



Rainforest Color-and-Cut

Rainforests are some of the most biodiverse ecosystems in the world, home to an astounding variety of plants and animals. Both rely on one another: Animals make use of plants for food and shelter, while pollinators help plants reproduce throughout the rainforest. In this activity, learn about some interactions between species that occur in the rainforest and try to match each plant with its “partner” animal.

Materials

Rainforest Habitat sheet (page 3)
Rainforest Animals sheet (page 4)
Scissors
Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
Glue or tape

Directions

1. **Print** the Rainforest Habitat sheet and Rainforest Animals sheet on pages 3 and 4.
2. **Color** the plants and animals found in the rainforest. What colors did you use?
3. **Cut out** the animals on the Rainforest Animal sheet.
4. **Glue or tape** the animal cutouts onto the Rainforest Habitat sheet. For hints on where to put the animals, **read** the Ecosystem Interactions on page 2. In the rainforest, certain animals only interact with certain plants to find food and shelter. Make your best guess on where each animal fits best.

Bromeliads and Tree Frogs



Certain species of tree frogs rely on rainwater that collects in the trough-like leaves of the bromeliad plant to lay their eggs. The leaves are able to hold large amounts of water, sometimes up to 2 gallons (7.6 liters), creating an aquatic environment high in the trees. These leaves provide convenient spawning grounds and nurseries for tree frog tadpoles, as microorganisms and aquatic insects provide food for the growing tadpoles.

Darwin's Hawkmoth and Star Orchid



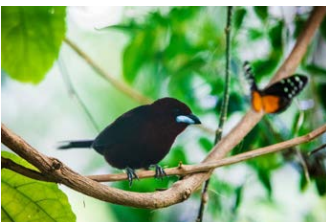
Star orchids are a strange species of flower, as their nectar is located down a spur (hollow part of the flower) an average of 13 inches (33 cm) long. Naturalist Charles Darwin hypothesized that an insect would have to have an equally long proboscis to pollinate the flower, and he was right: In 1882, the Darwin's hawkmoth was discovered, with a proboscis as long as the flower's spur. One of the few animals that can access the nectar of the star orchid, the hawkmoth is a wonderful example of coevolution, where two animals evolve alongside each other.

Passion Vine Leaves and Postman Butterflies



Passion vine leaves and flowers contain toxic compounds that deter herbivores from eating them, but the caterpillars of the postman butterflies are immune to the toxins. As the caterpillars eat the passion vines, the toxin builds up in their bodies and even stays with them when they undergo metamorphosis and become butterflies. The wings of the postman butterfly are brightly colored to let predators know to stay away.

Silver-beaked Tanagers



Tanagers can be found in the rainforests of South America and come in a variety of different colors. They primarily feed on fruit and insects and regularly fly around the forest to find food. Try to find a cluster of berry-like fruits from the coffee plant and place the silver-beaked tanager near them.



