

**Welcome/ Introduction:** Staff/Volunteer Names  
**Today’s Topic-Mammals**  
**Question: What kind of animal do you think of when you think “mammal”?**

**Ice Breaker/ Game:** **Whale to Scale**-Walk off 100 feet with students. This is the size of the largest mammal ever. Have the students guess—the Blue Whale.

**Background/ Exploration:** Ask students what makes a mammal. Types of mammals include: Sea Mammals, Hooved Mammals, Carnivores, Rodents, Insect Eaters, Marsupials, Primates, and others.  
**Sea Mammals** -mammals that are adapted for life in the water. Adaptations include blubber, efficient oxygen use, and streamlined shape. Appendages are flippers, not paws (or fins). Some can live in brackish/fresh water (manatees). There are three types-cetaceans, pinnipeds, and sirenians.

**Activity:** **Cozy blubber**-Coat a finger with petroleum jelly to test fat’s insulation properties.  
**Flying mammals**-bats, flying squirrels, sugar glider (lemur). Flying squirrels don’t have “wings”, but a membrane between front and back legs they use like a sail.  
**Bats** - Very useful-pollinate flowers, eat insects like mosquitoes. Eat insects, fruit, fish, frogs, nectar, pollen. They fly and find their prey by echolocation.

**Activity:** **Echolocation demonstration**  
**Ungulates/Hooved Mammals**-Bison and Elk used to live in Iowa. Discuss their life history and facts. How does each lifestyle help the animal survive?

**Activity:** **Bountiful Bison**- What Native Americans use each part of the bison for. Look at various mammal skulls, highlighting deer skulls and teeth types.  
**Activity:** **Antlers and Horns**- Show bison skull & cow horns. Talk about the deer rut.  
**Feet**-look at deer feet/legs, compare to horse and cow feet. What do tracks tell us about an animal?

**Activity:** **Track casts**-Students press rubber tracks into wet sand to make impressions.

**OUTDOOR EXPLORATION:** Hike through several nearby habitats, looking for signs of mammals. Visit a nearby farm/stable to look at **horses** or other ungulates. Look at a sandbar, area near creek, & prairie. Explain deer scrapes.

**SEND OFF:** Goodbye!  
**Next Month’s topic-Winter Woodlands**

**TAKE HOME:** parent outline  
track casts

**Vocabulary**

Diurnal, nocturnal, crepuscular, ungulate, carnivore, herbivore, omnivore, insectivore, echolocation

**Background and Activity References**

Caduto, Michael J., and Joseph Bruchac. 1991. *Keepers of the Animals: Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities for Children*. Fulcrum Publishing, Golden, CO. Mammal background

*Ranger Rick’s Naturescope: Amazing Mammals Part I & II*. 1987. National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C. Mammal background