



Who Lives in the Badlands? Pre-Visit Lesson

Animal Tracking, Grades K-2

Objective:

Students will be able to list at least five common animals that live in Badlands National Park.

SD Life Science Standards: K.L.1.1; 1.L.3.1; 2.L.3.1

Materials:

- *Land of Stone And Light* DVD (20 minute park film)
- Views of the National Parks computer-based learning program on CD or at <http://nature.nps.gov/views/layouts/Main.html#/BADL/>
- Paper and Pencils or Classroom Whiteboard

Procedure:

1. Tell the class that a Park Ranger from Badlands National Park will be visiting the classroom this week. Describe where Badlands National Park is. Show a map or tell the students how long it would take to drive to the Badlands.
2. Explain that Badlands National Park is a special place. One reason Badlands is special is because it protects homes for animals. Many different animals live in Badlands National Park. Has anyone ever been to Badlands National Park? What does it look like? Badlands is a grassland, or prairie.
3. Watch *Land of Stone and Light*. Have students list all the animals they see as the film plays. Or, have students recall as many animals as they can after the film. Teacher lists all animals on the board.

The following common prairie animals appear in *Land of Stone and Light*:

Mammals

buffalo
bighorn sheep
prairie dog
black-footed ferret
swift fox
pronghorn
cottontail rabbit
porcupine
mountain lion
bobcat
badger
thirteen-lined ground squirrel
least chipmunk

Birds

burrowing owl
sandhill cranes
western meadowlark
mountain bluebird
curlew
great blue heron
golden eagle
cliff swallows

Reptiles & Amphibians

prairie rattlesnake
bullsnake
garter snake
toad

4. Extension: Project the Views of the National Parks Badlands Virtual Experience from CD or from nature.nps.gov/views/layouts/Main.html#/BADL/. Go to “Prairie Present” then “Animals.” Discuss the different groups of animals and select different pictures for the students to see. Go to “Prairie Preservation” to see pictures of bison, bighorn sheep, swift fox, and black-footed ferrets.

5. Many animals live in Badlands National Park! Badlands protects habitat (homes) for animals. The park ranger that visits the classroom will discuss what we can learn from animal tracks (footprints).

Other Resources:

These resources are available through Badlands National History Association (BNHA), a not-for-profit organization established to support education and research efforts at Badlands National Park. badlandsnha.org

- *America’s Prairie and Grasslands* by Marianne D. Wallace
- Local Tracks of North America “Quick Guide”
- *Golden Guide: Mammals*
- *Badlands Suite: Land of Stone and Light, From Field to Lab, Multiple Perspectives* DVD

Teachers participating in a ranger-led Badlands National Park Education Outreach Program receive a 15% discount on purchases from BNHA. Discount is valid from the time a program is scheduled to one month after the program. Please provide name, school, and discount code **BIYC Education** when you place your order at badlandsnha.org.