McHenry County
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for registering for "Have to Have a Habitat", a McHenry County Conservation District educational outreach program. Before our staff visits your classroom, we wanted to give you some examples of activities that you can use with your students to enhance the overall learning experience of the program.

Please give each teacher participating in this program a copy of this information.

1. The program presentation itself consists of a puppet show and a group game that teach students about the importance and meaning of habitat. Both activities require 35-45 minutes to complete. We will require a space of approximately 10 feet by 8 feet to set up our portable puppet stage. Please have this space available before the scheduled program start time as we will arrive early to set up.

2. Background information as well as pre and post-trip activities are available for this and all McHenry County Conservation District school field trips in your choice of format. Completion of the activities ensures a more successful learning experience for your students.

- Download information from our website at www.mccdistrict.org; click on the Education tab.
- Request that information be sent to your email or school address (call Kim Compton or Brian Carroll at 815-678-4532)

3. If you should need to cancel the program for any reason, please contact us ahead of time by calling 815-678-4532. Unfortunately, there is seldom room in our schedules to reschedule a program and we cannot guarantee alternative plans.

We are looking forward to our visit with your class. Feel free to call us if you have any questions about the program or other Conservation District educational offerings.

Sincerely,

Kim Compton and Brian Carroll
Lost Valley Visitor Center Education Program Staff

McHenry County Conservation District – Lost Valley Visitor Center
7210 Keystone Road • Richmond, Illinois 60071 • 815.678.4532 • 815.678.4795 f
MCCD@MCCDistrict.org • MCCDistrict.org

Before We Visit Your Class

1. Have the students complete the worksheet entitled “Animal Homes”. The students should match the raccoon to the hollow tree stump, the spider to the web, the ant to the anthill, the cardinal to the bird nest, the squirrel to the leaf nest, and the mouse to the hole in the ground.

2. Have the students complete the worksheet entitled “What Does a Raccoon Need?”. The students should circle the sun for warmth and light; the wind for air to breathe; the tree stump for shelter; the acorn, the berries, and the crayfish for food; the raccoon for family; and the creek and trees for water and shelter.
You may want to lead a discussion afterwards about the answers. Some students may have circled the house because they’ve had raccoons in their attic. Talk about how raccoons have adapted well to living with humans but also how that has caused some problems, and point out that raccoons only have to come to our houses if they have no natural habitat. You may also want to clarify a raccoons “need” for other raccoons. Raccoons are considered all grown up and have to make it on their own as early as five months of age, but they start their own families as soon as they are one to two years old.

