GIRL SCOUT WILDLIFE BADGE WORKSHEET

Do you know the plants and animals that live in our region of the world and our state? Knowing about wildlife helps us to understand the natural world. Most of the activities below can be completed at Fernbank Museum, but be sure to look at your badge book to find additional activities on the subject. As always you must complete six activities to earn your badge.

Vocabulary
Knowing these words will help on the way to earn your badge and to 'talk' like a scientist.

Organism—Any living thing

Species—A group of related organisms that share a distinctive form (look alike) and are capable of interbreeding (producing young)

Taxonomy—The science of classification

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WILDLIFE SYMBOL PARTY

Use your new vocabulary to help you to learn about wildlife. All states have symbols they choose from the natural world. Many of our state symbol animals and plants can be found here in the Museum.

AT THE MUSEUM

In ***A Walk Through Time in Georgia***, locate some of Georgia's wildlife symbols from the list below and record where you found them in the space provided:

State Bird: Brown Thrasher	State Reptile: Gopher Tortoise	State Game Bird: Bob White Quail	State Amphibian: Green Treefrog	State Tree: Live Oak
_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____

AFTER YOUR VISIT

Now that you know Georgia's wildlife symbols, pick your own wildlife symbol to represent YOU! Choose the plant or animal that best characterizes you. You can look for one here at Fernbank, or you could choose an animal you have seen or heard of before.

I chose this symbol because:

_____

_____

_____

(your name) _____'s wildlife symbol is: _____

Draw your wildlife symbol here:

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IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

When scientists are in the field collecting data (information and measurements) or doing research, they often need to make scientific drawings to record their findings. Scientific drawings have been part of all fields of science for hundreds of years. Even now that we have photography and lots of imaging technology, a scientific drawing is still very useful. Drawings provide the scientist's point of view and perspective in a way that a camera or a computer cannot.

AT THE MUSEUM

Visit ***A Walk Through Time in Georgia*** and select a plant or animal and make a scientific drawing in your notebook. Using your judgment, determine how you want to approach your drawing. You may want to draw the entire organism or only a part. You are the scientist, so you get to decide.

AFTER YOUR VISIT

With your troop or a friend, discuss what you think is most important about the wildlife specimen you chose to draw. Share your pictures with others and learn from their experiences.

CREATURE FEATURE

Over time, animals adapt to fit their environments. The better an organism fits its environment, the greater chance it has for survival. Some adaptations can be easily seen, while others are much more subtle. Any change in the physiology (physical form and shape) of a plant or animal that increases its fitness is an adaptation. From leaf shape to claw shape, all organisms develop ways to fit into the world they live in.

AT THE MUSEUM

It is very easy to see the ways birds adapt to fit their environments. Beaks, feet, wings, and even overall body forms can be very different depending on the environment they live in. Look at the birds in ***A Walk Through Time in Georgia*** and examine their beaks. Pick one bird from two different regions (hint: the greater the difference between regions the better the comparison) and draw their beaks, feet or wing/body shape in the provided drawing boxes. What do these observations tell us about these organisms?

Bird 1

Bird 2

TAKING IT FURTHER

Now examine the teeth, claws and body coverings (fur, feathers, scales, etc.) of other animals. What do the differences and similarities between animals tell you about their lifestyle? Select two animals to specifically compare and contrast. What do they have in common? What makes them different? (*If your troop is also doing Plants and Animals today, the Creature Clusters section might be of use in this activity.)

WE ARE A FAMILY

Taxonomy is the science of classification. Scientists put organisms into taxonomic groups according to characteristics they share physically, behaviorally and genetically. The science of determining the names and groupings of animals is known as taxonomy.

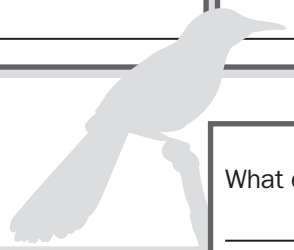
BEFORE YOUR VISIT

Select one of the wildlife groups listed below and learn some of the characteristics its members share.

AT THE MUSEUM

In ***A Walk Through Time In Georgia*** find animals that fit into these categories. Examine their common traits and record your findings in the space provided.

	Group 1 Reptiles	Group 2 Birds	Group 3 Mammals
Examples	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Common Traits	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____



TAKING IT FURTHER

What characteristics do all living things share?

_____

_____

_____

_____

TOUCH-ME-NOT!

Some animals and plants use poison to protect themselves or to catch their prey. Some of these natural toxins can affect humans as well. In fact, some plants and animals that use this survival tactic can be found in our own backyards and forests here at home.

AT THE MUSEUM

In ***A Walk Through Time in Georgia***, find the organisms and answer the questions:

	Poison Ivy		Diamondback Rattlesnake
In what region did you find it?	_____ _____	In what region did you find it?	_____ _____
Have you seen this plant before in the wild?	_____ _____	Have you seen this animal before in the wild?	_____ _____

AFTER YOUR VISIT

Learn how to identify (and avoid) the organisms on this list. What do their poisons and venoms do to people?

What effect does poison ivy have on people?	What kind of venom does the Diamondback Rattlesnake have?
_____ _____	_____ _____

STAYING ALIVE

Animals receive an "endangered" status from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service when the species' population is so small that it is in danger of becoming extinct. Animals receive a "threatened" status from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service when numbers are so low that they are in danger of becoming endangered. Both of these classifications tell us that there is an imbalance in the ecosystems that the organisms live in.

AT THE MUSEUM

Select two organisms from the list below and find them in ***A Walk Through Time in Georgia***. These animals all have endangered or threatened status.

- ☐ Gopher Tortoise
- ☐ Loggerhead Sea Turtle
- ☐ Eastern Indigo Snake
- ☐ Big Brown Bat
- ☐ Gulf Sturgeon

AFTER YOUR VISIT

Learn more about your chosen animals.

Why do you think these animals' populations might be in danger?

(Hint: There are many reasons for animal populations to be reduced, so there is no one right answer.)

_____

_____

_____

TAKING IT FURTHER

What kinds of changes made by humans destroy the environments these endangered animals live in? What do you think you can do to help?

_____

_____

_____