



Amazing Animals

Wyoming is home to a wonderful variety of animals! Some of these animals are livestock that lives on ranches and farms, some are pets that live in our homes, and others are wild. Depending on where you live, you may be able to watch animals in your backyard! Animals that live in Wyoming with our cold winters, hot summers, and high elevation may be different than animals that live in places with different climates. This activity will explore animals and how their bodies have structures and adaptations that help them live and survive here in Wyoming.

In this activity, your family will:

- Observe animals in their habitat
- Observe animal structures (body parts) and look for adaptations that help them survive
- Look for relationships between animals and plants

Materials needed:

- Notebook
- Pencil
- Camera or binoculars (*optional*)
- Animal pictures, if needed

Key Words to know:

Adaptation – a process in which a species becomes better suited to survive in an environment

Animal - a living thing that can move independently and uses senses to reach the environment around it

Habitat - the natural home or environment for a plant, animal or organism

Preparation:

- Find a space where you can observe animals in their habitats. (*i.e. birds, squirrels, deer, livestock, pets, any other type of animal.*)
or
- Visit <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Wildlife-in-Wyoming/Wildlive> to watch Trail Cam videos of Wyoming's wildlife. Scroll down to the "Recorded Videos" section and pick from the list on the right side of the page.
- Download the reference worksheets for specific examples of how livestock have special structures that help them to live in Wyoming.

Do the Activity:

1. Go to a place where you can observe animals in their habitats, bring along your notebook, pencil, and camera or binoculars if you have them. **OR** Watch one of the videos from <https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Wildlife-in-Wyoming/Wildlive> and pick an animal that you are interested in learning about.
2. Quietly observe an animal. Take pictures of it if you would like.
3. While you're observing, take notes in your notebook about what you see and hear.

Some things you may want to write down may include:

- What color is the animal?
- What covers its body?
- What kind of shape does it have?
- What do its legs look like?
- How does it move around?
- Does it make any sound? What does it sound like?
- Does it hide or stay out in the open?
- Is it alone, in a pair, or in a group? How many did you see?
- Have you seen it eating? What does it eat? How does it eat? What kind of mouth does it have?
- Does the animal stay on the ground, climb trees, fly in the air, or swim in water?
- Draw a picture of the animal.
- Label the animal's parts and tell what each does to help the animal survive in its habitat.
- Is there anything else you feel someone should know about the animal?

You may not see everything on this list. That's okay, just use it to guide your observations!

4. Choose another animal to observe and make notes on it, too. You may want to choose an animal very different from your first one (*i.e. a cow and chicken*), or one that is similar (*i.e. a robin and a turkey*) to see what makes each one unique and special.
5. You can observe as many animals as you like – it's up to you and how much time you have.
6. Compare the animals you observed. Think about these questions:
 - How are they the same and how are they different?
 - Do they live side by side without a problem or does one want to eat the other?
 - Do they eat the same kind of food, or is it different?
7. Draw a picture of one of the animals in its habitat. Show all the things it needs to survive.
8. Pretend you are the animal and write a short story from the animal's point of view. Think about what the animal did as you watched it, and let it tell a story about its day.

Learn more about Wyoming's Amazing Animals with these lessons and resources from the Wyoming Stewardship Project

3rd Grade:

- **Agriculture - Lesson 2** Students learn to identify livestock and explains the differences between livestock and other animals.
- **Outdoor Recreation & Tourism - Lesson 1** Students learn about Wyoming's wildlife and how those animals may live on both public and private land.

4th Grade:

- **Agriculture - Lesson 3** Students learn about structures and adaptations that help livestock thrive in Wyoming.

5th Grade:

- **Agriculture - Lesson 3** Students learn about how animals interact with other species in their habitat to form a food web.