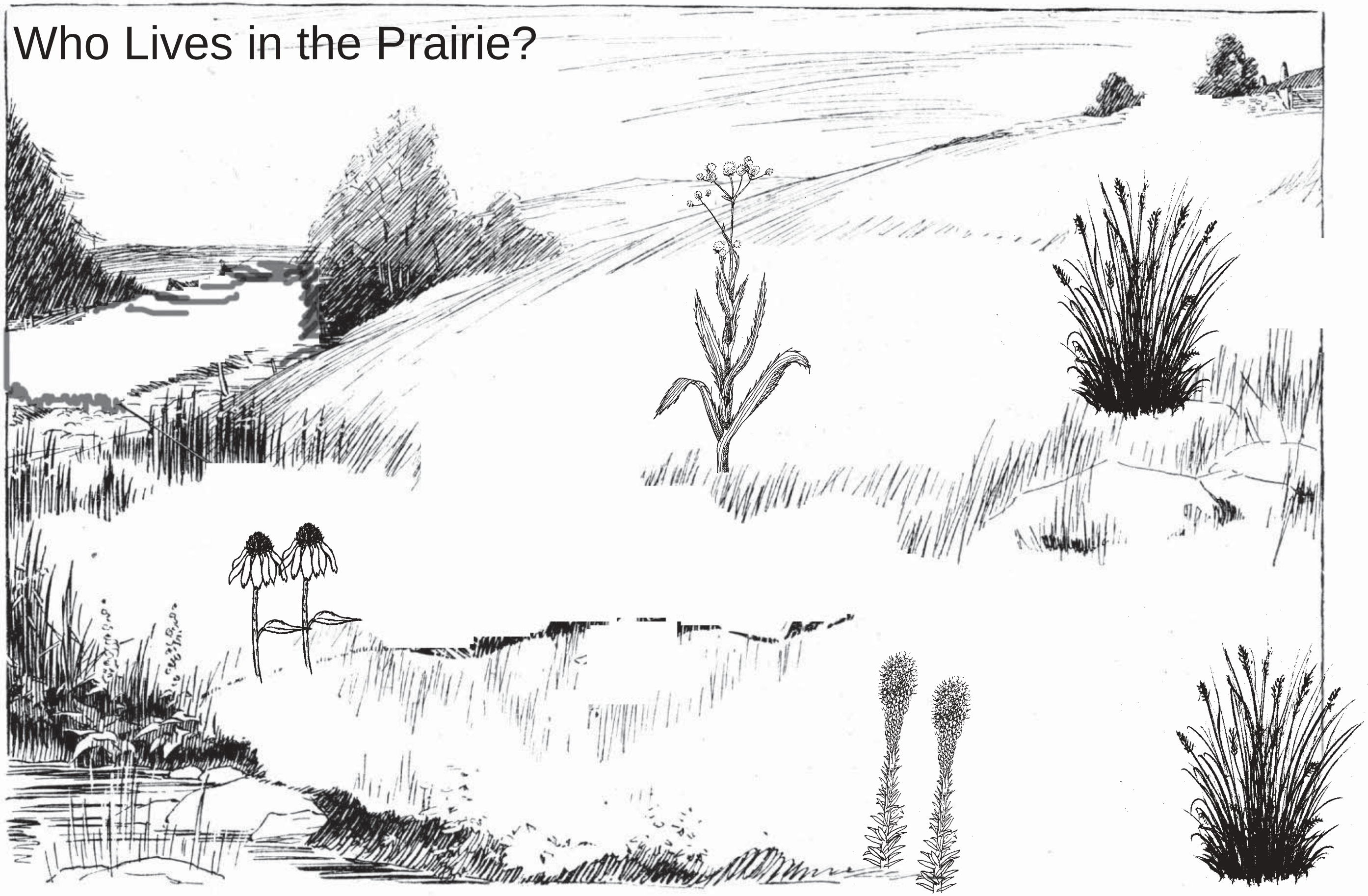
After Our Visit

1. Do the activities, “Who Lives in the Woods?”, “Who Lives in the Prairie?”, and “Who Lives in the Wetlands?”. Use the sheets with a variety of clip art animals and their names in English and Spanish. Students should cut out all the animals and then paste them onto the included appropriate habitat background. Some animals really do not have only one right habitat, but we suggest matching the animals this way: in the woods put the squirrel, opossum, raccoon, owl, cardinal, and centipede; in the wetlands put the beaver, yellow-headed blackbird, heron, frog, turtle, and fish; in the prairie put the deer, butterfly, turkey, vole, coyote, and grasshopper. After the glue dries the students can color the animals and their habitats.

2. Take your students for a short walk around the school grounds. Have them look for good animal habitat. Ask them where an animal might hide, eat, find water, run around, sleep, stay warm, etc. Remind them that an animal can be as small as an ant or as big as a deer.

3. Fill out the evaluation form given to you by the program leaders. Your feedback is a valuable tool in revising and improving our educational offerings. Send the completed form to Deb Chapman, MCCD Prairieview Education Center, 2112 Behan Road, Crystal Lake, IL 60014.

Who Lives in the Prairie?



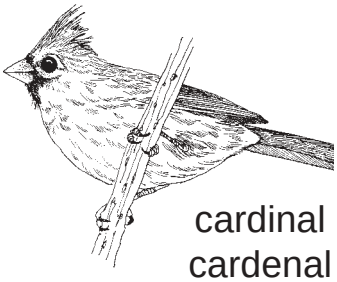
Who Lives in the Woods?

