



Wet Weather Activity Pack

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Introduction

As we all know, the British weather is unpredictable at best, and sometimes that means that however carefully you plan a school trip there is always the chance of it raining all day. But that doesn't mean you can't still enjoy a visit to Marwell Zoo!

This pack is full of ideas for short indoor activities to help keep pupils engaged if you need to remain inside the same exhibit for a long time. As our animals do sometimes choose to keep out of sight, many of the activities are designed to work even when the animals themselves are not visible.

There is also a list of general questions which you can ask to focus the children's attention on any animal that takes their interest as you move around the park.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have included a map detailing all our main undercover areas so if the rain catches you out, you can find the nearest place to take shelter.

Please note: due to animal management reasons, some of the animals or buildings available for viewing may be different to those listed.

Curriculum Links

SCIENCE

Working Scientifically

- Observing closely
- Using their observations and ideas to suggest answers to questions
- Identifying and classifying
- Asking questions



**Marwell
Wildlife**

Wet Weather Map



General Questions

This is a short list of simple questions that you can ask about any animals that the children show interest in as you explore the park. They may also be useful for extending the children's interest if you need to remain undercover in the same exhibit for a long time.

- ❖ What animals can you see?
- ❖ How many are there?
- ❖ What colours are they?
- ❖ How do they move?
- ❖ Can you see what they eat? If not, can you guess what they might like to eat?
- ❖ What kind of place do you think they might come from? (e.g. *hot or cold, wet or dry*)
- ❖ Do they have fur/feathers/scales?

The answers to most of these questions will be self-evident, otherwise refer to the animal ID signs to find information on habitat, diet etc.

Also remember to keep an eye out for other information signs around the park. You can use these to find out extra facts about the animals you are looking at, or draw the children's attention to any points of interest.



Penguin Cove

Look out for:

Different ways the penguins can move. What verbs ('doing words') can you think of to describe what they are up to? (e.g. *swimming, waddling, stretching, flapping, hopping, nibbling* etc...)

Can you see more penguins on the land or in the water? Why do you think this might be?

What can you find in the underwater cavern? How many starfish? Fossil fish bones? Clams? Handprints (*clue: there is only one!*)?

Have a go at:

Waddling like a penguin! Hold your arms out straight by your sides like wings, and keep your knees close together as you walk.

Do you think penguins are better at walking or swimming? Which one are you better at?

True or False?

Penguins are birds.

TRUE: Even though penguins are really good at swimming instead of flying, they are still birds. Their flippers are special types of wings. They also have beaks and feathers. See if you can spot one moving under the water. Does it look like it could be flying?



Servals

Look out for:

Some replica skulls on the far side of the Outpost. Which one belongs to the cheetah? Is it bigger or smaller than the lion and leopard skulls? Why do you think that might be? *(To help them run faster by being light and streamlined. The cheetah also eats smaller prey.)*

Look at the teeth on all of the skulls. Can you see which of the animals have sharp teeth for eating meat (*lion, leopard, cheetah*), and which have flat teeth for grinding up plants (*scrub hare, warthog*)?

If you can see the real Serval in the enclosure below, look out for the following features and think about why they have them:

- ❖ **Spotty pattern** – *to keep the Serval camouflaged*
- ❖ **Long legs for body size** – Servals have the longest legs for its size of any cat. They are used for pouncing but also to raise the Serval off the ground so it can hear above long grass.
- ❖ **Black ears with white spots** – The spots help cubs follow adults when they are leading the hunt.

True or False?

Servals can catch birds in mid-flight

TRUE: *Servals can jump between 2 – 3 metres into the air – That's taller than your teacher!*



Giraffe House

Look out for:

Long dark tongues! Giraffes have very long tongues which can be up to 45cm long! They are a dark blue-grey colour to protect them from getting sunburnt. They use their flexible tongues to grasp leaves from the very tops of trees.



Have a go at:

Who's who at the zoo?

If the giraffes are in their house, use the photo frames on the opposite wall to try and work out which giraffe is which. Be careful, it's not as easy as it looks...!

Giraffe gymnastics

Giraffes are so tall they almost have to do the splits to have a drink!

Try bending down like a drinking giraffe. Put your feet almost as far apart as they can go, then bend down to touch the floor, keeping your knees straight.

