



MARVELOUS MAMMALS



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

OBJECTIVES

LEARN WHAT MAKES MAMMALS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER ANIMALS. WHERE DO THEY LIVE? WHAT DO THEY EAT?

MATERIALS

COPY PAPER
CARDSTOCK
CARDBOARD TUBE
PIPE CLEANERS
CONSTRUCTION PAPER SCRAPS
GOOGLY EYES
GLUE STICK
COLORED PENCILS OR MARKERS*
(OPTIONAL)

FACTS

- ALL MAMMALS ARE ANIMALS BUT NOT ALL ANIMALS ARE MAMMALS.
- MAMMALS HAVE 5 CHARACTERISTICS THAT MAKE THEM DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TYPES OF ANIMALS.
 - MAMMALS HAVE HAIR OR FUR.
 - MAMMAL MOTHERS PRODUCE MILK TO FEED THEIR YOUNG. THE MILK IS MADE IN SPECIAL MAMMARY GLANDS.
 - THEY ARE WARM-BLOODED, WHICH MEANS THEY CAN MAINTAIN THEIR BODY TEMPERATURE REGARDLESS OF THE WEATHER.
 - THEY HAVE BIG COMPLEX BRAINS.
 - BABY MAMMALS SPEND TIME DEVELOPING IN THEIR MOTHER'S UTERUS BEFORE BEING BORN. THIS PROCESS IS CALLED GESTATION.
- MAMMALS CAN BE FOUND IN ALL TYPES OF HABITAT. FORESTS, PRAIRIES, MOUNTAINS, DESERTS, AND FRESH AND SALT WATER.
- SOME MAMMALS ONLY EAT PLANTS AND ARE CALLED HERBIVORES.
- SOME EAT ONLY MEAT AND ARE CALLED CARNIVORES.
- SOME (LIKE US) EAT BOTH. THESE ARE CALLED OMNIVORES.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS A MAMMAL?
2. WHAT DO MAMMALS NEED TO SURVIVE?

CONCEPTS

- THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ANIMALS.
- MAMMALS ARE ONE KIND OF ANIMAL.
- DIFFERENT TYPES OF ANIMALS HAVE DIFFERENT CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS.



INTEREST APPROACH-ENGAGEMENT

ASK A QUESTION(S):

1. WHAT ARE SOME NAMES OF ANIMALS THAT ARE MAMMALS?
2. DO YOU THINK PEOPLE ARE A TYPE OF MAMMAL? WHY OR WHY NOT?
3. WHERE DO ANIMALS (MAMMALS) LIVE?



ACTIVITY 1: MAKE YOUR OWN MAMMAL

- USING YOUR IMAGINATION AND THE MATERIALS PROVIDED, MAKE YOUR OWN MAMMAL.
- WHAT WOULD WORK FOR A BODY? MAYBE A TAIL?
- WHAT COLOR IS IT? DOES IT HAVE TEETH? HOW MANY FEET/PAWS OR HANDS DOES IT HAVE?
- THINK OF A NAME FOR YOUR MAMMAL.

ACTIVITY 2: CREATE A STORY ABOUT YOUR MAMMAL

- TAKE THE CARDSTOCK AND 4 SHEETS OF COPY PAPER AND FOLD IT HAMBURGER STYLE (WIDTH-WISE).
- PUT THE CARDSTOCK ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE COPY PAPER TO MAKE A BOOK.
- DRAW A PICTURE OF YOUR MAMMAL AND WRITE A STORY ABOUT WHERE IT LIVES.
- DOES IT LIVE IN A TREE? IN THE OCEAN?
- WHAT DOES IT EAT? IS IT A CARNIVORE, HERBIVORE OR OMNIVORE?
- HOW DOES IT TAKE CARE OF ITS BABIES?

ACTIVITY 3: MAKE A MAMMAL COLLAGE

- GO OUTSIDE AND COLLECT LEAVES OF DIFFERENT SIZES AND SHAPES AND OTHER FOUND NATURAL ITEMS. TRY TO FIND THINGS THAT ARE ALREADY ON THE GROUND. DON'T PICK LEAVES OFF THE TREES PLEASE.
- CAN A LEAF LOOK LIKE A TAIL OR PAW?
- ARRANGE LEAVES TO MAKE AN ANIMAL AND GLUE THEM DOWN ON YOUR REMAINING PIECE OF COPY PAPER.
- ADD GOOGLY EYES (IF YOU LIKE) AND DRAW ITS SURROUNDINGS.
- DOES IT LIVE IN A TREE? THE WATER? FLY THROUGH THE AIR?

