

# Pin the Moose on the Mountain



Exploring your world,  
one mission at a time

[pbskids.org/plumlanding](http://pbskids.org/plumlanding)

## What Is this Activity?

Where do you think you might be if you start your day strolling through a warm, leafy forest and end it walking on ice and snow? On a mountain! In this mapping activity, your child will explore the animals and plants that live on the different parts of a mountain.



**Topic**  
habitats,  
biodiversity

**Activity Type**  
indoor

**Activity Time**  
60 minutes

## ACTIVITY

### Part A

#### What You'll Need

- Notebook
- Pencil
- Crayons or markers
- Piece of posterboard or poster-sized paper
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Craft supplies such as pipe cleaners, pom-poms, and construction paper (optional)
- *Meet Us on the Mountain* handout

#### Imagine Mountains

Ask your child: Where might we be if we started strolling through a warm, leafy forest and ended up walking on bare rocks, possibly covered in ice and snow? If your child seems stumped, provide a hint: you would be walking uphill all day.

Then work together to draw the outline of a mountain on a large sheet of paper.

#### Ask:

- What do you think the climate is like at the top of a mountain? The bottom?
- How might sunlight, temperature, and rain or snow affect where the plants and animals on a mountain live?



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## Make a Mountain

1 Cut out the cards from the *Meet Us on the Mountain* handout. As you read each card, talk about where each organism might live on a mountain.

**Ask:**

- What does this animal need to eat? Where will it find its food?
- Where is its habitat?
- If it eats other organisms, what do those organisms eat?
- What does this plant need? Where will it find things it needs?
- Does the card give any clues about where on the mountain the organism lives?

You and your child don't need to know exactly which kinds of plants an herbivore like a ground squirrel might eat—don't worry about the "right" answers. Instead, think about which animals eat plants, which animals eat those animals, and which resources plants need to survive.



2 Using the cards as a reference, draw each plant or animal you would find in a mountain ecosystem. Make multiple drawings of each. Cut out these drawings, then glue or tape them to the parts of a mountain where you think each plant or animal lives. If you like, you could also build model plants and animals with craft supplies.

3 As you create the mountain, talk with your child about the relationships among the plants and animals.

**Ask:**

- What might the wolf eat? What might the ground squirrel eat?
- What might happen if there are more wolves than ground squirrels? More ground squirrels than plants?
- What might happen if all the plants on the mountain disappeared?
- Are there more plants or more animals in most ecosystems? Why?

## EXPLORE SOME MORE

### Map Your World

Go for a walk around your yard, apartment building, or neighborhood. Identify different kinds of habitats. These might be open spaces such as sports fields or parking lots; vegetation such as shrubs, flowers, or grass; or yards with trees or gardens in them. Predict what kinds of animals might live in each place, and jot down in your field

notebook any animals you see. Remember, spiders, insects, and worms are animals, too! How do the animals you see find food, water, and shelter? How do the plants survive? Back at home, make a map of your yard or neighborhood, drawing the locations of different habitats and listing the plants and animals you might find in each one.

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To discover more about this amazing planet we call home, check out **PLUM LANDING** at [pbskids.org/plumlanding](https://pbskids.org/plumlanding) where you'll find games, videos and, of course, Plum!

# Meet Us on the Mountain

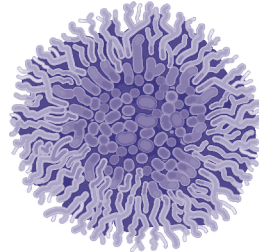


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## Lichen

### Where Does It Live?

Lichen can grow almost anywhere—in really hot, cold, or even toxic areas.



### How Does It Live?

It lies on the side of a rock! It's living the dream.

### What Can It Do?

It's a fungus that lives as a partner with an algae (the stuff that makes scum on a pond). The fungus is a home and the algae turns water, air and energy from the sun into food.

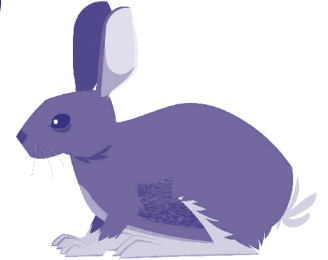
### But That's Not All!

Scientists study lichen to see the effect of pollution in an area because lichens are very sensitive to pollution.

## Snowshoe Hare

### Where Does It Live?

They live in the northern forests and eat plants and twigs.



### How Does It Live?

They have about four litters of babies every year. This helps their population survive against their many predators (like weasels, lynx, and housecats).

### What Can It Do?

These hares have big feet that stop them from sinking into the snow and have fur on the soles to protect them from the icy cold.

### But That's Not All!

Their fur turns white during the winter and brown during the summer — great for camouflage.

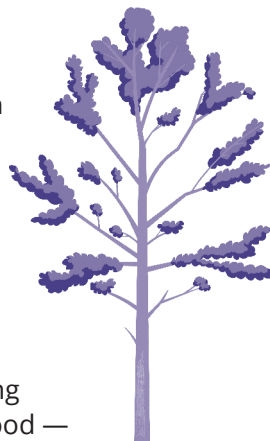
## Balsam Poplar Tree

### Where Does It Live?

It can be found across northern Canada.

