

FACTivity

In this FACTivity, you will do something similar to the student scientists in this study. The question you will answer in this FACTivity is: How do different areas in our school yard compare as wildlife habitats?

The method you will use to answer your question is:

Divide your class into 6 groups. Select three separate areas in your school yard. Depending on the size of your school yard, each area could be rather small. Two groups will work in each area.

Use the Student Wildlife Habitat Quality Index (SWHQI) below.

The range of this index is -2 to 6. Six would indicate an excellent wildlife habitat and -2 would indicate a poor wildlife habitat.

After the groups gather data on different areas in the school yard, compare what you found. What is the wildlife habitat quality overall? What could you do to improve the wildlife habitat? Where some areas of the school yard better than other areas? If so, why?

Discuss the value of using an index to compare wildlife habitats. Is it easier to use one number than comparing five qualities? Why or why not?



If you are a PLT-trained educator, you may use #70 "Soil Stories" as an additional resource.

Does the area have natural ground cover, such as leaves and small bushes?	No coverage (less than 10 percent) = -1 Some coverage (less than 25 percent) = 0 Fifty percent coverage and above = 1
Are there are variety of plants in the area?	No variety = 0 Some variety = 1 Wide variety = 2
Are there some plants that produce berries or other fruits?	No plants = -1 Less than 25 percent = 0 Fifty percent and above = 1
Is there some source of fresh water available?	No = 0 Yes = 1
Is there enough space for things to grow and live?	No = 0 Yes = 1