ANSWERS TO MAMMAL WORKSHEET: (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM) WHITE TAILED DEER (M), BROWN BEAR (M), SPARROW, KING SNAKE, RED SQUIRREL (M), FROG, RIVER OTTER (M), FOX (M), BISON (M)

Marvelous Mammals

Circle all of the mammals on this page.



Common Illinois Mammals

White Tailed Deer

Odocoileus virginianus

- Herbivore
- Smallest member of the North American deer family.
- During the summer, they typically inhabit fields and meadows using the trees for shade.
- During the winter, they keep to the forests using evergreens for shelter from the elements.
- Female deer, called does, give birth to one to three young at a time after a seven month gestation period.



Raccoon

Procyon lotor

- Omnivore
- Can be found almost anywhere there is food, water, and shelter.
- Normally dens (lives) in hollow trees, or abandoned fox or woodchuck burrows. They will also use barns, attics, and under porches in urban settings.
- Females raised 1 litter of 3-4 young after a 2 month gestation period.



Eastern Cottontail Rabbit

Sylvilagus floridanus

- Herbivore
- Found in open spaces near woody cover where they can take cover from predators and bad weather.
- Gestation is about a month, with 4-6 young per litter. They can have 3 litters per year.
- To keep predators from finding the babies, mothers only visit the nest twice a day to nurse.





Virginia Opossum

Didelphis virginiana

- The only marsupial (carries their babies in a pouch) in North America .
- Omnivore
- Live in or near wooded areas. Often found in urban areas.
- They don't build their own den, but use the abandoned dens of other animals, or take shelter in sheds, brush piles, and fallen logs.
- Females have one to two litters each year with 7 to 8 young in each litter.
- Gestation is about 13 days and then the babies, which are the size of bumblebees, climb into their mother's pouch to further develop and nurse.

Dog-like mammals



Coyote

Canis latrans

- Illinois pioneers called them prairie wolves or brush wolves.
- They prefer to live in semi open country with a mix of grasslands and woodlands, though they are very adaptable and are found in urban areas as well.
- Primarily a carnivore but will supplement diet with whatever it can find.
- Gestation is 58-65 days with females having 1 litter of 6-7 pups per year.



Red Fox

Vulpes vulpes

- Red fox can run up to 30 miles an hour for short distances.
- They can be found in a variety of habitats from forest land and grasslands to both agricultural and urban areas.
- They often sleep above ground, but use a den to raise their young and as shelter from bad weather.
- Both parents take care of the young. Gestation is 49-56 days and the young are called kits.
- Carnivore
- Nocturnal (active at night)

Cat-like mammals



Bobcat

Lynx rufus

- Bobcats were almost eliminated in Illinois by the mid-1900's but are now found statewide.
- They prefer living in forests using the dense cover for the dens and cover from weather. They use the edges of the forest and fields to hunt prey.
- Carnivore
- Bobcats have one litter a year with 2-3 kittens per litter. Gestation period is about 2 months and kittens are born with their eyes closed.

Burrowing Mammals



Eastern Mole

Scalopus aquaticus

- Moles spend almost their whole life underground.
- Soil is very important to a mole. They like soil that is sandy or loamy and well-drained.
- Insectivore (eats mainly insects) but will eat some plants.
- Female moles have one litter of 3-4 young per year. Scientist are not exactly sure what the gestation period is.
- Young are born without fur.



Woodchuck or Ground Hog

Marmota monax

- Rodent and largest squirrel in Illinois.
- Unlike most mammals in Illinois, woodchucks are true hibernators.
- Live primarily underground and have summer and winter burrows (homes).
- Herbivore
- They have one litter per year with 4-5 young. Gestation period is a little over a month.

Other mammals



Little Brown Bat

Myotis lucifugus

- The only mammal that flies.
- Insectivore (but some bats eat nectar, fruit)
- Nocturnal
- Roosts in caves or mines during winter.
- In spring, females form nursing colonies in hollow trees, under loose bark, or in buildings.
- Females give birth to 1-2 young called pups. The pups cling to the backs of their moms and then to the roost when their moms go out to catch food.



River Otter

Lontra canadensis

- In the late 1980's there may have been as few as 100 otters in Illinois. Now they are found in every county.
- Their presence in the water indicate a healthy ecosystem.
- River otters are found in rivers, streams, and lakes. They prefer to have wetlands or timber nearby.
- They don't dig their own burrow but use abandoned beaver and muskrat dens.
- Carnivore-eating mainly fish and crayfish.
- Gestation period is between 10-14 months. Females have 2-4 young (kits). They need to be taught how to swim.