

Lake Mead

Environmental Education

National Recreation Area
National Park Service



Classroom Program

Grade 1 - "Animals Among Us"

Theme	Though animals of the Mojave Desert share a common environment, they belong to different groups that represent the fascinating world of the Animal Kingdom.
Objectives	Students will sort desert animal photos of mammals, reptiles and birds. Students will compare at least one difference between two mammals, two birds, and two reptiles.
Vocabulary	<u>bird</u> - a warm-blooded animal that has a backbone, wings, a beak, and skin covered with feathers <u>mammal</u> - a warm-blooded animal that has a backbone, feeds its young with its own milk, and skin more or less covered with hair or fur <u>reptile</u> - a cold-blooded animal that has a backbone, and skin covered with scales or bony plates <u>zoology</u> - the branch of science dealing with the study of animals and animal life
Background Information	Scientists who study animals, animal groups, and animal life are called zoologists. Animals are classified or grouped by common characteristics so that members of each group are similar to one another and unlike members of other groups. Scientists have grouped all the animals with backbones (called vertebrates) into five commonly recognized classes: mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. One way that vertebrates differ is by their skin covering. Mammals are more or less covered with hair or fur, while birds are covered with feathers. Reptiles have scales and bony plates. Animals with backbones comprise just a small portion of the total number of animal groups found on earth. A wide variety of animals live in the Mojave Desert. Each species has different ways of surviving the challenges of desert living.
Before the Ranger Visits your Classroom	What type of animals do your students have as pets? Have students discuss the similarities and differences of their pets.
After the Ranger Visits your Classroom	Have each student draw a picture of their favorite desert animal and a picture of themselves. Compare the similarities and differences.

*Teachers! - check out our new web site with an extensive classroom section:
<http://www.nps.gov/lame/classindex.htm>*