

One Step Fun: All Rooms

Many of these one step activities are designed to provoke questions in the mind of the visitor. Victor Weisskopf, Physics Professor, said it best:

"People cannot learn by having information pressed into their brains. Knowledge has to be sucked into the brain, not pushed in. First, one must create a state of mind that craves knowledge, interest and wonder. You can teach only by creating an urge to know."

In "just one easy step" you can engage visitor interest by:

| Room | Display | Activity |
|--------------|----------------------------|---|
| Any Room | Awesome Adaptations Box | Awesome Adaptations can be as long or as short as a docent prefers. Please see the Developed Activities section of this document for and in-depth comparison of the objects in the box to a particular adaptation. |
| Conservation | Video Monitor | Use the California Condor Puppet to demonstrate how an adult feeds a chick. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a young participant what their favorite food is. • Tell the participant their parent will eat the food. • Have the participant hold their mouth open. • Using the puppet pretend to regurgitate food into the participant's open mouth. |
| Conservation | Electricity and Population | Have participants push the buttons on both these displays. |
| Conservation | DDT | Pose this question to participants: What if your parents had never been born? or your grandparents? |
| Conservation | DDT | Pose this question to participants: What happened to these eggs? |
| Conservation | DDT | Pose this question to participants: Can you identify these birds (all common to Idaho)? |
| Conservation | Falconry | Pose this question to participants: Why is this bird wearing a hood? |
| Conservation | World Map | Ask participants to point to places on the map where The Peregrine Fund has projects ongoing/completed: Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where in the world is India? (Asian Vultures) • Mauritius? (Mauritius Kestrel) • Philippines? (Philippine Eagle) • Panama? (Harpy Eagle) • Grand Canyon? (California Condor) • Trans Pecos? (Aplomado Falcon) • Madagascar? (Madagascar Serpent-Eagle and Red Owl) Visit the Conservation Projects section of The Peregrine Fund web site for detailed information on these and other projects. |
| Conservation | Kestrel Box | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them if they know what is the smallest and most numerous American Falcons. • Ask if they can distinguish a male from a female. • Ask participants if they live near any open areas such as fields, and do they see kestrels nearby? |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the answer to the last question is yes, tell the participants you are giving them a <i>homework assignment</i> to buy/build and mount a kestrel nest box. Kestrel nest box plans are in the storage bins in the hallway. |
| Conservation | Electricity | <p>Standing under the power line display ask the participants to find at least 3 safety features illustrated in the display:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The triangular perch guards to prevent perching between the close spaced lines. The insulator on top of the transformer. The wide spread between the other pair of lines. The plastic perch on the insulator. |
| Conservation | Founders | <p>Ask participants if they can find the bird:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That only kings could use for falconry in the middle ages. That breeds and lays eggs in below zero weather. That is the largest true falcon in the world. |
| Art Gallery | Sculptures | <p>Eagle – Have small children feel the beak and talons. Natural Selection – Have participants observe the tomial tooth and large feet of the Peregrine in the sculpture.</p> |
| Art Gallery | Condors | <p>Have participants bring feathers in to the room from the feather display, stand under the Condors, and by comparing their feather to the Condor feathers, identify their feathers as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary, Secondary, Tail, For Primary feathers, to which wing does the feather belong. |
| Ecology Room | Harpy Case | <p>Ask the participants to find the bird that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eats monkeys or slow sloths (Harpy) Has feathers on beak and feet. (Great Horned Owl) Was once reduced to 4 birds. (Mauritius Kestrel) |
| Ecology | Harpy Case | <p>Have the participants look at the Prairie Falcon skeleton and ask them to find the shoulder, elbow, upper arm, lower arm, wrist, and fingers.</p> |
| Ecology | Middle Case | <p>Have the participants find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How males compare in size to females? How coloration of males compare to females? How juveniles compare in coloration to adults? <p>To illustrate how raptors defend a nest with their feet, have a participant lie on their back and pretend to be peddling a bicycle. Bigger females would be more effective in defense of a nest.</p> |
| Ecology | Osprey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask participants to imagine some adaptations that might help an Osprey catch fish as a way to introduce fish hook talons and spicules on the bottom of their toes. The Awesome Adaptations box has a bumpy glove (spicules) |
| Ecology | Bird Flight Case | <p>Ask participants to pretend they cannot read the labels by the mounted birds. Challenge them to only look at the mounted birds to determine the bird that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a slow, quiet flyer? (Barn Owl) Is a very fast flyer like a fighter plane? (Peregrine Falcon) Can fly skillfully around and through bushes and trees? (Sharp-shinned Hawk) Is a soaring bird? (Swainson's Hawk) |