OH NO! Imagine a lion is coming! Try to run away quickly, like a giraffe would have to if it is in danger. Is it easy to do?

Even adult giraffes have to be careful when they are bending down to drink. This is when lions and other predators have their chance to attack.



Peekaboo!

One of the big, upright wooden pillars has a tiny painting of a bird peeping out of it – can anybody find it? *(it is on the pillar nearest the exit, about half way up)*

Lemurs (inside Giraffe House)

The lemurs are another group of noisy animals here at Marwell. Can you hear them now? You will know it if you can! If not, listen out for their calls as you go around the park – when one lemur starts, the others all quickly join in!

Look out for:

Three different types of lemur: ring-tailed lemur, black and white ruffed lemur and crowned lemur. As a group, see if you can think of 5 adjectives to describe each type (e.g. fluffy, sleepy).

Have a go at:

Following the 'lemur'

When a troop of ring-tailed lemurs travels along the ground, they all hold their long tails up high in the air. Why do you think they do this? (So they can see where all the members of their group are). One of the female lemurs is in charge and she leads all the others, showing them where to go.

As you go around the Giraffe House, try playing your own game of Follow the Leader. Choose someone to be in charge (if you want to be even more like the lemurs, pick a girl!) and then walk along in single file behind her. Everyone should hold one hand up in the air to be their 'tail', and follow the leader where they go and copy what they do. Try taking it in turns to be the leader, and see what happens!

Spotting the biggest and smallest lemur

Look into the Lemur enclosure. Can you find the biggest lemur? Which is the smallest?



Evolution 2

What kind of place do you think it looks like in here? Clue: look at all the model trees on the walls. (In the “heart of Africa” there are lots of rainforests. That is what this building is designed to look like)

Why is it so dark in a rainforest? (because the trees would block out lots of the light)



Look out for:

Some rainforest animals hiding in the paintings on the walls and up by the ceiling. What sorts of animals can you find? (monkeys – mandrill and potto, bird – hornbill, bats, gliding squirrel)



Strange fish in the tank. These fish all have their own special job to do in their community. They are the freshwater fish that would inhabit the rivers and flooded areas of the rainforest.

Unlike most fish species, barred bichirs can breathe air. They have a modified swim bladder which acts like a set of lungs so they can survive outside of the water for short periods of time. They are a ray-finned fish capable of moving on land by ‘walking’ on their pectoral fins.

Can you find the spotted Ctenopoma?

Also known as the leopard bush fish, the spotted Ctenopoma is a carnivorous predator whose odd spiny appearance and colouration mean it is easily camouflaged amongst the leaf litter. In the wild, they live in the Congo Basin, where they feed on smaller fish, amphibians and invertebrates. They are opportunistic hunters who will stalk anything small enough to fit in their mouths! - *How wide can you open your mouth?*

Have a go at:

Matching horns!

See if you can match the animal horns to the sign on the left.

Which animals have twisty horns? Which animal has the biggest horns?

In your groups, think about their similarities and differences. Use the display at the other end of the building to see how different species’ shape and size has evolved in relation to their diet and environment.

Wild Explorers

Look out for:

Footprints on the wall. There are lots of animal footprints on the wall in Room 1. Can you spot the prints of the animals that live in Wild Explorers? (Grevy's Zebra, Scimitar Horned Oryx and White Rhino).

The Rhino's heads. Rhinos have small eyes, big nostrils and big ears. Can you guess which senses White Rhinos use the most? Their huge nostrils are good for smelling and their big ears, which they can move about, are good for hearing. However, they have small eyes and very poor eyesight.



Have a go at:

Making shadow puppets! Look closely at the animals on the large video screens in Room 1. What features do they have and what are they doing? Take it in turns to stand so your shadow can be seen on the screen. Now act like one of the animals! Can your friends guess which one you are? How did they know?

Rhinoceros

What are the rhinos eating? In the paddock they will graze the grass and in their house they munch their way through a mountain of hay. Marwell's rhinos are white rhinos which is a mistranslation of the Afrikaans which means 'wide', referring to their wide mouths – perfect for grazing on the savannah. In contrast, the Black rhino has a pointed, prehensile top lip – perfect for picking leaves from low lying branches.





Aridlands

Think about the type of animals in here and what their homes look like. So what kind of place do you think the 'aridlands' might be? Clue: look for a big round sign that tells you what the aridlands lack (water - so it is hot and dry).

