



STEM Teaser Family Activities | **Animal Habitats**

Habitat Protection

Grade Levels
K-2

Overview

Here's how you can play an active role and enhance the power of Girl Scouting at home—all while having fun, making memories, and strengthening your bond. Letting your child share his/her knowledge as will both help cement these new ideas in their memory and give them a sense of pride.

Did You Know?

The natural environment where an animal lives is called a habitat, and it provides air, water, food, and shelter to those who live there. Habitats exist on land, in fresh water, and in oceans! Unfortunately, human land use and pollution are hurting all kinds of habitats, and habitat destruction is one of the biggest problems that animals face. Because animals, plants, and humans are connected in the circle of life, habitat destruction affects the entire world. Taking care of your local habitats therefore not only has the power to benefit the plants and animals who live in your community, but it will also help protect and conserve life throughout our planet.

Help Her Lead at Home

Talk: Your child has learned about habitats in school and even created his/her own imaginary marine animal and habitat. Ask your child to share the marine animal that they created and how they designed their habitat to meet its needs.

Then talk about the water habitats that exist in your own community. What bodies of water are closest to you? Rivers, lakes, ponds, and streams all count. Remind your child that every waterbody is a habitat to many different kinds of animals.

Do: Choose one waterway in or close to your community. If you can, visit the waterway as a family. If a visit isn't possible, research the waterway online. A quick search should bring up pictures of the waterway and some information about it!

As you observe this habitat, discuss:

- Is this habitat clean and litter-free?

It's not always easy to see how humans are affecting waterways. Some signs to look for include:

- Trash
- Boats with motors
- Signs of runoff (when water runs through nearby farms, factories, yards, etc., and carries pollutants into the waterway).

Check out no-cost resources for you and your girl to extend the learning at home: <http://bit.ly/GirlScoutsDE>



- Does it look like people are doing anything in or around this habitat that might hurt the plants or animals that live here?
- Does this habitat look healthy and full of plant and animal life?
- How could our community treat this habitat better *or* what could we do to make sure we continue to protect this habitat?

The letter template is meant to help you and your child craft your letter, but you may start from scratch if you have other ideas!

Then take action! Work with your child to choose a member of your local government to contact about your habitat observations. Your town selectman or city mayor are good community representatives to consider. You should be able

to find your community representative(s) and their mailing address on your town, city, or state website.

Once you know *who* you are writing to, use the **template** on the following page to write a letter to this official. The sentence starters included in the letter will help you and your child:

- Explain your waterway observations.
- Describe what actions are needed: Should your community take better care of this habitat *or* should your community continue to protect this habitat?
- Include why this body of water is important!

After your letter is written, encourage your child to illustrate some of the letter's main points on the second page. Once you've placed your letter in the mail, congratulate your child on being an active citizen and standing up for an important issue!

For More Tips

Take a trip to your local library, and ask the librarian for suggestions on books about waterways, habitats, and/or ecosystems. Fiction stories and nonfiction books are both fun ways to foster your child's interest in the environment. If you can't make it to the library, Common Sense Media also provides a [great list](#) of age-appropriate books that focus on the importance of protecting our ecosystems and the environment at large! Seeing you step up and get involved in her Girl Scout experience will give your girl a special sense of pride.

Attention Parents and Caregivers: Is your girl interested in the environment and in protecting our planet? Then Girl Scouts is the place for her. Girl Scouts' "It's Your Planet—Love It!" program gives her the opportunity to take the lead on issues such as clean water and air, noise pollution, climate change, agriculture, and more. This activity is powered by Girl Scouts of the USA. Girl Scouts is the place for every girl, and it always will be.

SIGN UP NOW.

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Letter template

Date

Dear _____,

We are writing to you about _____

We observed this body of water and noticed _____

Could you help _____

This waterbody (and all bodies of water!) is important because

_____.

Thank you for _____.

Sincerely,



