

Ecology Field Trip

Chaperone Instructions



Good morning! Thank you so much for being part of such an exciting part of our students' learning. As you may already know, this field trip is part of a science unit on Ecology. We know that students are eager to visit the museum; we want to channel that enthusiasm into a focus on the academic assignment that has been constructed for this visit. Your role as research guide for this experience will support the students in learning a great deal and will help you keep them interested and focused.

Materials you will have:

- Copy of Ecology Scientist's Notebook
- Research materials for your group
- Schedule of your group's tour

Facilitating Discussion During Visit

- **Help the junior scientists find what they need to see within the exhibits** as you guide your group through the museum.
- **Adhere to the schedule** as much as possible, but remind students that it is not a race and not to run. We know sometimes there is something fascinating going on that you will want the students to see, and we don't want them to lose out on those experiences; however, they will need to complete the assignment.
- **Remind students to make careful observations** of plants, animals and geologic features as well as to read the signs and labels at each exhibit.
- **Ask questions.**
 - In addition to the questions for this assignment, you may ask the following questions if there is time.
 - What are some of the limiting factors for this biotic community?
 - What is the carrying capacity of this exhibit?
 - What would happen if fire occurred in this biotic community? Predict the impact on the biotic features.
 - What would happen if drought occurred in this biotic community? Predict the impact on the biotic features.
 - What would happen if flooding occurred in this biotic community? Predict the impact on the biotic features.
 - To prepare for their post-trip assignment, questions regarding human-caused threats to the communities should also be asked frequently:
 - What would happen to this species if it can't get water?
 - What happens to this plant if cattle overgraze it?

- What happens to the animals that eat this plant if cattle overgraze it?
- What happens to this animal if it loses its nesting area?
- What happens to this plant if its pollinator is extirpated or extinct?

Desert Group Schedule for a Four-and-a-half-hour Trip

Time	Activity
10:00	Arrival and schedules done
10:00—10:05	Walk to life zone (by exit of walk-in aviary)
10:05—10:20	Life zone examination of zones 1 and 2
10:20—10:30	Walk to Desert Loop Trail. Outside of aviary, turn left on main trail; stay on main trail until you see signs for Cat Canyon. Desert Loop Trail entrance is behind Cat Canyon.
10:30—10:50	Complete data collection for the desert biotic community.
10:50—11:00	Walk to Cat Canyon. When you exit the Desert Loop Trail, the entrance to Cat Canyon is on your right
11:00—11:20	Complete data collection for cats that live in the desert biotic community.
11:00—11:25	Walk through the Riparian Corridor. When you exit the side trail leading to Cat Canyon and the Desert Loop Trail, turn right on the main trail; it will take you through the Riparian Corridor.
11:25—11:45	Complete data collection for specimens you would find in a riparian system within the desert biotic community. Be sure to go through the underwater viewing part of the exhibits.
11:45—11:50	Walk to the walk-in aviary. Continue following the main trail.
11:50—12:15	Complete data collection for birds that may live in the desert biotic community.
12:15—12:20	Walk to the reptiles and invertebrates exhibit. As you exit the aviary, turn right on the main trail and follow it to the museum entrance. The reptiles and invertebrates exhibit is in two rooms just past the main entrance.
12:20—12:40	Complete the data collection for the species you would find in a desert biotic community.
12:40—1:15	Lunch
1:15—2:20	Open exploration with chaperones and biotic groups: revisit areas to complete science notebooks; explore other exhibits

Grassland Group Schedule for a Four-and-a-half-hour Trip

Time	Activity
10:00	Arrival and schedules done
10:00—10:05	Walk to life zone (by exit of walk-in aviary)
10:05—10:20	Life zone examination of zones 3 and 4.
10:20—10:30	Walk to Desert Grassland exhibit. Outside of aviary, turn left on main trail; stay on main trail, which goes right into the Desert Grassland exhibit.
10:30—10:50	Complete data collection for the grassland. Note that the grassland exhibit leads right into the mountain woodland exhibit. Ensure you include specimens that are most likely to occur in a desert grassland.
10:50—11:00	Walk through the Riparian Corridor (you passed through it on your way to the Desert Grassland exhibit; retrace your steps through the exhibit and back on the main trail).
11:00—11:20	Complete data collection for specimens you would find in a riparian system within the desert grassland biotic community. Be sure to go through the underwater viewing part of the exhibits.
11:00—11:25	Walk to the walk-in aviary. Continue following the main trail.
11:25—11:45	Complete data collection for birds you may find in a desert grassland biotic community.
11:45—11:50	Walk to the Reptiles and Invertebrates exhibit. As you exit the aviary, turn right on the main trail and follow it to the museum entrance. The reptiles and invertebrates exhibit is in two rooms just past the main entrance.
11:50—12:15	Complete the data collection for these species you would find in a desert grassland biotic community.
12:15—12:20	Walk to Cat Canyon exhibit. As you exit the Reptiles and Invertebrates exhibit, turn left on the main trail. Follow the main trail until you come to a shortcut by the pollination gardens. There is a sign posted that the shortcut takes you to the Riparian Corridor. Follow the shortcut until it intersects the main trail in the middle of the Riparian Corridor. Turn right and follow the main trail until you see the side trail that leads to Cat Canyon.
12:20—12:40	Complete the data collection for cats you may find in a desert grassland biotic community.
12:40—1:15	Lunch
1:15—2:20	Open exploration with chaperones and biotic groups: revisit areas to complete science notebooks; explore other exhibits

Woodland Group Schedule for a Four-and-a-half-hour Trip

Time	Activity
10:00	Arrival and schedules done
10:00—10:05	Walk to life zone (by exit of walk-in aviary)
10:05—10:20	Life zone examination of zones 5, 6, and 7.
10:20—10:30	Walk to Mountain Woodland exhibit. Outside the aviary, turn left on main trail; stay on main trail, which goes right into the Mountain Woodland exhibit.
10:30—10:50	Complete data collection for the woodland. Note that you pass through the Desert Grassland exhibit to get to the Mountain Woodland exhibit. Ensure you include specimens that are most likely to occur in a mountain woodland.
10:50—11:00	Walk to the Reptiles and Invertebrates exhibit. Continue on the main trail until you are almost at the entrance to the Museum. The Reptiles and Invertebrates exhibit is inside just before you reach the entrance.
11:00—11:20	Complete the data collection for these species you would find in a woodland biotic community.
11:00—11:25	Walk to Cat Canyon exhibit. As you exit the Reptiles and Invertebrates exhibit, turn left on the main trail. Follow the main trail until you come to a shortcut by the pollination gardens. There is a sign posted that the shortcut takes you to the Riparian Corridor. Follow the shortcut until it intersects the main trail in the middle of the Riparian Corridor. Turn right and follow the main trail until you see the side trail that leads to Cat Canyon.
11:25—11:45	Complete data collection for cats you may find in a woodland biotic community.
11:45—11:50	Walk through the Riparian Corridor. As you come out of the Cat Canyon side trail, turn right on the main trail to take you back through the Riparian Corridor exhibit.
11:50—12:15	Complete data collection for specimens you would find in a riparian system within the woodland biotic community. Be sure to go through the underwater viewing part of the exhibits.
12:15—12:20	Walk to the walk-in aviary. Continue following the main trail.
12:20—12:40	Complete the data collection for birds you may find in a woodland biotic community.
12:40—1:15	Lunch
1:15—2:20	Open exploration with chaperones and biotic groups: revisit areas to complete science notebooks; explore other exhibits