Look out for:

Long twisty horns on the addax and dorcas gazelles.

If you've already been to Evolution 2 house, you might remember seeing some addax horns there. Do all of the addax and dorcas gazelles have horns? (*they should do – both males and females*)

DID YOU KNOW? Antelope like these are different to deer because they only ever grow one pair of horns. Male deer grow a new set of antlers every year.

Sometimes the antelope's horns grow crooked or get broken off. This can happen in captivity as well as in the wild.

Have a go at:

Counting how many addax or gazelles you can see with:

- ❖ 2 horns
- ❖ 1 horn
- ❖ No horns
- ❖ A crooked or broken horn

If there are any baby addax or gazelles - look for the tiny horns, just beginning to grow.



Desert Carnivores

Look out for:

Pawprints in the sand. Can you see the tracks that the Yellow mongoose have made around their enclosures? Where do they lead? You might even be able to find some shoeprints – who might have made these? (*the zookeepers*)

Have a go at:

Imagining you are a scientist studying these animals out in the desert! Think about your answers to the following questions:

❖ What would it feel like in the desert?

Very dry, hot, sunny, cold at night, lonely etc...

❖ What scientific equipment would you take?

Any (e.g. binoculars, notebook, stopwatch, radio collars etc...)

❖ What else would you need?

Lots of water, sun cream, tent, hat, food etc...

❖ What animals would you look out for?

Any desert animals e.g. meerkats, camels, antelope, sand cats, snakes, tortoises, scorpions etc...

True or False?

Yellow Mongoose throw eggs.

TRUE: Yellow mongoose mostly feed on invertebrates such as insects and spiders, but they have been seen eating eggs and smaller animals including rodents and birds. To get in to bird's eggs they have been seen rolling an egg close to a stone or rock and then throwing the egg between their legs so the egg will hit the stone or and break!



Amur Tigers

Look out for:

Parts of the tigers that help them get their food. Firstly, what do tigers like to eat? (Meat, such as deer and wild pigs).

So what kind of teeth do you think they might have? (Big, sharp etc.)

Have a good look at their:

- ❖ Massive paws
- ❖ Stripes for camouflage
- ❖ Two eyes facing forwards to help judge distances



Have a go at:

Predator peepers

Most plant-eating animals have eyes on the sides of their heads so they can watch out for danger. But tigers and other predators have both their eyes facing forwards to help them judge how far away things are (so they know when to pounce).

You can test this out by holding your arms out to the side and pointing your index fingers. See if you can bend your arms and touch your fingertips together in the middle. It should be quite easy to do. Try it again with one eye closed. Now how easy is it?

Creeping tigers

In India, villagers sometimes wear masks on the back of their heads to stop tigers attacking them. It works because tigers like to sneak up on their prey from behind, so if they see a face looking at them, they will keep away.

This game is a variation on 'Grandmother's Footsteps'. Choose one person to be a deer, and the rest of the group are the tigers. Get the tigers into a line facing the deer, who stands a little way off with his back to them. Then the tigers have to slowly creep up on the deer, holding their hands as tiger claws if they like. Every so often, the deer should quickly look behind him, and the tigers FREEZE! If the deer sees any of the tigers moving, they are out. The game continues until either all the tigers are out, or one of them manages to reach the deer and (gently) pounces!

True or False?

Amur tigers (the type you can see here at Marwell) are the biggest cats in the world.

TRUE: Tigers are the largest of the big cats, and Amur tigers are the largest tigers of all!

Okapi Houses

These animals are very shy so please remember to be quiet in their houses.

Look out for:

The okapi's long, blue tongue. It is so long the okapi can even use it to clean out their eyes and ears! In one of the okapi houses there is a mirror to look in – how close can you get to licking your eyes or ears?

The okapi's huge ears. Why are these useful to the okapi? *(to catch every sound and warn them of danger)*

The okapi's good camouflage. What is camouflage and why do they need it? *(so the okapi can hide safely in the rainforests where they live)*

DID YOU KNOW? Even though okapi are such big animals, they are so shy and well camouflaged that scientists didn't even know they existed until 1901!

Have a go at:

Who's who?

The stripe pattern on the okapi's legs and rear is unique to each okapi – just like a zebra's stripes or our fingerprints! Using the photo ID signs on the wall, can you work out the names of the okapi you can see?

