

Environmental Observations

Introduction

Now that we have learned about observation skills and how to think like a scientist, it's time for us to put them to use! In this experiment, we will compare the differences in the amount of wildlife we can observe in areas with more human activity and areas with less human activity. What do you think we are going to discover? Which area do you think will have more wildlife? Before you get started, be sure to make a hypothesis (educated guess) about what you think you will discover.

Background

In many urban environments the growth of human population will most likely lower the amount of resources available to wildlife (food, water, shelter, space). Since there is a decline in resources in this area there will be a decrease in organism and a less diverse community. As Land Stewards it is our job to manage and observe how our human presence can affect the wildlife populations. Wildlife populations in an area depend on the amounts of resources available to them. It's important to think about the impacts that we can have on wildlife and the environment.

Hypothesis

I think I will see more wildlife in areas with More Less human activity.

(Circle one)

Procedure

In this activity you will need to choose two different spots to sit and look for animals. The first location should represent an area with more human activity (i.e. your front yard, a parking lot, etc.). The second location should represent an area with less human activity than the first location (i.e. your backyard, a park, garden, etc.). At each location, you will spend 10 minutes looking around to see how many different animals you can see or hear. Don't forget that insects count as animals! Use the provided data sheet to write down each species that you saw or heard. If you don't know the name of the species, just describe it (i.e. 1 shiny black beetle, 2 large birds with long black tails, 1 frog making a deep "crooak!" sound, 20 red ants). While making your wildlife observations, it is important to be very quiet because this increases the odds of seeing animals.

Questions

What wildlife did you note the most?

Does your environment have a lot of trees?

Does the environment around you have water nearby? How does that effect the wildlife?

Why is it important for an environment to be healthy?

Are some species better adapted for urban environments than others?

Advanced graphing analysis

Bar Graph

Wildlife observations in urban vs rural environments

Number of individuals observed

Number of species observed

