

Habitats of Virginia

STUDENT PAGE 1

DRIVING QUESTIONS

What are the major animal habitats in Virginia and how are they impacted by both human activity and natural events?

OBJECTIVES

I will understand the key elements of a habitat by exploring some of Virginia's animal habitats.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Note: Younger students may need assistance with reading the directions or completing the activities.

- Habitat Word Cloud – Have students think of at least 3 words they associate with a habitat. Ask students to submit words prior to lesson. Find the word cloud generator here: <https://www.wordclouds.com/> On the website, select “File” and then create new word cloud. Under “File” you can also type in or paste the students’ word choices. You can use the finished image to start a discussion about what a habitat is and point out some of the more interesting words that students came up with.
- You can watch the [Habitats of Virginia video](#) with your teacher or your teacher may instruct you to view it separately. The video will introduce the concept of habitats, introduce specific habitats of Virginia, discuss what animals might live in specific habitats, and how a habitat might change.
- Animal and habitat videos
 - [Diamondback Terrapins Video](#)
 - [Amphibians Video](#)
 - [Sturgeon Video](#)
 - [James River Video](#)
 - [Choose Your Own Adventure: Muskrat Mission](#)
 - [Wanted: Habitat](#) – Digital story about threats to wildlife and where they live
 - [Wetlands Exploration](#) – Google 360 experience
 - [Choose Your Own Adventure: Sea Turtle Resiliency](#)
 - [Habitats Game](#)
 - [Migratory Flyways](#) – Virginia is part of the [Atlantic Flyway](#) and habitat loss is a big concern
 - [Migratory Connectivity Project](#)
 - [Monarch Migration](#)
 - [StoryMap](#): Tour oyster reef restoration in the Chesapeake Bay (5 locations in Virginia)
- [Interdependence](#) – Explore relationships between organisms and learn about [symbiotic relationships](#)
 - [How Wolves Change Rivers Video](#)
 - [How Whales Change Climate Video](#)
 - [How Beavers Engineer the Land Video](#)
- Reading Selection – [Thinking Like a Mountain](#) by Aldo Leopold, [A Sand County Almanac](#)
- [Virtual Discussion](#)

ACTIVITY

To begin this part of the lesson, provide your teacher with a descriptive word(s) about habitats. These descriptive words can define what a habitat is, what needs a habitat, or describe some of Virginia's habitats. Your teacher will take these words and create a word cloud that will be shared with the class. The word cloud can help you and your classmates to discuss important elements of habitats.

Next you can watch the Habitats of Virginia video on your own or with your teacher. As you watch, think about different places you may have traveled in Virginia (beach, state parks, national parks and scenic highways) and see if you recognize any of these locations. There are a lot of different habitats and lots of wildlife that live in Virginia. There are lots of videos, choose your own adventures, games and digital stories to explore. They highlight specific animals, but also the habitats where those animals live.

Ecologist study the relationships of organisms and the environments in which they are found. Understanding these relationships can better help us to conserve and protect the environments where animals live. We are just beginning to understand some animals and the key roles they play in their environments. Take a look at the Prezi and the three videos that focus on three different species and the roles they play in shaping their environments. Afterwards, your teacher may conduct a virtual discussion.