Who Lives in the Wetlands?

squirrel
ardilla

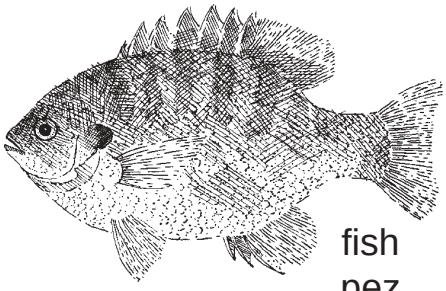
frog
rana

raccoon
mapache



cardinal
cardenal

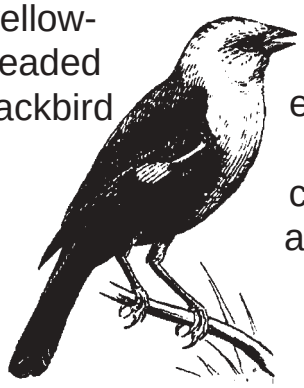
butterfly
mariposa



fish
pez

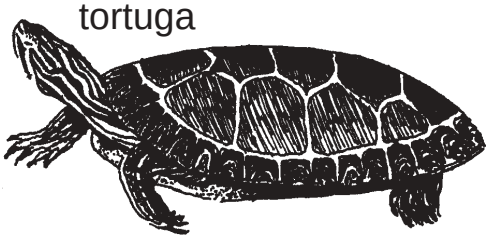
yellow-headed blackbird

el mirlo con cabeza amarilla

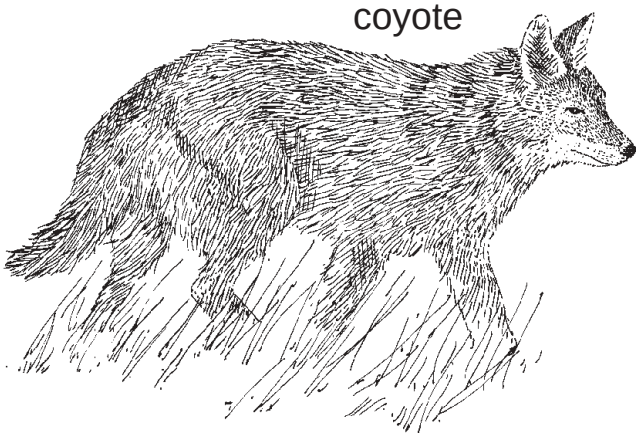


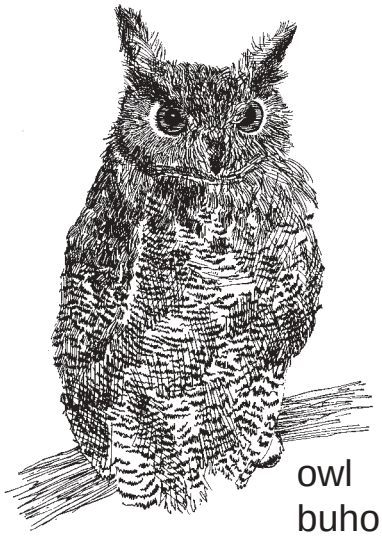
opposum
zarigueya

turtle
tortuga



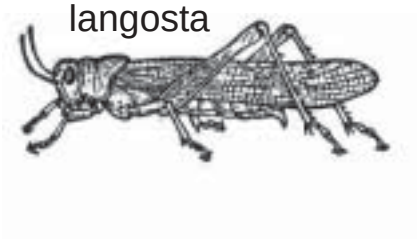
coyote
coyote





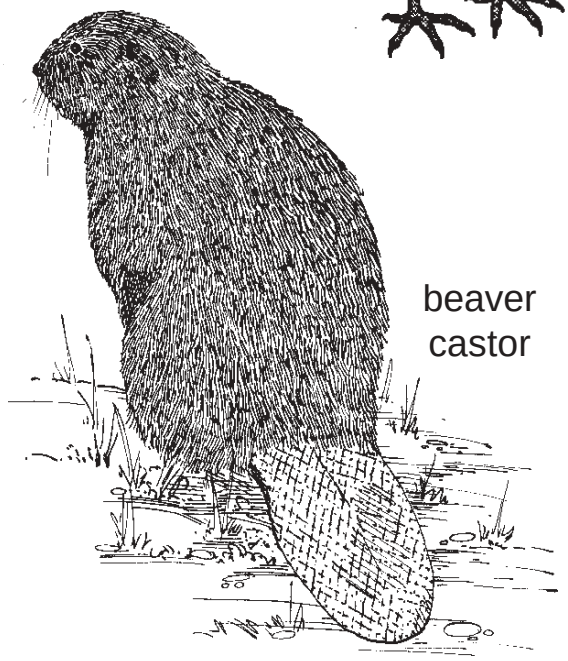
owl
buho

grasshopper
langosta