### How Does It Live?

The poplar tree lives near water — either rivers or where the snow melts.



### What Can It Do?

Its resin can be used as a healing ointment. Its wood — cottonwood — is used to make houses.

### But That's Not All!

A poplar tree can live 200 years — as long as it is not cut down for its wood!

## Goshawk

### Where Does It Live?

These hawks hunt during the day, looking for birds and small animals.



### How Does It Live?

They have big nests that are hard to get to. This helps protect their babies from bears.

### What Can It Do?

Their wings can be tucked in so they can swoop through narrow gaps in the trees to chase their prey.

### But That's Not All!

The females are bigger than the males.



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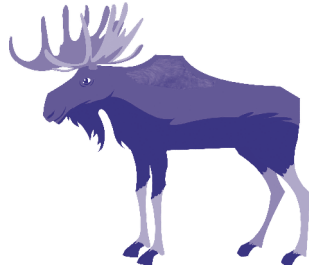


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## Moose

### Where Does It Live?

These massive vegetarians are the biggest deer in North America.



### How Does It Live?

Their huge antlers (horns) are made of a kind of bone. They use these for protection or for fighting other moose.

### What Can It Do?

They are preyed on by wolves, bears, and human hunters.

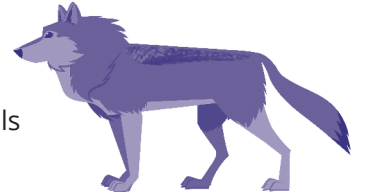
### But That's Not All!

Males are called bulls, females are called cows!

## Gray Wolf

### Where Does It Live?

Wolves hunt in packs to bring down big animals like moose and elk.



### How Does It Live?

They howl, bark, and growl to communicate with others in the pack.

### What Can It Do?

They hunt within an area that can be hundreds of miles wide.

### But That's Not All!

Conservation work has helped the wolves grow in numbers.

## Columbian Ground Squirrel

### Where Does It Live?

Its diet is mostly grasses and plant parts — stems, leaves, bulbs, fruits, and seeds. Sometimes it will eat birds, insects, or other small animals.



### How Does It Live?

Unlike most squirrels, a Columbian ground squirrel lives in burrows in the ground.

### What Can It Do?

It hibernates. That means the squirrel sleeps through the winter to avoid the cold.

### But That's Not All!

It makes barking and whistling sounds to communicate with other ground squirrels.

## Whitebark Pine

### Where Does It Live?

Forests of whitebark pine can be seen across northern Canada.



### How Does It Live?

They produce pine cones, which are clusters of pollen and seeds.

### What Can It Do?

Whitebark pines are an important source of food for many birds and small mammals, including the Clark's nutcracker.

### But That's Not All!

They are threatened by white pine beetles, which have killed 750,000 trees in Yellowstone.



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## Mourning Cloak Butterfly

### Where Does It Live?

These butterflies live in the trees and fold their wings back so they can hide against the dark bark of the trees.



### How Does It Live?

They eat a lot of leaves: these butterflies make some very hungry, hungry caterpillars.

### What Can It Do?

They can link up with other butterflies to scare off birds!

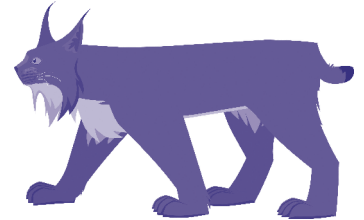
### But That's Not All!

Mourning is when you remember someone who has died. The name comes from its dark beautiful colors.

## Lynx

### Where Does It Live?

They live and hunt high up in the mountains.



### How Does It Live?

Canadian lynx are good climbers and swimmers.

They live under fallen trees or on rock ledges.

### What Can It Do?

Like their house-cat cousins they stalk and jump to catch rabbits, rodents, mice, and other prey.

### But That's Not All!

Their feet have thick pads to let them walk on snow.

## Clark's Nutcracker

### Where Does It Live?

They live in the mountain pines where they feast on tree seeds



### How Does It Live?

They use their sharp beaks to get the seeds from pine cones.

### What Can It Do?

The nutcracker has a pouch under its tongue that it uses to carry seeds long distances.

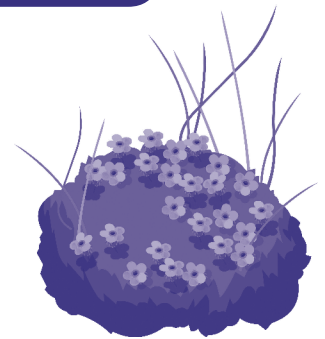
### But That's Not All!

Each nutcracker hides thousands of seeds every year and can remember where to find the seeds that it hides!

## Alpine Forget-Me-Nots

### Where Does It Live?

They live in alpine (mountain) meadows. They are Alaska's state flower.



### How Does It Live?

They are food for several kinds of butterfly and moth.

### What Can It Do?

There are very few blue flowers in nature.

### But That's Not All!

They get their name from being a symbol to help remember long-lost friends and family.



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