Rainforest Animals

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NGSS: 3-LS4-3

Construct an argument with evidence that in a particular habitat some organisms can survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.

Clarification Statement:
Examples of evidence could include needs and characteristics of the organisms and habitats involved. The organisms and their habitat make up a system in which the parts depend on each other.

Go here for more information:
http://ngss.nsta.org/DisplayStandard.aspx?view=topic&id=12

Cross Cutting Concepts:

Patterns
Students may notice patterns in animal traits for survival. For example many animals in cold climates have blubber or thick fur coats to keep warm. Many animals that eat meat have sharp teeth.

Structure and Function
Animal's body structure is evolved in such a way to help them maximize survival in their particular habitat.

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Rainforests are found all over the world

Shows tropical rainforest locations

By Beck, H.E., Zimmermann, N. E., McVicar, T. R., Vergopolan, N., Berg, A., & Wood, E. F. - "Present and future Köppen-Geiger climate classification maps at 1-km resolution". Nature Scientific Data. DOI:10.1038/sdata.2018.214., CC BY 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=74672913

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What Special Challenges Does the Rainforest Pose?

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(Have students give answers/discuss)

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What Special Challenges Does the Rainforest Pose?

- Rainforest has lots of water and food – so lots of life! But what is good for one animal is also good for its predator. Thick vegetation means lots of places to hide – but also lots of places for a predator to conceal itself from you. Plants and animals to eat abound, but this also means many defense strategies to stay safe from. Be careful out there!

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These animals all live in the rainforest. What observations can you make?

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Rainforest Animal: Poison Dart Frog

- Bright colors indicate the animal is toxic – some are and others are pretending!
- Poison is in skin
- Long sticky tongue helps catch prey

Learn more

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Rainforest Animal: Sloth

- Sloths sleep up to 20 hours a day and move slowly. Their stillness makes it less likely for predators to find them.
- Algae grows on their fur to help them camouflage.
- They mostly hang upside down, their body has many adaptations to make this possible!

Learn more

By derivative work: Stevenj (talk)Original photo by Leyo. - Two-toed sloth Costa Rica.jpg, CC BY 2.5, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4372587

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Rainforest Animal: Toucan

- Their big bills are made from a porous material; the bills are strong but light.
- The large bills allow them to reach for food and may attract a mate.
- Their colorful bills can be hidden under a wing to hide from predators.

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By Patty McGann - https://www.flickr.com/photos/pattymc/5200186525/, CC BY 2.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=27102110

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Rainforest Animal: Leaf Cutter Ants

- Ants have a sharp blade in their mandibles (jaw) that is used to cut off pieces of leave (see video here)
- Ants do not eat the leaves, but bring them to their colony. The leaves grow a fungus the ants eat.
- Ants have a complex society with specialized roles.
- An ants blade dulls over time, when it's too dull they carry instead of cut

Learn more

Leafcutter ant video

By Pjt56 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=66912074

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Rainforest Animal: Jaguar

By Charles J. Sharp - Own work, from Sharp Photography, sharpphotography, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=44247573

- Large paws help them climb trees or swim
- Large, strong jaw gives them the ability to eat large prey or shelled animals like turtles.
- Due to strength and size no other animals pretty on them – except humans.

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Rainforest Animal: Leaf-mimic Katydid

By Charles J. Sharp - Own work, from Sharp Photography, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=38264372

- Look like a decaying leaf leaves
- Each individual has it's own unique pattern

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Note:

- Rainforests are found all over the world; not all animals shown here live near each other.
- Many animals, including some shown here, live in the rainforest AND other biomes.

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