True or false?

The okapi's closest animal relative is the zebra.

FALSE: Although the okapi have stripes like a zebra, they are actually cousins of the giraffe! Look closely at their faces, little horns and long necks – can you see the family resemblance?



Cold Blooded Corner

All the animals here are cold-blooded reptiles. What does cold-blooded mean? (*cannot maintain a constant body temperature and take on the temperature of their surroundings*)

Look out for:

Some animal bones in one of the tanks. Can you tell what kind of animals the bones are from? Which one do you think has the most bones in its skeleton?

Have a go at:

Animal detectives!

When the children have had a look around, read out the following clues one by one so they can use a process of elimination to work out which animal the clues refer to.

This reptile:

- ❖ Has scales...
- ❖ Has 4 legs...
- ❖ Is a pale yellow colour...
- ❖ Lives in the desert...
- ❖ Has a shell to hide in...

= **Egyptian tortoise!**

This reptile:

- ❖ Has scales...
- ❖ Lives in trees...
- ❖ Eats mice...
- ❖ Doesn't have any legs...

= **Royal Python**



This reptile:

- ❖ Has bumpy scales...
- ❖ Has 4 legs...
- ❖ Has sharp claws on its feet...
- ❖ Has a venomous bite...
- ❖ Has a bright yellow and black pattern...

= **Beaded lizard!**

What is a reptile?

As a group, see if you can come up with a list of features that reptiles have. (*E.g. dry scales, bones, cold-blooded, lay leathery eggs on land. Depending on their prior knowledge, you may have to use questioning to help the children here.*)

True or false?

Snakes don't have any bones in their bodies.

FALSE: Lots of people think that snakes have no bones because they are so flexible. Actually snakes have a long backbone just like ours, all the way down their body. They also have a skull and LOTS of ribs! Did you see the snake skeleton in the bone enclosure?

Siamang Gibbon House

Look out for:

Terrific trees!

There are lots of trees around this area. How many different kinds of tree can you spot from where you are standing?

- ❖ 0 : Keep trying, open your eyes!
- ❖ 1-3 : Jungle junior
- ❖ 4-6 : Fantastic forester
- ❖ 7 + : Expert Explorer!

This is an activity you could repeat in other spots around the zoo, or even on the coach on the way home!

Don't forget to look in the water around the gibbons' island. Can you see any animals there? (*some large fish*). What colours are they?

Have a go at:

Gibbon X-Factor!

Sometimes siamang gibbon families like to sing very loudly. What do you think they might be trying to say? (*"This is our bit of forest – KEEP OUT!"*).

You can have a go at singing like the gibbons too! Split the group into two halves. One half should make a deep 'whoooooop, whoooooop!' sound, and at the same time the other half should make a quick, high, 'aaack ack ack ack ack!' sound.

If the gibbons don't sing back at you while you are there, listen out for them as you go round the rest of the zoo. They are very loud!



Life among the trees

All the animals here are found in forests across the world. See if you can use the signs to work out where in the world these animals come from. Some animals (such as the Bokiboky) from dry forest in Madagascar whereas others such as the Red-Ruffed lemurs come from the rainforests.

Look out for:

Spot the difference

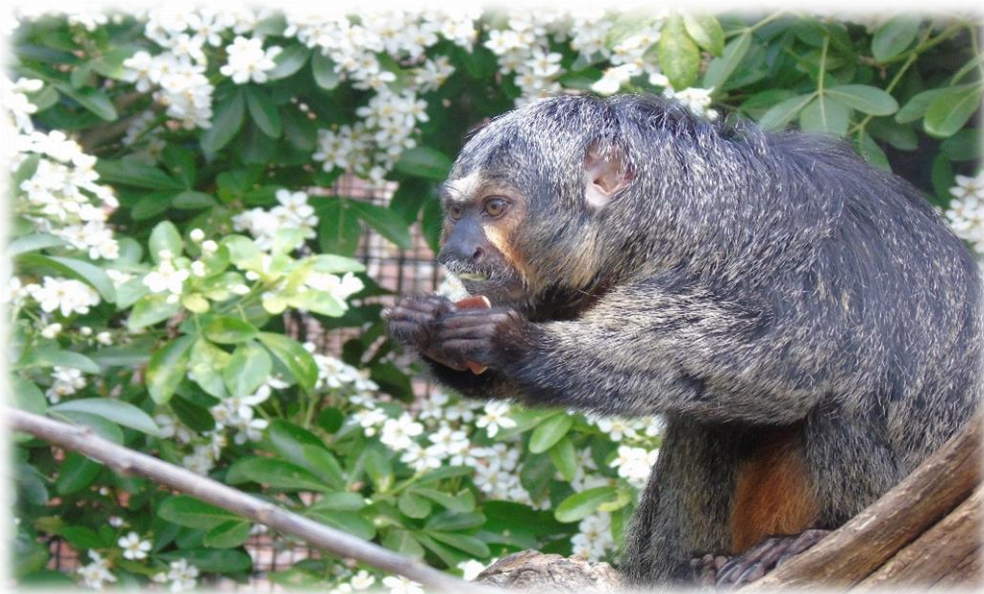
Look at the different types of money – can you spot any similarities and differences between the monkey species? Look carefully at the White-Faced Saki monkeys – can you spot the female one? She looks different to the males (she is brown with white line markings on her face)

