



FONTENELLE  
FOREST

**Fontenelle Forest Nature Center**  
1111 Bellevue Blvd. North  
Bellevue, NE 68005-4000  
Phone: (402) 731- 3140  
[www.fontenelleforest.org](http://www.fontenelleforest.org)

## My, What Sharp Claws You Have!

4<sup>th</sup>

&

## Thorns, and Teeth, and Feathers! Oh My! (On The Go)

4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

### Pre- and Post-Trip Activity Suggestions

*Below are pre- and post-visit field trip activities that can be done either indoors or on your school grounds. We encourage you to give serious consideration to one or more of these -- they will enhance your class' field trip experience and are also a lot of fun! We look forward to your students' arrival and anticipate providing them with a fun and educational experience. If you have any questions, please call us at 402-731-3140.*

**The following activities meet NE State Science Standards: SC 5.1.1, 5.3.1, 5.3.3, 8.3.1.e, 8.3.3.b, & 8.3.4**

**Activity:** Moving Meals Game

**Suggested Timing:** Pre-Trip

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Location:** Indoors or Outdoors

**Materials:** none

**Background:** Ask your students what specific physical adaptations they think frogs have that allow them to survive in a variety of habitats and temperatures. Tell them that frogs, like most predators, eat moving prey. In fact, a frog's eyes only function when there is movement within their field of vision.

**Procedure:** One child is chosen as a frog, and the rest of the class are insects. Similar to the game Red Light, Green Light, the frog stands at one end of the field with his back to the insects. The frog then says "1-2-3, food for me" and turns toward the insects. Anyone seen moving is "eaten" and has to sit down. The object is for the insects to make it safely past the frog. The first insect across the imaginary line is the frog for the next round.

**Activity:** Create a Critter

**Suggested Timing:** Post-Trip

**Time:** 1 hour

**Location:** Indoors

**Materials:** paper, pencils and crayons, a variety of craft supplies (optional)

**Background:** Ask your students what defense mechanisms plants and animals have that help them avoid being eaten. Have them do some research on defense mechanisms; may include stinging (bees and nettles), tasting bad or being thorny (toads and greenbriar) and having a hard outer surface (turtles and nuts).

**Procedure:** Tell students to create and then draw an imaginary plant or animal that has such good defenses that no one would try to eat it. They may either do this on paper or use a variety of craft supplies to create a 3-dimensional plant or animal.

Writing Extension: Have the students write a description of the animal or plant adaptations that help it defend itself.

**Activity:** Bird Beak Demonstration

**Suggested Timing:** Post-Trip

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Location:** Indoors

**Materials:** table, eyedropper, vase, egg carton, rice, tweezers, container with peanuts or sunflower seeds (in the shells), pair of pliers, container filled with water and wood shavings (or similar floatable object like Styrofoam packing peanuts) and a strainer.

**Background:** Brainstorm as many different kinds of birds as you can. Explain that different types of birds eat different foods and that their beaks are suited to those specific foods.

**Procedure:** Set up a table with four accessible stations. Have all the utensils off to one side. Participants will come up and try to match the proper utensil to the appropriate station. The object is to find the utensil that will work best for the different types of food that birds eat.

One way to set up "feeding" stations is described below:

1. Hummingbird - vase filled with water (representing nectar)
  - a) correct beak utensil is the eyedropper
2. Woodpecker - egg carton filled with rice (representing small bugs inside bark)
  - a) correct beak utensil is the tweezers
3. Cardinal - container with peanuts or sunflower seeds
  - a) correct beak utensil is the pliers
4. Duck or Goose - container filled with water and floating wood shavings (representing aquatic plants)
  - a) correct beak utensil is the strainer

Fontenelle Forest Nature Center has a Feet & Beaks interactive display in the downstairs Habitat Hollow Gallery. If you have taken time during your field trip to explore this you may refer back to it during this activity.

### **Selected Bibliography**

Acorn Naturalists: Resources for the Trail and Classroom. To order this educational resource catalogue for environmental and science education call 1-800-422-8886. To look at these resources on-line go to <http://www.acornnaturalists.com>.

Lingelbach, Jenepher, ed. Hands-On Nature. Woodstock, VT: Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 1986.

National Wildlife Federation. Ranger Rick's NatureScope: Trees are Terrific. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998.