



TEACHER GUIDE

DIVERSITY OF LIFE ON EARTH GRADES K-2

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

- **Hardly any living things live in the desert.**
The desert is home to a variety of animals and plants. Often times animals are hiding underground and out of sight to keep cool. Students often think plants can't survive in the desert. However, some plants have adaptations that help them survive with very little water. A cactus is a great example.
- **All species of living things have already been discovered.**
Each year scientists discover many new living things. As we begin to explore the depths of the ocean floor, these numbers will continue to rise. Scientists believe there are many more species of living things left to discover.
- **When one type of animal dies, it does not impact humans.**
Even small living things such as bees can impact humans. Bees are responsible for pollinating many plants. Without them we wouldn't have many fruits and vegetables to eat. The survival of honey bees is important to the human food supply!

BIODIVERSITY

Being aware of the variety of animals and plants on the Earth is an important first step to advocating for a better Earth. Animals and plants in ecosystems rely on each other for their survival. Everything is connected, so it's important that we take care of our Earth so that animals and plants continue to thrive. Humans benefit from the diversity on Earth in so many ways. For example, worms might be gross, but they also serve an important role in aerating soil, which helps plants grow.

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Teach your students that biodiversity is more than just cool animals to look at. Students need to understand that it's important to have high biodiversity on Earth. Many species of animals are endangered or threatened. It's important to take care of our Earth so that our children's children can enjoy the biodiversity we have experienced. Young students are never too young to advocate for a better Earth. Learning about this topic can make them interested to help the Earth by recycling and being thoughtful in how we use our resources. In higher grade levels, they will learn how all these living things are connected through food webs and other important interactions.