Find the food

Look carefully inside the enclosures. The animals in life among the trees are omnivores. They eat a range of food from fruits, flowers, nectar and small animals including frogs, snails, lizards and insects. Can you spot any tasty treats left out by the keepers? Can you identify any of the fruit they are eating?

Have a go at:

The monkeys you can see in Life among the trees use their tails for balance as they run or climb though the branches. Can you balance? Try standing on one leg – hold your hands out either side. Does holding your arms out help you while balancing?





Tropical House

Look out for:

Any of the following animals...

- ❖ **A very hairy, slow animal** (*Linne's two-toed sloth*)
- ❖ **Lots of busy ants** (*leaf-cutter ants*)
- ❖ **Some tiny, noisy frogs** (*yellow-throated frogs*)
- ❖ **An enormous pigeon with a big crest** (*Sclater's crowned pigeon*)

(You could split the class into teams and give each team one of the clues to find that animal. Or if you have a smaller group, give them one animal clue each.)

Have a go at:

Be a super slow sloth!

Can you spot our sloth? They are well camouflaged and move very slowly so that other animals don't know they are there.

Try being a two-toed sloth – pretend to hang upside down and move very slowly! What would it be like to eat whilst hanging upside down?



Ant trackers

In the Science Gallery is a colony of leaf-cutter ants. Why do you think they are called leaf-cutters? *(because they use their powerful jaws to chew off bits of leaves and take them back to the nest.)*

Can you find one carrying a big piece of leaf and follow it along the tube all the way back into the nest?

True or False?

Leaf-cutter ants eat leaves.

FALSE: Leaf-cutter ants actually use the leaves as compost to help them grow a kind of fungus in a special 'garden' inside their nest. The fungus that grows on the leaves is what the ants really like to eat.

Semi-aquatic Mammals

Why do you think these animals are called semi-aquatic? What does it mean? *(they like to spend time on the land AND in the water).*

The pygmy hippos and the Brazilian tapirs are both mammals like us. What do mammals usually have on their skin? *(fur or hair)*. Can you see any fur or hair on the hippos/tapirs? *(the tapirs have short, smooth fur all over. The hippos are hairless except for little tufts on their ears and tail!)*

These mammals also have lots of special features to help them live in the water.

Look out for:

Pygmy hippo

- ❖ **Eyes, ears and nostrils on top of the hippo's head** *(so it can hide under the water and only have the top of its head poking out to see, hear, and breathe)*
- ❖ **Smooth shiny skin** *(to help it glide through the water)*
- ❖ **Big, spreading toes** *(which act as paddles for swimming)*
- ❖ **Short tail** *(used as rudder for steering)*



Tapirs

If the tapirs are in the house, have a good look at their noses. They are quite long and bendy! How do you think a tapir might use its long bendy nose in the water? *(They can actually use them as snorkels to breathe when they are underwater!)*

Have a go at:

Closing your eyes and using your nose to smell the pygmy hippo and tapirs. Would you like your house to smell like this?

Why do you think it is so smelly? *(In the wild the pygmy hippos like to mark their bit of water with their smell. So they go to the toilet in the water to make it smell of them!)*

Luckily, the keepers fill the pools with fresh water every day so the hippo and tapirs stay clean and healthy.