Lt. No. 721

OSU EXTENSION
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Self Determined 4-H Wildlife & Fisheries Project Ideas

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

The purpose of this type of 4-H activity is to stimulate individual initiative in conceiving and developing an exhibit. Your exhibit will reflect your maturity and abilities as a 4-H member.

There are no specific requirements or rules to follow except for overall size as noted in Lit. No. 720 4-H Wildlife Project Exhibit Preparation Guidelines Leaders/Members Guide and the current year's state fair catalog. Exhibit should be of a nature which relates to a wildlife and fisheries project. Many young people are already involved in the preparation of displays and exhibits in the natural sciences. Such things as science fair projects and other science oriented school projects may provide the stimulus you need to start an activity of this type or it may be a result of a growing interest in the 4-H wildlife and fisheries project area beyond current fair exhibit offerings. Self determined projects may also serve as prop for a 4-H presentation or a working display that is put together to educate the public.

This exhibit may be a model, chart, illustrated story or any of the number of other devices which shows your efforts and the learning experience you gained in the development of the activity. You will need to do research in your selected subject matter area to complete the project. It must tell a story and preferably a story of scientific nature relating to natural science.

All 4-H exhibits should be the original work of the 4-H member. When information is taken from books, publications, magazines, or from the internet it should be expressed in the 4-H members own words. The 4-H member must reference the source of the information by using an asterisk (*) or a number (if more than one) and name the actual source at the end or bottom of paper, poster or educational display following an asterisk or corresponding number in text.

No copyrighted or trademark protected written or visual material (pictures, photos, drawings, illustrations, etc.) should be used from books, magazines, publications or from the internet with out permission from the original creator. If 4-H'er applies for and is granted permission to use a copyrighted or trademark protected item, a copy of the permission form or letter needs to be attached to the back of the exhibit and properly cited with an asterisk (*) or number. If an item (picture, photo drawing, illustration, etc.) that is not protected is used it's source must be cited and referenced by using an asterisk (*) or number and the source information placed at the end or bottom of paper, poster, or educational display, following an asterisk or corresponding number.

The suggestions offered below are intended only to stimulate you to use your imagination and resourcefulness in selecting an area of interest. Certainly there are many more possibilities for educational exhibits.

WILDLIFE

Aerial photos showing best habitat for a certain species
Set out different kinds of feed and record which animals or birds prefer the different foods.
Posters showing habitats and species.
Habitat improvement recording – poster and pictures.
Litter propagation – size and description of appearance at birth (how different from parent in color and covering.).
Diet (young vs. old, newborn vs. mature)
Posters showing different habitat of wildlife. Tell why its habitat is best for it.
Show life cycle of wildlife. How wildlife may be harmful or beneficial to environment.
Photo display of your creation of a wildlife habitat.
Picture, either drawn, photo, magazine of animal along with plant specimens eaten.
Map of paths of migration of wildlife.
Report describing what wildlife are seen, time of day and weather conditions.
Take common habitat and describe wildlife found there and why.
Take an area and compare the amount of food, shelter and water to the number and species of wildlife.

BIRDS

Parts of a bird
Illustrations of different beaks, feet, tails, and/or wings
Design a bird, labeling its adaptations
Draw simple black and white silhouettes of commonly seen birds
Bird eyesight
Report on bird banding
Owl pellet analysis
Crop analysis of quail, etc
Bird behavior observations (territorial)
Report on endangered species
Report of which birds in your community are summer residents, winter residents, transients or permanent residents.
Exhibit showing how birds can be identified by their different characteristics such as feet, wings, beaks, tails, flight patterns, etc.
Exhibit with information of birds of prey found in Oklahoma and what they prey Report on state or federal laws protecting birds
Report on types of bird nests an nesting habits
Exhibit of lifetime bird identification list
Exhibit showing five major groups of birds with characteristics of each
Collection of bird songs on tape, identified with name of bird, location, and date.
In depth report on any bird species
Study or observations of birds by (one of the following): family, season, location, date (as in annual Christmas bird watch)
Report on migrating habits of birds.
Record of birds migrating through your community
Charts explaining and showing different stages of egg embryo.
Stages of bird growth from egg to adult.
Poster showing waterfowl food such as duck weed, snails, etc.
Report on what birds nest in what type of tree.

FISHING

How to care for and clean fish
Grow fish for six months and write a report
Water temperature record or chart for stream or lake
Types of fishing rods or reels and use of each
Raising your won bait report
Life history of a fish
In depth report on any fish species
Record of your fishing luck, or fishing trip report
Identify parts of a fish
How to age fish by their scales
Report on strategy for catching certain fish
How to improve fish habitat in stream or pond
Catfish farming Stream or pond analysis
How to identify fish by shape, fins, skin, etc
Diorama of fish habitat
Aquatic plant collection
Fishing derby report
How does light and temperature affect
Car and maintenance of fishing tackle
Aquatic food collection
Boating safety
Make a water safety exhibit
How to bait a hook with three types of live bait
A display comparing three or more types of fishing
Examine two or more kinds of fish and explain how they are physically different Exhibit showing animals in the food web or a particular body of water
Exhibit comparing an aquatic food web to a land food web.
Exhibit of the different types of aquatic insect development
How to repair rods an fishing equipment
Poster of hydrologic cycle
Measure and record daily rainfall for a month. Repeat for 3 separate months during different seasons of the year. Determine average annual precipitation. Show how to survey a pond or stream for fish, insects, or plankton
Show Oklahoma boat safety laws.
First aid kit for tackle box.
Fishing report with depth of water, structures (underwater foliage, hills, drop offs, depressions, etc.), where fish were caught during different weather conditions, time of year or temperatures.
How to care for or tune up your fishing reel (or regular maintenance).
How to improve habitat for spawning fish
Monthly records of fish caught
How to use fish locators.
When to use different colors of bait.

WATERFOWL

How to distinguish between puddle ducks, diving ducks, geese, and swan
List puddle ducks or diving dicks found in your area. Tell whether they migrate through your area or are permanent residents. Describe the habitat they live in.
Map showing the major waterfowl flyways through the United States
Map of your farm or other area, showing areas that provide waterfowl habitat. Show how these areas could be improved for waterfowl.

WILDFLOWERS

Posters of specific wildflowers in a specific area
Changes in appearance across Oklahoma with same species
Root systems and whether they can be transplanted or only seed propagation
Report on effects of habitat (shade, full sun, marsh, soil type, etc.)
Time calendar of emergence, flowering and seed
Collect and display pressed wildflowers in a picture frame
Develop teaching guide for your project interest
Collage using parts – 15 wildflowers and written report and ID them
Specimens along with month of bloom – found in measured areas
A collage of wildflowers pictures on poster board
Photographs of 5 or 10 different wildflower fields in Oklahoma State University A display of wildflower seeds and their name
Before and after pictures of a section of planted wildflowers

First edition was developed by Jim Rutledge, 4-H & Youth Development Specialist and Susie Ruby, 4-H Volunteer; with assistance from participants at 1989 4-H Wildlife Training Retreat revised by Charles Cox, State Specialist and Program Leader April, 2005.Revised December 2006 by Dr. Dwayne Elmore, Extension Wildlife Specialist, OSU Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management, and Kevin R. Hackett, NW District 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

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