

Des cabanes **dernier cri**

La última cabaña sobre un árbol

Ultimate treehouses

During the summer of 1996, The Dallas Arboretum (USA) created an outdoor exhibit called "Ultimate Treehouses" which entertained and educated over 77,000 visitors. In addition to ten outrageous treehouses which were designed and built by local groups, Ultimate Treehouses featured an educational exhibit with the theme of Trees as Habitats. This exhibit, aimed at 6 to 12 year-olds, featured hands-on discovery stations, interpretive panels, plant displays and a children's activity book containing inquiry questions, math puzzles, games, habitat scavenger hunts, and follow-up activities to be completed at home.

On each panel and discovery station, the exhibit's cartoon host Rocky Raccoon offered extra information, funny comments and suggestions for finding animal habitats. For example, on the first panel Rocky states, "My home is in a tree. Trees are also homes for other animals, insects and plants. Let's find some other animals and insects that call trees home."

It was our goal to start with what was familiar to a child and move on to the unfamiliar. For example, the "What is a Habitat?" panel introduced the concept of habitat with the text, "Every living thing on Earth needs a place to live and call home. Your home provides you with shelter, food, water, and a place to play. Your house or apartment is your habitat, in the same way a hollow tree trunk is the home, or habitat, for a raccoon." At this stop, the activity book exercise asks participants to list their daily needs and to draw a picture of their own habitat.

The discovery station "Pecan Tree Homes" introduced visitors to wildlife that uses this tree as a habitat. Rubber

stamps were provided for visitors to place images of animals and insects on a picture of a pecan tree in the activity book. Next to this station was a display of plants native to the Dallas area, and an interpretive panel of the animals and insects which rely on them for food.

The "Cactus is Home" discovery station interpreted animals and insects that live in and around a saguaro cactus in the Sonoran Desert. A panel

described desert characteristics and plants that desert animals and insects use as food. At this desert stop, the activity book asked pupils to identify desert weather conditions based on information contained within the interpretive panel. Another activity was to match desert animals with their descriptions.






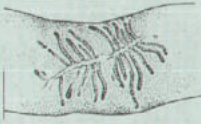



At the "Signs of Habitat" discovery station, visitors learned how to improve

Find a Habitat Tic-Tac-Toe

Animal and insect habitats can be found everywhere. Look around The Arboretum to find these habitats.

Directions: Put a big "X" over the square when you find one. The first one to get three across, down or diagonally wins!

Where to Stop for Activity: Use the entire Arboretum

		
Hole in Ground	Fungi on Tree Trunk	Bird's Nest
		
Spider Web	Hole in Tree Trunk	Bark Beetle Tunnels
		
Fallen Log	Insect Galls on Leaves	Dried Grass Nest

the observation skills used to locate animal habitats. Replica animal tracks were provided for visitors to make rubbings. These included white-tail deer, opossum and great horned owl. Other activities suggested that visitors look around The Arboretum for animal and insect habitats, such as spider webs, tree trunk holes, and bird nests.

Day and night rain forest sounds were incorporated into the "Listen to a Rain Forest" discovery station. This station featured images and information on animals living within the canopy layer of the Amazonian rain forest. The music company Rykodisk allowed us to use portions of the CD "Amazon Days, Amazon Nights" for the audio portion of the display. At this station, Rocky Raccoon stated "Listening is another good way to find an insect or animal's habitat." Plants native to the Amazon rain forest were displayed. An interpretive panel explained rain forest layers and showed plants and animals that rely on rain forest trees as their habitat. Activity book exercises for this stop focused on math puzzles, such as "Rain forests are being destroyed at a rate of about 125 acres per minute.

That's about 100 football fields! How many acres are destroyed in one hour? How many acres are destroyed in one day?" Answers were given at the back of the book. Another activity was a paper bromeliad, complete with a frog living within its leaves, which could be cut out and constructed at home.

The final station, "We All Need Trees", introduced the importance of trees to humans and discussed forest management techniques. Visitors were asked to draw a picture illustrating the importance of trees to animals as well as people. The activity book asked children to keep a diary about a neighborhood tree, listing animals and insects that visited the tree, the animals' activities, and which parts of the tree were used for food. To conclude, the children were asked to draw their tree with the animals and insects that they had observed.

By teaching children and adults in fun and interactive ways, The Dallas Arboretum hopes to foster a genuine appreciation for plants, nature and habitats. Enhanced appreciation will hopefully lead people to make better informed choices and decisions affecting our environment.

d'étude et étaient complémentaires des stations de découvertes. L'arboretum de Dallas espère créer par l'enseignement récréatif et interactif des liens affectifs avec l'environnement naturel.

▲ Resumé

Pendant l'été 1996, L'arboretum de Dallas (USA) a proposé une exposition en plein air intitulée "Ultimate Tree House". "Ultimate Tree House" montre 10 cabanes extravagantes sur le thème des arbres comme habitations. La partie éducative de cette exposition consistant à proposer aux enfants de 6 à 12 ans des stations d'initiation et de découverte, des tables d'explications, des panneaux d'informations sur les plantes et des livres d'activités.

Ces derniers comportaient des espaces pour dessiner, des puzzles mathématiques, des jeux et des chasses aux charognards. Ces livres d'activités illustraient le thème

● Resúmen

Durante el verano de 1996, el Arboretum de Dallas (Estados Unidos) produjo una exposición externa denominada 'Lo Último en Cabañas sobre Árboles'. Una exposición que mostraba 10 monstruosas cabañas con un tema los árboles como hábitats. El elemento educativo de la exposición, que estaba destinada a chicos entre los 6 y 12 años, contó con lugares de descubrimiento, paneles interpretativos exposiciones de plantas y un libro de actividades. El libro de actividades contenía espacios para pintar, problemas de matemáticas, juegos, y un recolector de basuras (scavenger hunts) que complementaba el tema y las estaciones de descubrimiento. El Arboreto de Dallas

espera fomentar un verdadero amor por la naturaleza, mediante el empleo de caminos interactivos y divertidos.

Monica Buntin Myhill is the Education Coordinator at The Dallas Arboretum, 8617 Garland Road, Dallas, Texas 75218, U.S.A. Tel: 214 327 8263. Fax: 214 324 9801.

