

Whatcom Family Farmers/WSU Farm Circle (age group: grades 3-4)
Station Plan: Wildlife on the Farm

Background: Farms are home to many wild birds, mammals and other animal species in addition to the typical farm livestock. This station intends to give students a sense of the farm setting, including barns, fields, orchards, streams, ponds, and the trees and shrubs found in wooded areas and edges of farms. There will be a model barn, tractors, and a few typical toy farm animals visible in the backdrop of the station. There will also be a poster depicting the full “farm ecosystem” as taken from the Polly coloring book center fold, that will NOT be visible when students first arrive into the station at the start of the session.

Objective: Students will leave the station knowing that farms are a great environment for many kinds of wildlife as well as for the more typical farm animals.

1. Students are seated in semi-circle around leader (1 minute to settle)
 2. Distribute various stuffed toys depicting both wild and domesticated animals so that each student is holding a different animal (animals include cow, chicken, pig, cat, dog, goat, rat, mouse, cougar, coyote, bobcat, bald eagle, crow, salmon, frog, red-tail hawk, woodpecker, snake, dragonfly, bee, deer, crow, goldfinch, duck, goose, toad, crayfish, spider, beetle, skunk, beaver, robin, snail, slug) Some of the animals are puppets and some of the birds make noises, so allow them to discover that (2 minutes)
 3. Ask all or some of the students to identify their animals if they think they know the name. Ask if all of these animals live in Whatcom County (yes!). (2 minutes)
 4. Ask student to raise their hands, holding their animal, if they think their animal lives on a farm. Respond to each of those who raised a domesticated animal – and ask the rest of the group whether they agree with those choices. If any non-domesticated animals are also raised, interact with the group to ask whether they think this is correct, and discuss where on a farm that animal might live (3 minutes).
 5. Tell the students that actually ALL of them would have been correct to raise their hands holding their animals, because ALL of the wild animals as well as the domesticated animals, live on farms in Whatcom County! Turn poster around so that they can see the places on farms that host all of these different animals. Allow them to offer information on wildlife they have seen on or near farms, if there is time for that (4 minutes).
 6. Collect animals while talking about where students can look for animals next time they are in the countryside or out on a farm, while out walking or even if just driving by. End with question: “Do you think wild animals are better off with farms or without farms?” (2 minutes)
- Chat with students as they are leaving, if there is time (1 minute)