

Animals Fact Sheet

The Kelp Forest, Extreme Zone, Island Zone, Rot Room and Family Discovery Room features an array of species that demonstrate how they have adapted to their environment and why they are of vital importance to their particular ecosystem.

Kelp Forest

The Kelp Forest features several species that each play an important role in their environment.

- “Grazers,” like the Garibaldi, specialize in food that does not move.
- “Slurpers,” such as Leopard Sharks and Round Stingrays, creatively use their mouths and fins to dig for food.
- “Kelp lovers,” such as the Giant Kelpfish, feed on different types of food, but never stray far from the kelp.
- “Crushers,” like California Sheephead and Bat Rays, have adapted to prey on hard-shelled species.
- “Night Prowlers,” such as California Moray eel and Treefish, concentrate on hunting when the sun goes down.
- “Ambushers,” like the Giant Sea Bass, California Halibut and California Scorpionfish, wait for food to come to them.
- All live together in their 188,000 gallon home.

Extreme Zone: Desert

The Desert features animals that have adapted to live and thrive in conditions of extreme heat and dryness. Learn how animals, such as the tortoise and chuckwalla or lizard, make their homes in places that have little water or shade.

California Desert Tortoise

- To conserve water, tortoises don’t cool themselves by sweating, they just move into the shade or underground.
- Tortoises have strong legs built for digging and spend 90% of their time in burrows that they excavate.
- Tortoises get most of their water from the annual plants they eat.
- If necessary, tortoises can go over a year without water.

Common Chuckwalla

- Chuckwallas live only in areas with large rocks, boulder piles or rocky terrain on slopes.
- They can change their color from dark to light to adjust to the outdoor temperature.
- These lizards get almost all the water they need from plants, like the flowers of creosote or brittlebush.

Island Zone

The Island Zone illustrates how animals and plants living in an isolated environment, such as an island, evolve. Since isolated environments are hard to get to, animals and plants use different modes of travel to reach remote destinations. Examine a variety of anole (lizard) to learn how one species can specialize and diversify within an isolated environment over time.

Knight Anole

- Live in the canopies of trees on sturdy branches.
- Each toe is expanded in the form of an adhesive pad and allows the knight anole to run up smooth, vertical surfaces or downward on a horizontal plane
- Their snout is long and wedge-shaped and they have a strong jaw with sharp teeth to help them catch nestling birds and even smaller anoles.

Rot Room

This gallery demonstrates how the decay process is essential for new life to grow. Beetles, maggots and other live animals feed on dead organisms, and in the process provide a constant flow of energy and nourishment back to the environment. Species that specialize in scavenging and feeding on decomposing plants and animals show how everything is recycled to begin a new phase of growth.

Millipede:

- Millipedes feed on decaying leaves or other vegetation mixed with soil.
- The digestive tract is a simple tube with two pairs of salivary glands to help digest the food.
- Many millipedes moisten their food with saliva before eating it.

Family Discovery Room

Learn about the pets we choose to live with and the pests who choose our homes to develop habitats of their own. From a backyard compost pile to crumbs in the kitchen, learn how our behavior entices other creatures to share our environment. Here are two common examples of creatures that live near or sometimes in our homes:

House Mouse

- House mice usually live in close proximity to humans, in or around houses or fields.
- Mice primarily feed on plant matter but will also eat meat and dairy.
- The house mouse makes its own nest but lives in groups, sharing escape holes and common areas for feeding.

American Cockroach

- Cockroaches generally live outdoors in wood piles, decaying trees, palm trees, and sewer systems.
- Their flattened bodies allow them to enter homes through cracks around doors and windows
- Mainly active at night, cockroaches eat almost anything, including meat, grease, sweets, leather, wallpaper paste and book bindings.

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