



Invasive Investigators

Independent Activity



Lesson Name: Be a Forest Friend

Outcome: Students will make a commitment to protect island forests as they have come to recognize their impact.

Preparations:

- Prepare YouTube video to show class to get inspired: [Habitats: Woodlands](#)
- Print enough “2B.2 Leaves” pages for students to each have a leaf.
- Have a box for students to put their leaves in. Optional: Instead, create a tree trunk & branches with cardboard and brown paper towel to display forest promises.

- Play this video for the class: [Habitats: Woodlands](#) (Discovery Education UK).
- Ask students what species they saw in the video can be found in PEI?

- Here:

Native: Owls, squirrels, bees.

- The most common owl on PEI is the Barred Owl which lives in holes in big trees and so we need to make sure that old big trees stay around for this animal to be happy.
- Squirrels use trees year round as they do not hibernate, they gather food in the summer when trees produce nuts like acorns. Does anyone know what kind of trees produce acorns? Oaks! In the winter squirrels dig up their hidden food but sometimes they forget where they buried them and they end up planting trees!
- Bees! Bees are very important, honey bees are used to help produce our food but they are actually not native to our area. Bumble bees are native to PEI and are very important to our wild plants, they overwinter in old dead logs on the ground and so these old logs can be important to bees.

Introduced: Skunks

- Skunks are an example of an animal that was introduced to PEI because their

Fur was valuable. Then one day because there was no more price in their fur, people released them and they now today have a population on PEI. Skunks are an example of a species that was introduced but is not invasive because they are not harmful, they are known as an exotic species.

Some animals you would have seen in the video were once here on PEI but don't exist here anymore, like bears. Bears once played an important role as predators in forests but they became a problem when humans developed the land for farming. The bears had lost a lot of their habitat and so they began targeting sheep and cows and became harmful to humans. We need to keep our forests healthy because, without them, PEI may lose species just like we did with the bears (and moose!).

- Pass out leaves to student, one each.
- Ask them to think about one way they can be a friend to PEI forests and protect habitat for animals. Ask them to write it down on their leaf. It can be as simple or as detailed as they would like: explore forests more, to make sure we are cleaning our shoes, spread the word about firewood, to wildlife from a distance. Suggest some of these ideas to students to help them along.
- Ask students to put their promises in the box or on the tree. They don't need to have their names on their leaf. If they are put in the box they can stay a secret as a personal action item or they can be reviewed together—possibly even at the end of the year.

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