the environment:

1. Food
2. Water
3. Shelter
4. Space

These baby birds live in a nest. Their mother and father bring them

seeds to eat. Their mother and father also bring them water to drink.

How do they get water? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the nest made of? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the parents get this stuff? \_\_\_\_\_



Where does the woodpecker get its food from? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is its shelter? \_\_\_\_\_

Where does it get water? \_\_\_\_\_



What does a squirrel eat? \_\_\_\_\_

Where does it get water? \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of home (shelter) does it have? \_\_\_\_\_



You are an animal. You need all the same things.  
Where does your food come from?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where does your water come from?

\_\_\_\_\_

What kind of shelter do you have?

\_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of yourself in this box.  
What are you eating?

## **More Activities**

### **Grow a Sock** –taken from “Hug a Tree”

Using seeds collected from hike or elsewhere:

1. Place seeds on a wool sock
2. Wet the entire sock and place it in a shallow pan, (Slant pan slightly)
3. Fill the lower portion of pan with water so sock will remain wet.
4. Place the pan in a sunny or warm location.
5. Watch the sock for signs of growth.
6. If you bury the sock and seeds what would happen to the seeds and the sock?

### **Stain Glass Leaves**

Have students make a stained glass leaf by pressing leaves in clear plastic or laminate them. Make a frame from construction paper and hang them in your window.

### **Leaf Collage**

Make a collage of all the leaves collected on the hike.

### **Draw a Picture** (Our favorite)

Have students draw a picture or write a story about their trip. We love mail.

Note: Activity 3-7 were adapted from Andrews Educational services, Growth and Changes in Animals

