INVESTIGATION PROGRAM SUMMARY

INVESTIGATION ECOLOGY

This is an outdoor program. In the event of inclement weather, alternate programs may be offered if available.

Level: **Grades 6-8** Length: **45 minutes**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

How do organisms survive and relate to one another in the Georgia Piedmont? Students will explore habitats and participate in inquiry-based activities in this outdoor program to discover the unique and important roles different plants and animals play in Piedmont forests. Students will study adaptations, survey for animal signs, and construct a "web of life" model of a forest ecosystem.

CURRICULUM CORRELATIONS

Students will:

- Explore how adaptations, both external features and behaviors, help animals survive in their habitat. **S7L4a**
- Examine the mechanisms by which adaptations relate to evolution and inheritance. **S7L5b**
- Model the flow of energy from producers to consumers in an ecosystem. **S7L4b**
- Discover the role of biodiversity in maintaining the flow of energy and stability in an ecosystem. **S7L4c**

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How and *why* do organisms interact with each other and their environment?

PROGRAM VOCABULARY

Adaptation
Biodiversity
Consumer
Habitat
Producer

ASSOCIATED VOCABULARY

Camouflage
Herbivore
Carnivore
Omnivore
Ecosystem
Predator
Food Chain/Web
Prey

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

As a class, review vocabulary. Discuss the many ways organisms relate and interact, including food webs. Have students create a basic food chain or web for organisms native to the Georgia Piedmont.

AT THE MUSEUM

Be sure to visit **A Walk Through Time in Georgia** and have students search each diorama for animals which live in (and are adapted to) the ecosystems of Georgia. Also explore a Piedmont forest from tree-height at Adventure Outpost and along the elevated trails in **WildWoods**.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Have students research one of the organisms they saw or discussed while exploring a forest ecosystem; then have students work together to determine how each of their organisms could connect in a web of life.

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MUSEUM | 3D THEATER | FOREST