



AGE GROUP



IC. COMPASSION FOR ALL CREATURES

THE FORGOTTEN ONES

GOAL: Campers will learn about the importance of, and build compassion towards all creatures, especially the ones we often forget about on the farm and at home.

MATERIALS: Materials for enhancing animal habitat (i.e: drill, wood logs, flowers, mulch, etc.)

OUTPUT:

- **ZERAIM:** Creature scavenger hunt
- **NEVATIM:** Beneficial creations

ACTIVITY

1. Campers lie stomach down in a grassy or wooded area and watch for small insects and other creatures walking through the grass. This can be a quiet, reflective activity or an active one where campers can shout out when they see something.
2. Mention this quote from Genesis: “And the God formed human (ADAM), of the dust of the ground, (ADAMAH), and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and human became a living soul.” *(emphasize the wordplay between ADAM/ADAMAH)*
 - Campers explore life in the soil, which is our source for life
 - Ask, “What animals did you notice that you may not have noticed before?” *(Example: worms, beetles, ants, etc)*
3. Creature Scavenger Hunt
 - Identify several small creatures (worms, beetles, etc), for campers to recognize
 - Campers try to search for as many “creatures” as they can. Campers should keep count of how many they spot, but should not touch them.
4. Symbiotic Relationships on the Farm
 - Ask campers: What kind of symbiotic animal relationships exist on our farm?
 - Define and explain “symbiotic relationships.” Ask campers for more examples.
5. Beneficial Relationships
 - Campers choose one symbiotic relationship on the farm to focus on (plan for multiple relationships before the activity, or steer campers towards the relationship you planned for)
 - Discuss in detail how this symbiosis works: What animals are involved? How does the relationship benefit the farm? How does the relationship benefit us?
 - What is the Human role here? How can we make it more positive?
6. Build a resource to help foster beneficial relationships (instructions listed on sourcesheet)

PARTING MESSAGE

What other ways can we take these ideas home and benefit the symbiotic relationships in our home environment? What are some other symbiotic relationships in our lives? (Think outside the farm, suggest camp relationships)

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Animal	Interaction/relationship	Importance	How we can benefit relationship
Japanese Beetles (pest)	Predate on crops, predated on by birds and beneficial insects such as Assassin Bugs and Big Eyed bugs	Damage crops by eating stems and leaves, breed prolifically	Birds: build birdhouses Beneficial Insects: plant Queen Ann’s Lace, daisies, alfalfa, marigold, goldenrod, or dill
Aphids (pest)			
Fleahopper (pest)			
Worm (decomposer)	Decompose crop residues into plant available nutrients, attracted by moist soil with high organic matter content, affected by compacted soil with low oxygen content	Break down nutrients so plants can use them to grow	Add mulch to soil to maintain moisture, and add compost to increase the organic matter content. Reduce tilling to maintain oxygen levels in soil.
Bee (pollinator)	Bees attracted to the crop flower collect and move pollen amongst the crops, aided by higher availability of flower pollen	Pollination fertilizes crops and allows perennials to stay healthy	Plant native flowers of your area or other brightly coloured flowers, plant mint, build bee shelters (see link below)

CREATE A HUMANE BACKYARD—HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

<http://www.humansociety.org/about/departments/faith/humane-backyard-at-place-of-worship.html>

BUILD A BEE HOUSE - NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

<http://www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/Young/Build-a-Bee-House.aspx>

SIX EASY STEPS TO BUILD A WORM COMPOST BIN - CORNELL UNIVERSITY

<http://compost.css.cornell.edu/worms/steps.html>

NOTES

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SOURCE: *Genesis Rabbah 8*

If a person merits praise, we say to them, “you were created before the angels.” And if not, we say to them, “flies were created before you, bugs were created before you, snails were created before you.”

אם זכה אדם אומרים לו אתה קדמת
למלאכי השרת ואם לאו אומרים לו זבוב
קדמך, יתוש קדמך, שלשול זה קדמך

SOURCE: *Genesis Rabbah 10:7*

The rabbis state: even things that you see them as superfluous in the world, like flies and fleas and mosquitoes, even they are a part of the world’s creation. And with all of them God is enacting Divine purpose, even with a snake, even with a mosquito, even with a frog.

רבנן אמרי אפי' דברים שאתה רואה אותן
שהן יתירה בעולם כגון זבובין ופרעושין
ויתושין אף הן בכלל ברייתו של עולם הן,
ובכל הקב"ה עושה שליחותו, אפי' ע"י
נחש, אפי' ע"י יתוש, אפי' ע"י צפרדע

SOURCE: *Baal Shem Tov, Rabbi Yisroel (Israel) ben Eliezer, Tzava'as HaRiVaSH #12, 18th century Jewish mystic, Poland*

What makes you superior to a worm? The worm serves the Creator with all its mind and strength! Human, too, is a worm and maggot, as it is written “I am a worm and no man.” (Psalms 22:7) If God had not given you intelligence you would not be able to worship God but like a worm. Thus you are no better than a worm, and certainly [no better] than [other] people. Bear in mind that you, the worm and all other small creatures are considered as equals in the world. For all were created and have but the ability given to them by the blessed Creator. Always keep this matter in mind.

SOURCE: *Martin Buber, Late Masters, p. 220*

“Rabbi Yitschak Eisik said, the motto of life is ‘Give and Take.’ Everyone must be both a giver and a receiver. He who is not is like a barren tree.”

SOURCE: *John Muir*

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe”

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