

LESSON: IMPACTS OF PLASTIC ON ECOSYSTEMS

Instructors Guide

WHAT THIS LESSON COVERS

Plastic pollution in the environment is not only ugly to look at but has the potential to impact ecosystems in many harmful ways. This lesson introduces the impacts of plastic pollution on ecosystems, while inspiring action to create solutions. Participants will participate in activities to understand the impacts of entanglement and ingestion on wildlife, with a focus on animal species found in the Great Lakes ecosystems.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THIS LESSON

Activity 1 - [Get to Know Your Ecosystem](#)

20 minutes

Activity 2 - [Oh no, I'm Entangled!](#)

10 minutes

Activity 3 - [Entangled Flight](#)

30 minutes

Activity 4 - [Plastics for Dinner](#)

20 minutes

ACTIVITY 1

Online resources:

- [Worksheet](#)
- [Ecosystem Posters & Wildlife Cards](#)
- [Bonus Experiment](#)

ACTIVITY 2

Materials from home:

- Hair elastics

ACTIVITY 3

Online resources:

- [Worksheet](#)
- [Paper Plane Bird Template](#)

Materials from home:

- Tape
- Scissors
- Assortment of plastic materials

ACTIVITY 4

Online resources:

- [Worksheet](#)
- [Food Chain Poster](#)
- [Food Chain Wildlife Images](#)

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- DFO Trophic transfer: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/rp-pr/ncag-gncc/projects-projets/030-eng.html>
- NOAA Microplastics: <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/microplastics.html>