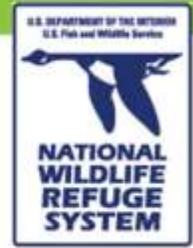
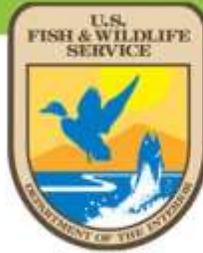




A Collaborative Project of  
Arbor Day Foundation and  
Dimensions Educational Research Foundation

## Play Area Monitor Instructions



Your job is to make sure everyone has fun, stays safe, and the play props and items don't get broken or stolen. Please help the kids by modeling appropriate play behavior. At the end of your play session, please gather up all props and toys. Count to make sure you have everything. Make note of any missing items.

### Overall Rules:

Respect nature – no harming wildlife and don't pick or trample plants, don't climb trees (sorry, there may be poison ivy on the trees).

There should always be a supervising adult present.

Don't throw rocks or blocks or play animals.

Please don't hit each other.

Be polite and courteous to each other.

We share play items and props. Take turns!

Return wood blocks to the brown bench, and lock the bench when finished.

Return to the Visitor Center the items you borrowed from there.

Don't take the play toys home. Please leave the toys and props for other kids to use.

We sell the wings in the Nature Store inside the Visitor Center.

### Things to do:

#### **1. Sorting and Counting Table (on flagstone flooring)**

- Container with play items (colorful animals and fruits) and sorting bowls
- 20 snails, 20 slugs, 20 spiders, 20 dragonflies, 20 bees
- 10 bananas, 10 grapes, 10 strawberries, 10 blueberries, 9 apples, 6 oranges
- 3 bowls in each color (red, purple, orange, yellow, green, and blue)

**Suggested Play:** Sort animals and fruits by color and put in matching colored bowls. Count each type of animal and type of fruit. Have sorting or counting races. Close your eyes and pick out one play item and guess what it is. Tell a story using some or all of the different play props. Play store and sell or buy or barter for fruit items. Play with the animals using your imagination – make the dragonflies fly around and the snails slither over the table.

#### **2. Build Towers and Animal Homes (on the wood tree cookie flooring)**



- Wood blocks stored locked bench (2 black buckets, 1 clear plastic box); the key to open this bench can be checked out at the Nature Store
- 24 toy animals (2 of each animal) in small clear container with red lid

**Suggested Play:** Use wooden blocks to build animal homes, build towers. See who can build the tallest tower. Work in teams to build a tower by playing reverse Jenga with each person



taking turns to place a block on the tower instead of removing a block. Use every block to build an entire city or fort. Sort the wooden pieces into piles by shape and count. Play with the animals – who are friends, who might eat each other, who might live in the same habitat? Sort the animals by who can swim, fly, run, crawl or slither. What sounds does each animal make? Have the children close their eyes and the mentor hand each child one toy animal – then guess which animal you have without looking.

#### 4. Squirrel Circle (wood tree stumps and wood balance beam)



**Suggested Play:** Ask what animals might hop or jump from stump to stump? Pretend you are the different animals (squirrel, chipmunk, bear, fox, grasshopper, frog, toad). Play follow-the-leader. Pretend the wood chips are water and there are alligators swimming in the water – everyone must stay out of the water or they will get eaten. Put pecan nuts in one bucket and place at the end of stumps then place an empty bucket at the opposite end, let the students be squirrels who are foraging nuts from one bucket. Their mission is to carry pecans over the stumps and balance beam to the empty storage bucket (storing nuts for the winter). *Assist young and smaller children by holding out your hand for them to grab if they lose their balance or when jumping from stump to stump.*

#### 5. Large Hollow Logs



**Suggested Play:** Climb on and crawl through the logs. Ask what animals might use the hollow log to hide in for shelter? Pretend you are the animals.

#### 6. Stage with Animal Wings



-2 eagle, 2 bat, 2 monarch butterfly, and 2 fabric monarch butterfly wings

**Suggested Play:** Fly around and pretend you are the animal (bat, eagle or butterfly) – what kind of things does the animal do and what kind of places might your animal fly to? Play a predator and prey chasing game. Create a story with dancing and singing then use the stage for your performance. Be sure children take turns and that one child doesn't hog a set of wings. Set a time limit of 5 or ten minutes if needed.

#### 7. Tree House



**Suggested Play:** Use your imagination. Swiss Family Robinson, Tarzan, pirates . . .

*Caution: Don't jump out of tree house! Don't climb up or down from it.*

#### 8. Fishing Boat



-2 life vest, magnetic fish (4 green, 4 red, 2 blue) and 3 magnetic fishing poles

**Suggested Play:** Put on your life vest and hop aboard the boat and go on a fishing adventure. See how many fish you can catch and what color are those fish. After you have reeled in a good catch pass the pole along so others can fish too. Make sure children are taking turns and not hitting each other with the fishing poles.