



L.A.'s Wild Past

2nd Grade

Duration

Museum Visit

30-45 minutes

Classroom

1 hour

Locations

La Brea Tar Pits Museum

Pleistocene Garden

Supplies

- Worksheet / Journal
- Pencil
- Clipboard (optional)

Standards

NGSS

2-LS4-1.D

S+E Practices

3,4,6,7

CCSS ELA

W.2.7, W.2.8

CA State

Science Grade 2

Investigation and
Experimentation 4.a

Vocabulary

Diversity • Biodiversity •
Extinct • Community

Concepts

- There are many kinds of different things living in any area.
- Our home, Los Angeles, is also home to a great diversity of living things.
- The fossil record from Rancho La Brea shows us what lived here in the past, and how our home has changed since the Ice Age.

Objectives

- Students will use a nature journal to conduct a biodiversity survey at school and at the Tar Pits.
- Students will understand that our home, Los Angeles, is home to a great and changing diversity of organisms.

Outline

1. Students will conduct an investigation at school using nature journals to document what kinds of living organisms they can find.
2. Students will conduct a similar investigation at the Museum during their field trip to discover what kinds of organisms once lived in Ice Age Los Angeles.
3. Back in the classroom, students will compose a short report using evidence from their journals to explain how the animal and plant communities of Los Angeles have changed since the last Ice Age.

Pre-Visit

Review the idea that our home, Los Angeles, is a hotspot for biodiversity! Millions of species of animals, plants, and insects share our environment, and if we look closely, we can record some of the living things that make their homes right in our backyards.

At school, hand each student one of the provided journal pages, or have students use classroom journals if they already have them. Give students time to explore outside the classroom, using their journals to record any wildlife they can find. Squirrels, birds, insects, and plants, while they might seem mundane, are great specimens to observe when conducting a biodiversity survey!

You can find tips on how to keep students safe and engaged in an outdoor setting at www.tarpits.org/for-teachers/professional-development/workshop-resources.

You can also download a free copy of *Opening the World Through Nature Journaling* from the California Native Plant Society here: <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/education/curriculum/index.php>. In it, you'll find tips and techniques for leading nature journaling activities with students.

Museum Visit

During their visit to the Museum, hand each student a second journal page, or have them bring their classroom journals with them on your field trip. Students can explore the Museum and use their journals to make observations about the animals and plants that lived in Los Angeles thousands of years ago.

In addition to the inside of the Museum, have students explore the Pleistocene Garden as well!

Post-Visit

Back in the classroom, have students review their research from the Museum and from school. Did they see any animals or plants at school that they also saw at the Museum? Did they see any animals at the Museum that they know still live around Southern California? In what ways has Los Angeles changed since the Ice Age?

Have students summarize their findings in a short project. This can be a report, an art project, or an oral presentation.



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FIELD JOURNAL

THESE OBSERVATIONS BELONG TO:
