

Ecosystem Exploration Teacher Guide

Field Trip Description

Observe how interactions within the ecosystem, such as climate, human activity, and availability of food and water, affect plants and animals in Piedmont and African environments. Explore these diverse ecosystems through a tour of our galleries and Naturalist Center. **SC State Standards:** 5-LS1-1, 5-LS1-2, 7-LS2-1, 7-LS2-2, 7-LS2-4

Objectives

- Students will be able to explain the components of an ecosystem.
- Students will be able to discuss how each component keeps the ecosystem in balance.
- Students will be able to hypothesize about what might happen should one of the components of the ecosystem be missing or altered.

Vocabulary

Ecosystem: An ecosystem is made up of all of the living and nonliving things in an area.

Biotic: All of the living things in an ecosystem.

Abiotic: All of the nonliving things in an ecosystem.

Food Chain: The term food chain describes the order in which organisms, or living things, depend on each other for food.

Food Web: Food chains overlap and connect to form a food web.

Pre-Visit

(suggestions to prepare students for the field trip)

- Review different habitats with students. Ask students to name animals that live in these habitats.
- Discuss food chains and food webs with the students.
Additional Resource: [Food Chains and Webs](#)
- Review the vocabulary list with the students.
- Watch "[Welcome to the Museum!](#)"
- Watch "[Welcome to Ice Age Carolinas!](#)"

Post-Visit

(suggestions to reinforce concepts learned on the field trip)

- Have students use the vocabulary learned at the Museum through a quiz or writing exercise.
- Have students present the habitat and food web their team observed at the Museum.
- Have students share what they predict might happen should one of the "strings" of their food web break.