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| | | Ask participants which bird eats? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mice (Barn Owl) • birds in bushes and trees (Sharp-Shinned Hawk) • birds flying in the air (Peregrine Falcon) • small mammals during breeding season and insects during non-breeding season (Swainson's Hawk) |
| Ecology | Migration | Have participants pair up and press the following buttons for comparison: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Barn Swallow & Barn Owl (migratory versus non-migratory) -Peregrine Falcon, Turkey Vulture & Osprey (Peregrine migrates the greater distance) |
| Ecology | Skins | Have the participants identify the animal that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates burrows for Burrowing Owls? (Badger and Piute ground squirrel) • Has the softest fur? (Bob Cat) • Has long been treated as a pest, but is essential in controlling rodents? (Coyote) • Once used to trim the robes of royalty? (Ermine) • Once used for fashionable hats for men? (Beaver) • Lives near water and creates habitat for fish? (Beaver) • Is a carnivore?(all but the beaver) • Is a herbivore? (beaver, ground squirrel) |
| Ecology | Feathers | Ask the participants what are feathers for? Have a group brainstorm why birds have feathers. Some answers could be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help a bird fly. • For camouflage. • To help tell adults from juveniles. |
| Ecology | Feathers | Have the participants obtain a feather from the feather display. Ask the participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you take this feather home? • Is it legal for you to take feathers from a dead bird of prey? Discuss that it is illegal to possess a bird of prey or any part of a bird of prey without a special permit. |
| Ecology | Feathers | Have the participants obtain a feather from the feather display. Ask the participant to gently and very slowly pull the barbs apart. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They should feel the resistance of the barbules letting go of each other. • If they look carefully, the participant can see the barbules. Ask the participant why a parted feather is not good for the bird, and how would the bird fix this problem. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants should indicate preening is the solution. • Help the participants to understand the importance of preening in maintaining the health of the bird. |
| Ecology | Feathers | Ask the participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If they have ever lost a tooth? (molting) • Do birds ever lose feathers? (molting) • What happens if a bird loses a primary feather on the right wing? (maintain balance by molting same feather on other wing) |
| Silhouettes | Eagle/Vulture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For families this is a great photo opportunity. Have the children pose with their arms outstretched along the eagle or vulture silhouettes. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants, “How many people’s arm spans would it take to equal the wingspan of a California Condor?” |
| Silhouettes | Hawks | <p>Ask participants which of these hawks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soar? (buteos) • produce quick, maneuverable flight? (accipiters) • are not found in Idaho? (kites and Harris Hawks) • are usually winter visitors? (Rough-legged) • are usually summer visitors (Ferruginous) • is the easiest to identify? (Northern Harrier – white rump stripe) |
| Silhouettes | All | <p>For local participants, ask, Where are the birds now in the NCA? (see <i>Where Are the Birds?</i> handout in hallway bin on the wall.)</p> |
| Rain Forest | All Walls | <p>Challenge participants to count how many animals can be found on all 4 walls</p> |
| Rain Forest | Participants Seated | <p>Retrieve the <i>Special Present</i> from the kitchen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the participants pass the present around. • Show the present to the participants and tell a version of this story: Pretend your aunt (participant’s) brought you this present for your birthday. This is a very special present that she brought and you cannot wait to open it. But your birthday was tomorrow, so you had to wait until tomorrow to open it. When you awoke the next day, the present was gone! • Ask the participants to express how they would feel if this were their present. Collect a variety of responses. • Most express sorrow or even anger. Explain the present is an analogy the disappearance of the rain forest. • See the <i>Magical Rain Forest Bag</i> activity for more information about the special importance of the rain forest. |