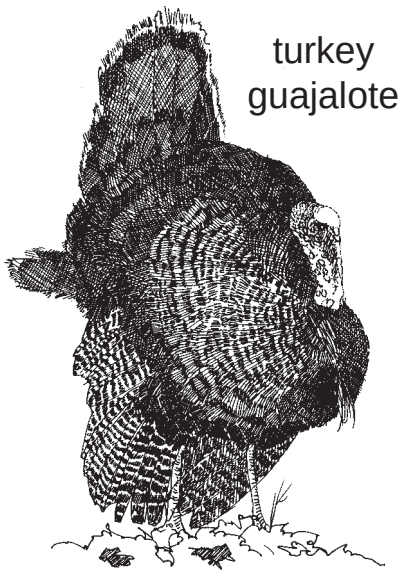


deer
ciervo

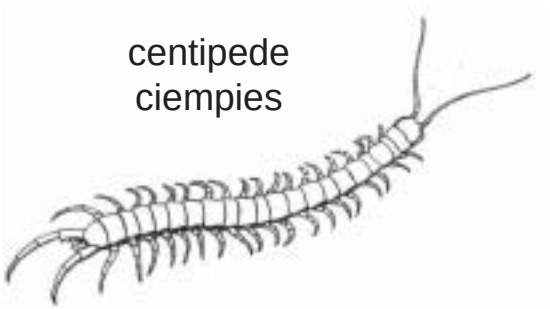
heron
garza



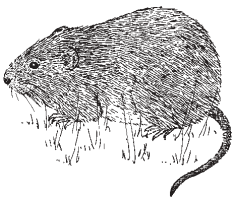
beaver
castor



turkey
guajalote



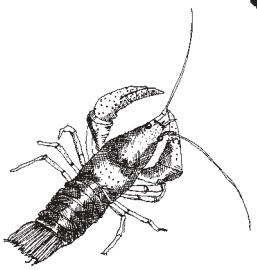
centipede
ciempies

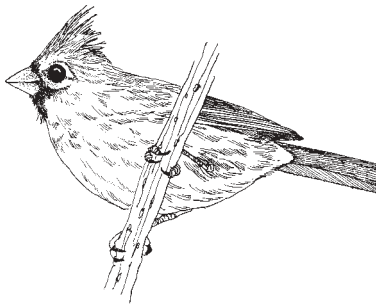
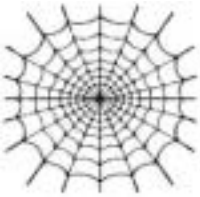
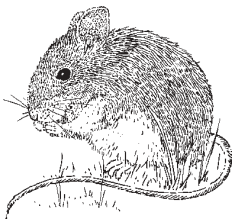


vole
campanol

What Does A Raccoon Need?

Circle all of the things below that a raccoon in the wild could use to survive.



Animal Homes

Match each animal to a place the animal might call home.