

PHILADELPHIA ZOO

3400 West Girard Avenue ■ Philadelphia, PA 19104-1196 ■ 215-243-1100 ■ philadelphiazoo.org

Post-visit activity

Home Sweet Home (3rd-5th)

In-School Activity

Found Object Habitat

- Students will work in groups or as individuals
- Time needed: **60 minutes**
- Materials needed: Can include soda bottles, shoe boxes, plastic or clay flower pots, non-toxic paint or markers, scissors, string, etc. Be creative!

Standards

PA Academic: 3.1 A2, 3.1 C2, 3.1 C3, 4.1 A, 4.1 C, 4.1 D, 4.1 E, 4.4 A, 4.5 C, 4.5 D

Next Generation Science: K-LS1-1, K-ESS2-2, K-ESS3-1, K-ESS3-3, 2-LS4-1, 1-LS1-1, 1-LS1-2

New Jersey Core Curriculum: 5.1, 5.3A, 5.3B, 5.3C, 5.4 G

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3

Found Object Habitat

1. Each student or group should choose what type of animal they would like to create a habitat for.
 - a. Birds: like privacy, mostly live in trees or other elevated places, only need a very small opening to pass through, like to have some kind of bedding
 - b. Frogs: like dark spaces, need moisture, must be able to enter at ground level, prefer dirt or soil underneath
 - c. Small mammals: like very small spaces, need protection on all sides, like privacy, are usually good climbers
2. Once they have chosen their animal, have the students decide what objects would be best suited to use for their habitat based on the

descriptions above. Encourage them to take the following into account:

- Does this type of animal live nearby?
- Where will this habitat be placed?
- Will it be safe from human traffic, flooding, wind, etc.?
- How large should the habitat be?
- How will the animal enter the habitat?

3. Assist students in building their habitats, and encourage them to be as creative as possible. There are no wrong answers!
4. As a follow up, have students check on their habitats after placing them outside. Share with the class if anyone finds evidence of wildlife in their habitat.

Here are two images of habitats made from recycled materials that you may find helpful for inspiration:



Take it one step further: **Build a Bat Box**

If you'd like your class to take it a step further, involve the whole class in the creation and placement of a bat box. Instructions for building one can be found [here](#) (the simplest box can be seen [here](#)). These bat boxes will need to be constructed by an adult with some level of handiness with carpentry. These boxes work best when hung on buildings, but can also be hung on trees. While the students may not be able to assist much with the actual construction, you can get them involved in the following ways:

- Have them choose the site for the bat box, either at school or at the home of a student or teacher
- Allow them to paint the box
- Set up a camera to record activity around the box at night, then have students watch the footage to see if there are bats living there
- Have them do research and create a short presentation about the importance of bats and share it with another class

For lots of information about bats, check out the following resources:

Philadelphia Zoo – [Vampire Bat](#) and [Rodrigues Fruit Bat](#)
[Bat Conservation International](#)
[PA Game Commission](#)
[NJ Fish and Wildlife](#)