

Manatee Activity Calendar



Objective

Students will increase their knowledge of manatees. They'll discover what they can do to help the manatees' survival by participating in the activities on this calendar.

Materials

- two large pieces of butcher paper (enough to cover a bulletin board)
- push pins or tape
- white construction paper
- activity calendar ideas (page 2)
- markers, crayons, or paint
- gluesticks or glue
- scissors

Action

1. November is Manatee Awareness Month in the state of Florida. To enhance students' awareness of manatees, the calendar can be made as a class project in the last week of October.
2. The calendar should be constructed on a bulletin board or wall. Cover the board with butcher paper using push pins or tape, then randomly draw thirty uniform squares on the paper. Write (or have students write) the activities on the board in the squares.
3. Cover the activity-filled butcher paper with another sheet of butcher paper. Cut slits in the paper to make windows that expose the activities beneath it when opened. Number the windows with a black marker for the number of days in November.
4. Have students illustrate the whole bulletin board using construction paper, paint, crayons, and/or markers. Encourage them to draw animals found in the manatees' natural habitat.
5. Begin each daily science period by opening and reading the window for that day. For example, on November 3, open window number three. Do each activity described on that day or as a homework assignment.

Deeper Depths

Have students make smaller, individual calendars to keep at home or in their desks. Encourage students to read weekend entries with family members at home. Set up the classroom so most of the activities can be done at school.

Go on a field trip to see manatees (SeaWorld Orlando, Blue Spring State Park, Crystal River, or Homosassa Springs) or read a book about manatees. While observing or reading about manatees, make a list of what is in their environment and notice how they interact with other animals.



November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Manatees move into warmer waters when it starts to get cold. What do you do when it gets cold? Draw a picture of something you do when it gets cold.	Look up these manatee words: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •estuary •brackish •herbivore •migrate •endangered •extinct •conservation 	Manatees only eat plants. Find out two kinds of plants that are a normal part of a manatee's diet.	The three species of manatees are the West Indian manatee, West African manatee, and Amazonian manatee. What is the name of the extinct manatee relative? Find a map and locate where it lived.	Make a manatee out of modeling clay. Be sure to include flippers, a tail, a head, two eyes, two nostrils, and whiskers. To make the whiskers, break off pieces of a toothpick.	The Florida manatee is an endangered species. Name two other animals found in the United States that are endangered.	Read about or visit an area where manatees are known to congregate. Write a story about what you learned.
Water is an important part of a manatee's habitat. Make a rain gauge by marking inches or centimeters on a clear container and leaving it outside.	An adult male manatee is a bull, an adult female manatee is a cow, and a young manatee is a calf. Can you think of other animals that these words describe?	Manatees eat lots of manatee grass! Count how many blades of grass are in a square inch or square centimeter of your yard. Measure and cut out a square inch piece of paper to use as a guide.	The Steller's sea cow was an Arctic relative of the manatee that was hunted to extinction 27 years after its discovery. Draw a picture of a Steller's sea cow.	Create an area in your room to display articles about endangered species.	Adult West Indian manatees may weigh up to 1,590 kg (3,500 lb). Weigh yourself and see how many of you it would take to weigh as much as one West Indian manatee. Draw a life-size manatee.	Measure the amount of rain in your rain gauge.
Take a map of Florida to the library and highlight areas where manatees are found.	West Indian and West African manatees have three or four fingernails at the tips of their flippers. Name three animals that have fingernails.	Think of some words that rhyme with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •tail •plants •rivers •flipper •cow •bull 	A manatee's only teeth are molars in the back of their mouths. Manatees have between 24-32 teeth. Count how many teeth you have. Then count how many teeth an adult has.	With a group of your friends, pick up trash around your neighborhood. By throwing trash away, it won't harm wildlife or end up in waterways where manatees are found.	A manatee pokes its nostrils above the surface to breathe. The average time between breaths is two to three minutes. How long can you hold your breath?	For a rainy day: Color manatee pictures with water-based markers. Leave them in the rain for a short time. What happened?
Manatees probably live a maximum of about 50 to 60 years. How many months are in a year? Figure out how many months are in 50 and 60 years.	List two things you and a friend can do together to help manatees.	Many manatees are accidentally injured by speed boats and boat propellers. Make a poster warning boaters to slow down in areas where manatees live.	Write a manatee poem, illustrate it, and share it with a friend.	At Sea World, manatees eat romaine lettuce. Buy some romaine lettuce and try it. If you like it, find a recipe for Caesar salad and make it.	Walk through your home and make a list of items your family uses that can be recycled. By recycling, you can keep trash out of the environment.	Manatee calves weigh about 27-32 kg (60-70 lb.) and are 1.2-1.4 m (4-4.5 ft. long). Measure your own height and weight and compare.
Name two other endangered species besides manatees. What is the difference between extinct and endangered? Name two endangered animals that live in your state.	A manatee cow gives birth about once every three years. Figure out how many days and months there are in three years.					