

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION

Grade Levels: 4-12

Time: 2 Hours



Florida Then and Now

Goal: Provide an introduction to Florida animals and environmental changes in the past, present and future.

Objectives:

- Students will understand that when environments change, some animals survive while others die or move to new locations.
- Students will recognize that adaptations displayed by animals enable them to survive.
- Students will appreciate how plants and animals, including humans can impact the environment.
- Students will share with others how they can improve and make changes to the environment around them.

PLANNING YOUR RESERVATION

- Fall and spring fill quickly
PLEASE REGISTER EARLY
- Groups must register
2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE
- Programs require a
MINIMUM OF 15 PEOPLE
- Programs are available
ON AND OFF-SITE
- Visit our website for
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
- Proper adult supervision
REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES

Travel behind the scenes to meet Florida animals, explore pre-historic fossils, tour the Wild Florida Loop and visit our new conservation station to participate in one of the Zoo's local conservation efforts.

Curriculum Alignment:

SC.4.L.16.2; SC.4.L.17.4; SC.5.L.14.2; SC.5.L.15.1; SC.5.L.17.1; SC.6.E.6.1; SC.7.L.15.2; SC.7.L.15.3; SC.7.L.17.3; SC.8.N.4.1; SC.912.L.17.2; SC.912.L.17.3; SC.912.L.17.4; SC.912.L.17.6; SC.912.L.17.8; SC.912.L.17.16

Where education and conservation collide!

This is a 2-hour program presented by Brevard Zoo Education staff. It is an enhanced experience focusing on Florida's pre-historic past, Florida animals of today and the future of the Florida ecosystem. Students delve into the concept through fun, interactive activities, touring through four unique stations including hands-on animal encounters, Wild Florida, The Wetlands and participating in a Brevard Zoo Conservation Project. The program is designed to supplement in-class learning. Depth and structure vary depending on grade and age range.

Keywords: adaptation, habitat, encroachment, fossils, behavior, ecosystem, invasive, camouflage, wetlands, competition, biodiverse, conservation, predator environment, oyster reef, keystone species, mangrove

Florida's Past, Present and Future

The Florida ecosystem is forever changing. Many of these changes have occurred due to natural events before and after the last ice age. As the sea level fluctuated, the Florida land mass has both grown and diminished in size. Some animals have survived and adapted while others have died or moved to new locations.

Through fossils, we can decipher what life was like 25 million years ago. Pre-historic animals such as the saber-tooth cat, giant land sloth and Columbian mammoth thrived. As the land began to change and humans entered Florida, these animals began to

decline in numbers and many became extinct, making way for new species.

The Florida ecosystem went through huge changes as the modern day climate developed and the sea level reached its current elevation. The Everglades of south Florida formed and the Keys became islands. Animals such as the Florida panther, bobcats, snakes, lizards, birds, fish and a wide variety of marine life thrived.

ACCREDITED BY THE
**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS**

Today, with the human population in Florida reaching 20,000,000, our ecosystem is once again undergoing striking changes. The Indian River Lagoon has become one of the most biodiverse estuaries in the North America, however, seagrass die-offs and algae blooms are altering this valuable ecosystem.

This national treasure is right in our backyards and it needs our help to recover from decades of declining water quality! Luckily, with the help of caring volunteers, we can improve the water quality of the Lagoon by restoring populations of native, filter-feeding oysters and planting of mangroves.