

Backyard Biodiversity

Recommended Grades: 3rd-
5th



What is “biodiversity”?

Biodiversity is the variety or diversity of life in the world or in a particular habitat or ecosystem.

Why is biodiversity important?

How does biodiversity benefit an ecosystem?

What can you do to increase biodiversity?

Love, laugh, and learn together!

Beautiful Biodiversity

Did you know that biodiversity is all around us, even in your backyard! Head outside to see how many species of trees, plants (shrubs, grasses, flowers, etc.), animals, insects, and spiders you can find. Choose a specific area to collect data (i.e. your backyard or an area at a local park) and use the data collection sheet on Pg. 2 to record your findings. Write down the name of each species and write tally marks next to the species name if you see more than one. If you are unsure of the plant or animals name, write a description of the plant or animal so that you will know if you see it again. When you are done collecting, you will add up how many individual species you saw from each category as well as how many items you saw total by counting the tally marks. Do this same activity again in another area (i.e. front yard or a different area of a park), compare the results, and discuss why you think one area may or may not be more diverse than another area as well as what factors may have influenced the biodiversity of that area.

Take it Further

Find out which area (front vs. backyard) is truly the most diverse by calculating the “Simpson’s Index of Diversity” and compare each location. Head to the [Khan Academy website](#) to watch a helpful tutorial on how to calculate the biodiversity in your environment and discuss with your family the factors that might have influenced your results. Research what you can do to increase biodiversity in your environment by checking out the websites listed on the right side of this page.

Check out these websites for more information on biodiversity:

- kids.britannica.com
- Conservation.org
- Ck12.org

TREES

Total Species=

Total items=

Hint: Look for different types of leaves or bark on the trees

PLANTS

Total Species=

Total items=

Hint: Look for flowers, bushes, grasses, etc.

ANIMALS

Total Species=

Total items=

Hint: What animals do you think live here?

INSECTS & SPIDERS

Total Species=

Total items=

Hint: Look for flying, crawling, and burrowing insects and spiders.

Location:

Date:

Time: