

Lake Mead

Environmental Education

National Recreation Area
National Park Service



CLASSROOM PROGRAM

Grade 5 - *Designed for Desert Living*

Theme	Wildlife species found in the Mojave Desert differ in their adaptations from similar species found in other biomes of North America.
Objectives	Students will identify at least three conditions that characterize the Mojave Desert. Students will compare differences between at least three biomes of North America. Students will compare and record differences between at least two desert wildlife species and their related species found in other biomes of North America.
Vocabulary	<u>adaptation</u> -a physical or behavioral feature of an animal which enables it to live in its specific ecosystem <u>biome</u> -a distinctive association of plant and animal populations characterized by certain geographical boundaries and specific climatic and geographical features <u>ecology</u> -the study of the relationship between plants, animals, and their environment <u>ecosystem</u> -a community of animals and plants, interacting with their environment <u>species</u> -a group of animals or plants that is made up of related individuals with the ability to reproduce with one another <u>zoology</u> -the study of animals
Background Information	Different ecosystems called biomes can be found throughout the world. Biomes are areas with distinctive associations of plant and animal populations characterized by certain geographical boundaries and specific climatic and geographical features. The biomes of the world include the following: Arctic tundra, Alpine tundra, Northern coniferous forests, temperate deciduous forests, grasslands, chaparral, tropical rain forests, and deserts. Mojave Desert wildlife species have developed specific adaptations that allow them to survive in this desert biome. Similar species living in other biomes of North America have different adaptations that relate to their unique ecosystems.
Before the Ranger Visits your Classroom	Ask students to make a list of common weather conditions in the Mojave Desert. How do these conditions differ from other parts of the country that they have either lived in or studied. Write the comparisons on the board for the ranger to use as part of the classroom program.
After the Ranger Visits your Classroom	Have students draw their own desert animal, based on adaptations necessary for surviving in the Mojave Desert. Have them make brief presentations to explain their designs.



Teachers! - check out our new web site at <http://www.nps.gov/lame/classindex.htm>

designed - 2/4/02